

PATIENT RIGHTS

The following Patient Rights and Patient Responsibilities are applicable to patients of all Tift Regional Health System, Inc. ("TRHS") Facilities*. Each patient of TRHS is entitled to certain rights and assumes certain responsibilities. TRHS recognizes each patient's right to express his or her values and beliefs, to have a part in decisions and actions which affect him/her and to expect proper regard for personal dignity in human relationships during a stay as a patient in the hospital. These patient rights and responsibilities extend and apply to all patients who receive care and treatment at any TRHS Facility, whether adult, neonate, child or adolescent, provided that certain rights and responsibilities may only apply in a hospital setting. Each patient has the basic rights stated below. Patient rights and responsibilities extend to and are explained to patients and their parents/guardians.

* Refer to the <http://www.mysouthwell.com> website for a complete list of TRHS Facilities.

Access to Care/Nondiscrimination: Each patient shall be afforded impartial treatment or accommodations that are available or medically indicated, regardless of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression or other type of discrimination prohibited by law.

Respect and Dignity: Each patient has the right to considerate, respectful care at all times and under all circumstances, with recognition of his/her personal dignity.

Pain Management: Each patient has the right to appropriate management of pain.

Personal Safety: Each patient has the right to expect reasonable safety while receiving care and services.

Identification of Caregivers: Each patient has the right to know the identity and professional status of individuals providing services to him/her and to know which physician or other practitioner is primarily responsible for his/her care.

Information: Each patient has the right to obtain, from the practitioner responsible for coordinating his/her care, complete and current information concerning his/her diagnosis (to the degree known), treatment options, and any known prognosis.

Advance Directives: Each patient has the right to obtain information and formulate an Advanced Directive (consistent with applicable state law) and to have TRHS staff implement and comply with such Advance Directive to the extent possible as detailed in the TRHS Facility policy. Information regarding Advanced Directives and the limitations for honoring an Advanced Directive shall be provided upon request.

Communication: Each patient requiring communication assistance has the right, at no charge, to use and access qualified and certified interpreters, including sign language and oral interpreters, TTYs and other auxiliary aids and communication services offered by TRHS, as available. For assistance in obtaining these services, a patient or his or her representative should ask any staff person.

Consent to Treatment: Each patient has the right to participate in decisions regarding his or her health care, including the right to give voluntary, competent and understanding consent prior to any procedure.

Consultation: Each patient, at his or her own request and expense, has the right to consult with a specialist.

Refusal of Treatment: Each patient has the right to refuse treatment, to the extent permitted by law, and to refuse information concerning the medical consequences of his or her actions.

Transfer and Continuity of Care: Each patient of TRHS has the right not to be transferred to another facility or organization without first receiving an explanation as to the need for the transfer and any alternatives to such a transfer.

Regarding Hospital Charges: Regardless of the source of payment for his or her care, each patient has the right to request and receive an itemized and detailed explanation of his or her total bill for services rendered at TRHS.

Payment by Third Party Payers: Each patient has the right to a timely notice prior to the termination of payment or benefits by a third party payer for the cost of his/her care at TRHS.

Rules and Regulations: Each patient who is a patient of TRHS has the right to be informed of TRHS's rules and regulations applicable to his or her conduct as a patient.

Notice of Privacy Practices: Privacy and Confidentiality: Each patient has the right to all privacy and confidentiality protections provided for protected health information under state and federal law. Each patient has the right to receive a copy of the TRHS's Joint Notice of Privacy Practices, which describes the patient's rights and TRHS's obligations regarding use and disclosure of the patient's protected health information and how the patient may access this information.

Complaints and Grievances: Each patient has the right to voice complaints and grievances. If a patient's complaint involves his/her disability or discrimination, the complaint or grievance should be submitted to TRHS's Section 504 Coordinator, whose phone number is (229) 353-6504, or the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Civil Rights, (800) 368-1019, TDD (800) 537-7697, or ocr@ed.gov. If the patient's complaint or grievance involves any other matter, such complaint or grievance should be submitted to the Patient Representative at (229) 353-6942. Complaints and grievance may also be made to the following external agencies: Joint Commission's Office of Quality Monitoring at 1-800-994-6610 or complaint@jointcommission.org, or the Georgia Department of Human Resources, Office of Regulatory Services at 1-800-878-6442.

Patient Safety: It is TRHS's goal to provide a safe environment for patients and families. Patients may report safety concerns to the Patient Safety Officer at (229) 353-6596. Patients may also report safety concerns to the Joint Commission: online at www.jointcommission.org using the "Report a Patient Safety Concern" link in the "Action Center"; by fax to 630-792-5636; or by mail to Office of Quality and Patient Safety, The Joint Commission, One Renaissance Boulevard, Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181; and may report patient safety events to the Joint Commission online at www.jointcommission.org using the "Report a Patient Safety Event" link in the "Action Center."

Visitors: Subject to TRHS visitation rules, each patient has the right to receive or to refuse to receive visitors and the right to designate an authorized representative to exercise the patient's visitation rights.

PATIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

In keeping with the preceding rights, each patient has certain obligations to meet while a patient of a Tift Regional Health System, Inc. ("TRHS") Facility*.

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Provision of Information: Each patient has the responsibility to provide, to the best of his/her knowledge, accurate and complete information about present complaints, past illnesses, hospitalizations, medications, and other matters relating to his/her health. The patient and significant other are responsible for reporting pain to a caregiver.

Compliance with Instructions: Each patient is responsible for following the treatment plan recommended by the practitioner primarily responsible for his/her care. This may include following the instructions of nurses and other personnel as they carry out the coordinated plan of care, implement the responsible practitioner's orders, and enforce the applicable policies and procedures.

Responsibility for Refusal of Treatment: Each patient is responsible for his/her actions if he/she refuses treatment or does not follow the practitioner's instructions.

Pre-certification/Length of Stay: In order to receive full benefits, most insurance companies require pre-certification (prior to hospital admission, surgery or diagnostic procedures). Each patient is responsible for making sure that a precertification number has been furnished to TRHS, if the patient's insurance company requires it. If a patient's stay extends beyond the length agreed to by a patient's physician and the precertification company, coverage can be reduced or denied. Most insurance companies require that surgical patients be admitted the same day as surgery.

Financial Responsibility: Although assignment of insurance benefits for payment is accepted, the ultimate responsibility for final payment rests with the patient. A claim will be filed with the patient's insurance company promptly after discharge. If payment is not received from the insurance company within 45 days, the patient will be contacted regarding payment.

Billing from Other Sources: Patients may receive separate bills from the physicians involved in the patient's care. For example, surgeons, radiologists, and anesthesiologists.

Policies: Each patient is responsible for following TRHS's policies affecting patient care and conduct.

Respect and Consideration: Each patient is responsible for being considerate of the rights of other patients and personnel and for assisting in the control of noise, smoking, and if hospitalized, the number of visitors. The patient is responsible for being respectful of the property of other persons and of TRHS.

Patient Safety: Each patient is responsible for notifying TRHS of suggestions to improve patient safety, perceived risks in his/her care and unexpected changes in patient's condition.

Availability: It is the responsibility of the patient to make themselves available for their care and treatment to include, but is not limited to, physician rounding, medication administration, procedures, and treatments.