

Patient rights & responsibilities

Being a good patient does not mean being a silent one. If you have questions, problems, safety concerns or unmet needs, let us know. If you would like further clarification of the patient rights and responsibilities as they pertain to you, you would like more information regarding our complaint and/or grievance process, or if you would like to send your patient safety event, our contact information is listed below.

All locations

Email: patient_advocates@geisinger.edu

Geisinger Medical Center

Mail: Attn: Patient Liaison
100 N. Academy Ave.
Danville, PA 17822-2112
Phone: 570-271-8881

Geisinger Shamokin Area Community Hospital

Mail: Attn: Patient Liaison
4200 Hospital Road
Coal Township, PA 17866
Phone: 570-644-4357

Geisinger Jersey Shore Hospital

Mail: Attn: Patient Liaison
1020 Thompson St.
Jersey Shore, PA 17740
Phone: 570-398-3180

Geisinger Lewistown Hospital

Mail: Attn: Patient Liaison
400 Highland Ave.
Lewistown, PA 17044
Phone: 717-242-7953

Geisinger Holy Spirit Hospital

Mail: Attn: Patient Liaison
503 N. 21st St.
Camp Hill, PA 17011
Phone: 717-763-2298

Geisinger Community Medical Center

Mail: Attn: Patient Liaison
1800 Mulberry St.
Scranton, PA 18510
Phone: 570-703-8005

Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center

(including The Pearsall Heart Hospital)
Patient liaison 570-808-7636

Geisinger South Wilkes-Barre

Mail: Attn: Patient Liaison
1000 East Mountain Blvd.
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18711-3472
Phone: 570-808-7636

Geisinger Clinics, doing business as Geisinger Medical Groups:

Call the site where you receive care and ask for the operations manager.

Patient rights

1. A patient has the right to respectful care given by competent personnel.
2. A patient has the right, upon request, to be given the name of his or her attending practitioner, the names of all other practitioners directly participating in his or her care, and the names and functions of other healthcare persons having direct contact with the patient.
3. A patient has the right to consideration of privacy concerning his or her own medical care program. Case discussion, consultation, examination and treatment are considered confidential and shall be conducted discreetly.
4. A patient has the right to have all records pertaining to his or her medical care treated as confidential except as otherwise provided by law or third-party contractual arrangements.
5. A patient has the right to know what hospital rules and regulations apply to his or her conduct as a patient.
6. A patient has the right to expect emergency procedures to be implemented without unnecessary delay.
7. A patient has the right to good quality care and high professional standards that are continually maintained and reviewed.
8. A patient has the right to full information in layman's terms concerning diagnosis, treatment and prognosis, including information about alternative treatments and possible complications. When it is not medically advisable to give such information to the patient, the information shall be given on his or her behalf to the responsible person.
9. Except for emergencies, the practitioner shall obtain the necessary informed consent prior to the start of any procedure or treatment, or both. Informed consent is defined in section 103 of the Health Care Services Malpractice Act (40 P. S. § 1301.103).
10. A patient or, if the patient is unable to give informed consent, a legally responsible person, has the right to be advised when a practitioner is considering the patient as a part of a medical care research program or donor program, and the patient or legally responsible person shall give informed consent prior to actual participation in the program. A patient or legally responsible person may, at any time, refuse to continue in a program to which he or she has previously given informed consent.
11. A patient has the right to refuse drugs, treatments or procedures offered by the hospital, to the extent permitted by law or statute, and a practitioner shall inform the patient of the medical consequences of the patient's refusal of drugs, treatments or procedures.
12. A patient or his or her legally responsible person has the right to receive care without discrimination due to age, sex, race, color, religion, sexual orientation, income, education, national origin, ancestry, marital status, culture, language, disability, gender identity or who will pay his or her bill.

