

## Content

The Charter contains information on rights and responsibilities in six areas: Access, Communication and Participation; Confidentiality; Respect; Safety; and Comments and Complaints.

There are also sections describing what you can do if your rights have not been respected, and where you can get further information and support.

A leaflet will be produced to summarise this information further, and factsheets will provide practical examples of your rights and responsibilities in the six areas described above.

### Question 1

- a) Do you think the level of detail in the Charter is useful and appropriate?
- b) Is there any information not included in the Charter that should be covered?
- c) What would make it better?

### Question 1 Answer

- a) Generally well-pitched
- b) Better information about the methods of complaint and a statement that the process of complaint cannot be circumvented, as is the case at present, by, for example, a GP refusing to permit the published complaints procedure to be bypassed by the GP complained about declaring that he has resolved the matter himself and the complaint cannot go further as a result. It should also make clear that no NHS employee or contractor or service provider should be permitted to pass on to third parties, even when the passing of information is required by law, information which is either untruthful or utterly misleading. Page 22 simply doesn't reflect current reality, at least insofar as complaints against GPs are concerned
- c) No observation on c)

## Accessibility

We want the Charter to be as accessible as possible. This means that the language is easy to understand, and it is set out in a way that is easy to read.

## Question 2

- a) Do you think the information in the Charter is written in a way that is easy to understand?
- b) Does the format of the Charter make it easy to find the information you need?
- c) What would make it better?

- a) It is straightforward and easy to understand
- b) Reasonably so. It is impossible to please everyone, but this is a reasonable compromise.
- c) No answer on c)

## Design

The Charter is presented in A4 format, with a different colour and icon for each section.

## Question 3

Do you have any comments on the design of the Charter?

## Question 3 Answer

Presentation OK.

Contents list useful and helpful

## Availability

The Patient Rights (Scotland) Act 2011 says Health Boards must make copies of the Charter available without charge to patients, staff and members of the public.

The Charter will also be published online, and supporting information such as a summary leaflet and fact sheets will be available.

We are considering what the most appropriate alternative formats for the Charter or the supporting information is. For example, different languages, large print or audio may be produced. We would normally make available alternative formats on request.

### Question 4:

- a) What do you think is the most appropriate way for people to get a copy of the Charter?
- b) Do you agree that we should only make alternative formats available on request?

### Question 4 Answer

- a) Internet
- b) Yes – and I really don't see the relevance of such materials being prepared in, for example, Welsh.

## Rights and Responsibilities

The Charter outlines responsibilities as well as rights. These are things that people using health services can do to help the NHS in Scotland work effectively and deliver quality care and treatment.

### Question 5

- a) Do you have any comments on the balance of rights and responsibilities set out in the Charter?
- b) What would make it better?

### Question 5 Answer

- a) Patients being on time for appointments is stressed (fair enough) but nothing is said about a responsibility of doctors keeping the appointment reasonably timeously and appointments being made at times suitable for the patient. Many patients are dependent on public transport and if they are not taken at the time of their appointment they have to leave without the appointment being fulfilled in order to get the available public transport home. Additionally, patients frequently get chastised if they are unavoidably late, but doctors

- expect that nothing should be said if they are unavoidably delayed in commencing the appointment. Tolerance should count both ways.
- b) A clear indication that in every area where there is a patient duty there should be a corresponding area of duty on the part of NHS staff, contractors or service providers.

## **General**

### **Question 6**

Do you have any additional comments to make about the Charter of Patient Rights and Responsibilities?

### **Question 6 Answer**

It is frequently very difficult for patients to make a complaint – and that applies even more when they are ill in hospital.

I have seen and experienced a roomful of patients in a NHS hospital being very badly treated by one particular member of staff, but actually getting a formal complaint recorded was extremely difficult. There is often no clear chain of command which is obvious to patients.