

Users' rights Charter for hospitalised individuals General principles*

(Circular no. DHOS/E1/DGS/SD1B/SD1C/SD4A/2006/90 of March 2 2006 relating to the rights of hospitalised individuals and comprising a charter for hospitalised individuals).

- 1 – Each patient is free to choose the health care institution he wants to take care of him, subject to the limitations of each institution. The public hospital service is **accessible to everyone**, in particular to the most needy persons and, in the event of emergency, to persons without social security cover. It is adapted to handicapped persons.
- 2 – Health care institutions must guarantee **the quality of reception, treatment and care**. They must be attentive to pain relief and do everything possible to ensure everyone is treated with dignity, particularly at the end of life.
- 3 – **Information** given to the patient must be **accessible and reliable**. The hospitalised patient can participate in the choice of treatment. He can be assisted by a trusted support person that he freely chooses.
- 4 – A medical procedure can only be conducted with **the free and informed consent of the patient**. The latter has the right to refuse all treatment. Any adult can express his wishes as to the end of his life in advance directives.
- 5 – **Specific consent** is needed for patients participating in biomedical research, the donation and use of parts and products of the human body and for screening procedures.
- 6 – A patient who is asked to participate in **biomedical research** must be informed of the expected benefits and the foreseeable risks. **His agreement must be given in writing**. His refusal will not have any effect on the quality of care that he receives.
- 7 – The hospitalised patient can, unless otherwise provided for by the law, **leave the institution** at any time after having been informed of any risks incurred.
- 8 – **The hospitalised patient must be treated with consideration**. His beliefs must be respected. He must be ensured privacy and peace and quiet.
- 9 – Respect of privacy is guaranteed to every patient, as well as **confidentiality of personal, administrative, medical and social information** concerning him.
- 10 – The hospitalised patient (or his legal representatives) benefits from **direct access to health information** concerning him. Under certain conditions, in the event of death, his beneficiaries benefit from the same right.
- 11 – The hospitalised patient can express his views on the care and reception provided. In each institution, a commission for relations with users and the quality of care given ensures that the rights of users are respected. Every patient has the **right to be heard** by a manager of the institution to express his grievances and request compensation for harm to which he believes he has been subjected within the context of an amicable settlement procedure for disputes and/or before the courts.

⁽¹⁾ The complete Hospitalised Patients' Charter document is accessible on the website: www.sante.gouv.fr. It can also be obtained free of charge, immediately, on simple request, from the institution's admissions service.