




POLICY/PROCEDURE

SECTION:	Administration	NUMBER:	ADM 04
APPROVED:	Chief Executive Officer 	ORIGINAL:	September 2008
		REVIEWED/REVISED:	March 2013

PATIENT RELATIONS PROCESS

The Excellent Care for All Act states that *every health care organization shall have a patient relations process and shall make information about the process available to the public and that every health care organization shall ensure that the patient relations process reflects the content of its patient declaration of values.*

Nipigon District Memorial Hospital is committed to responding to patient concerns in a positive and supportive manner consistent with its Vision, Mission and Values Statement and its Patient Declaration of Values – Rights and Responsibilities.

We are committed to playing a vital role in the continuous improvement of our health care services by working toward new standards set out in the Excellent Care for All Act to ensure the highest possible quality health care for the communities we serve.

PURPOSE

Patients, family members and the public may express concerns about the health services they receive at the Hospital. This process will allow us to receive suggestions and compliments in regards to the care and services provided here. We seek to facilitate the investigation and resolution of patient, family and visitor issues, concerns and complaints.

Patient satisfaction affects health outcomes and your feedback is extremely important to us as it provides an opportunity to improve the care we provide. Your feedback may include compliments, inquiries, suggestions, concerns or complaints regarding your experience here.

We acknowledge that patient complaints are an important source of feedback. Patients have a right to voice a complaint and need to know that their issues are appropriately dealt with. We try to understand patient specific dissatisfactions and take action to rectify or limit deficiencies. When ever possible, complaints are responded to and resolved at the time they are made known.

PROCEDURE

The Hospital's Patient Relations Process has three steps and all concerns and complaints received, whether in person, by phone, email or fax, will initially be dealt with at Step 1 of the 3 Step process.

Informing Patients of the Patient Relations Process

For the benefit of patients, the Patient Relations Process will be posted on the Hospital's website, included in the admitted patient's information package, and pamphlets will be distributed throughout waiting areas.

Educating Employees about the Process

All Hospital employees will be made aware of their role and responsibility in the Patient Relations Process upon orientation and through refresher training.

WHAT DO YOU DO FIRST IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM OR A CONCERN?

Step 1 – Talk with a member of the health care team.

- When you or your family has a concern, please share these concerns as soon as possible. Feel free to speak with any member of the health care team. They will listen and respond to your concerns.
- Because your care team knows you best, discussing your concern with them may resolve the issue right away.
- If you have a concern about an employee. Try to speak with them directly.
- Staff shall record and report the concern/complaint using the Hospital's appropriate documentation form.
- The completed "Patient Concern/Complaint Form" shall to be forwarded to the Senior Manager of the department and/or the Chief Nursing Officer.

Step 2 – Ask to speak with another team member, if needed.

- If you don't feel comfortable speaking with the person or your concerns do not get resolved to your satisfaction, ask to speak to the Senior Manager of the department or the Chief Nursing Officer.
- The Senior Manager or Chief Nursing Officer will meet you to review and further document your concerns within 24 hours, or the next business day after receiving the "Patient Concern/Complaint Form".
- The Senior Manager will investigate the concern/complaint by speaking with all relevant stakeholders.
- The Senior Manager will report back to you on their findings and on a recommended solution to the concern/complaint.
- If unable to resolve the concern/complaint to your satisfaction, the Senior Manager will forward the concern to the Chief Executive Officer for follow up.

Step 3 – Ask to speak to the Chief Executive Officer, if needed.

- The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will contact you to review your concern/complaint within 24 hours or next business day after receiving the “Patient Concern/Complaint Form” from the Senior Manager.
- The CEO will collaborate with you on obtaining a satisfactory resolution to the concern/complaint.
- The response to the concern/complaint will be further documented.
- A follow up letter will be forwarded to you.

We welcome your feedback. Hearing from patients and families is the best way to improve the care and services we provide. Please be assured that raising a concern/complaint will not negatively affect the care of yourself or your loved one in any way.

Your concerns/complaints will receive our courteous and respectful attention at the earliest possible time.

Talking about serious issues can be upsetting. However, the best way to work together and find solutions is for everyone to conduct themselves in a respectful manner. Rude, hurtful, offensive or threatening words or actions are NOT acceptable.

Reference: Excellent Care for All Act
Blind River District Health Centre, Patient Relations Process