13. A patient has the right to be communicated to in his or her preferred language. A patient who does not speak English should have access to a qualified, certified interpreter.
14. A patient has the right to effective written or oral communication from healthcare personnel in a manner that meets his or her vision, speech, hearing or cognitive impairments and communication needs.
15. Upon request, the hospital shall provide the patient or patient representative access to the information contained in his or her medical records, unless access is specifically restricted by the attending practitioner for medical reasons.
16. A patient has the right to expect good management techniques to be implemented within the hospital. These techniques shall make effective use of the time of the patient and avoid the personal discomfort of the patient.
17. When medically permissible, a patient may be transferred to another facility only after his or her next of kin or other legally responsible representative has received complete information and an explanation concerning the needs for and alternatives to such a transfer. The institution to which a patient is to be transferred shall be notified first and has accepted the patient for transfer.
18. A patient has the right to examine and receive a detailed explanation of his or her bill.
19. A patient has a right to full information and counseling on the availability of known financial resources for his or her healthcare.
20. A patient or his or her representative has the right to request a discharge planning evaluation.
21. A patient has the right to expect that the healthcare facility will provide a mechanism whereby he or she is informed upon discharge of his or her continuing healthcare requirements following discharge and the means for meeting them.
22. A patient has the right to be informed of his or her rights at the earliest possible moment in the course of his or her hospitalization.
23. A patient has the right to have a family member or representative of his or her choice and his or her own practitioners notified promptly of his or her admission to the hospital.
24. A patient or his or her representative (as allowed under Pennsylvania law) has the right to make informed decisions regarding his or her care. The patient's rights include being informed of his or her health status, being involved or participating in the development and implementation of his or her plan of care and treatment, and being able to request or refuse treatment, in accord with applicable law and regulation. This right must not be construed as a mechanism to demand the provision of treatment or services deemed medically unnecessary or inappropriate.
25. A patient has the right to change providers if other qualified providers are available.
26. A patient has the right to assistance in obtaining consultation with another physician at the patient's request and own expense.
27. A patient has the right to formulate advance directives and, if transferred to another hospital, to request that the hospital staff and practitioners who provide care in the hospital comply with these directives in accord with federal regulation.
28. A patient cannot be denied the right of access to an individual or agency who is authorized to act on his or her behalf to assert or protect the rights set out in this section.
29. A patient or his or her representative (as allowed under Pennsylvania law) has the right to information on infection control practices, including handwashing, respiratory (cough) hygiene and contact (isolation) safety measures.
30. A patient has the right to be informed of unanticipated outcomes during his or her care.
31. A patient has the right to make decisions about care, treatment and services received at the end of life.
32. A patient has the right to be free from seclusion and restraints of any form for behavioral management imposed as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience or retaliation by staff.
33. A patient has the right to be free from restraints of any forms for acute medical and surgical care that are not medically necessary or are used as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience or retaliation by staff.
34. A patient has the right to be free from mental, physical, sexual and verbal abuse; neglect; exploitation; or harassment.
35. A patient has the right to access protective and patient liaison services.
36. A patient has the right, without recrimination, to voice complaints regarding his or her care, to have those complaints reviewed, and when possible, resolved.
37. A patient has the right to prompt resolution of complaints and/or grievances from either the patient and his or her family.
38. A patient has the right to appropriate assessment and management of pain.
39. A patient has a right to have his or her cultural, psychosocial, spiritual and personal values, beliefs and preferences respected.
40. A patient has the right to access, request amendment to and receive an accounting of disclosures regarding his or her own protected health information as permitted under applicable law.
41. A patient has the right to receive care in a safe setting.
42. A patient has the right to an environment that preserves dignity and contributes to a positive self-image.
43. A patient's medical record is used only for the purposes of treatment, payment and healthcare operations except as otherwise required or permitted by applicable law, rule or regulation. A patient is entitled to access information in the medical record, following applicable procedures and within a reasonable time frame, unless such access to the medical record is restricted by the practitioner for medical reasons or is prohibited by law. Patient records will only be used or disclosed as referenced in our Notice of Privacy Practices.
44. The privacy of a patient's protected health information will be maintained as required by law. A patient has the right to receive the applicable Notice of Privacy Practice brochure indicating privacy practices with respect to a patient's protected health information on a patient's first contact on or after April 14, 2003, and when such brochure is materially changed. To receive a copy, contact any of our employees.

45. A patient has the right to give or withhold informed consent to produce or use recordings, films, or other images of the patient for purposes other than his or her care.
46. A patient has the right to decide if he or she wants visitors. A patient has the right to have visitors of his or her choice during the hospital stay. The hospital may need to limit visitors when visitation interferes with the well-being, rights or safety of others, or is not medically indicated in the patient's care.
47. A patient has the right to designate visitors who may not be legally related by marriage or blood. A patient has the right to request limits on visitors.
48. A patient has the right to designate his or her representative (as allowed by Pennsylvania law) who may determine who can visit if the patient becomes incapacitated.
49. The hospital will not deny visitation privileges based on race, religion, ethnicity, language, gender, gender identity or expression, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability or disability.

Patient responsibilities

As a patient, you have the responsibility to:

- Provide information about present and past illnesses, hospitalizations, medications and other matters relating to your health history.
- Have members of your family authorized to review your treatment, if you are unable to communicate with doctors or nurses.
- Formulate an advanced directive and appoint a surrogate to make healthcare decisions on your behalf, to the extent permitted by the law.
- Ask questions if you do not understand directions or procedures.
- Help your doctor, nurse, and healthcare support staff in their efforts to care for you by following their instructions and medical orders.
- Report safety concerns immediately to your doctor, nurse or any healthcare support staff.
- Report if pain is not adequately controlled so the medication regimen can be changed to meet your needs.
- Avoid drugs, alcoholic beverages or toxic substances that have not been administered by your doctor.
- Accept medical consequences if you do not follow the care, service or treatment plan provided to you.
- Help control noise and the number of visitors in your room (or exam room, if you are an outpatient).
- Respect the property of other people and the applicable facility.
- Use the call light provided for your safety.
- Be respectful and considerate of other patients and Geisinger staff.
- Sign a written acknowledgement that you have received the applicable Notice of Privacy Practices.
- Provide accurate information needed for processing your insurance coverage.
- Be responsible for payment of all services, either through your third-party payers (insurance company) or by personally making payment for any service that are not covered by your insurance policy(s) including second opinions or consultations.
- Follow policies and procedures set forth by the applicable facility.
- Advise Geisinger staff if at any time you wish to request limits on visitors during your stay.

You or a representative of your choice also have the right to speak to any state survey agency without interference. The contact information is as follows:

Division of Acute and Ambulatory Care
Pennsylvania Department of Health
625 Forster St.
Health and Welfare Building
Room 532
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0701
Toll-free: 800-254-5164
Phone: 717-783-8980
Fax: 717-705-6663
DOH website: portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt

or

If you feel that your patient safety event or concern was not resolved through the applicable complaint and/or grievance process, you or a representative of your choice may contact the Office of Quality and Patient Safety of The Joint Commission by:

Website: JointCommission.org using the "Report a Patient Safety Event" link in the "Action Center" on the home page of the website
Fax: 630-792-5636
Mail: Office of Quality and Patient Safety
The Joint Commission
One Renaissance Blvd.
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

or

Quality Insights of Pennsylvania
610 Freedom Business Center, Suite 102
King of Prussia, PA 19406
Phone: 304-346-9864
Toll-free: 800-642-8686
Fax: 717-671-5970
Website: qipa.org

or

Office of the Medicare Beneficiary Ombudsman
Website: medicare.gov/claims-and-appeals/medicare-rights/gethelp/ombudsman.html