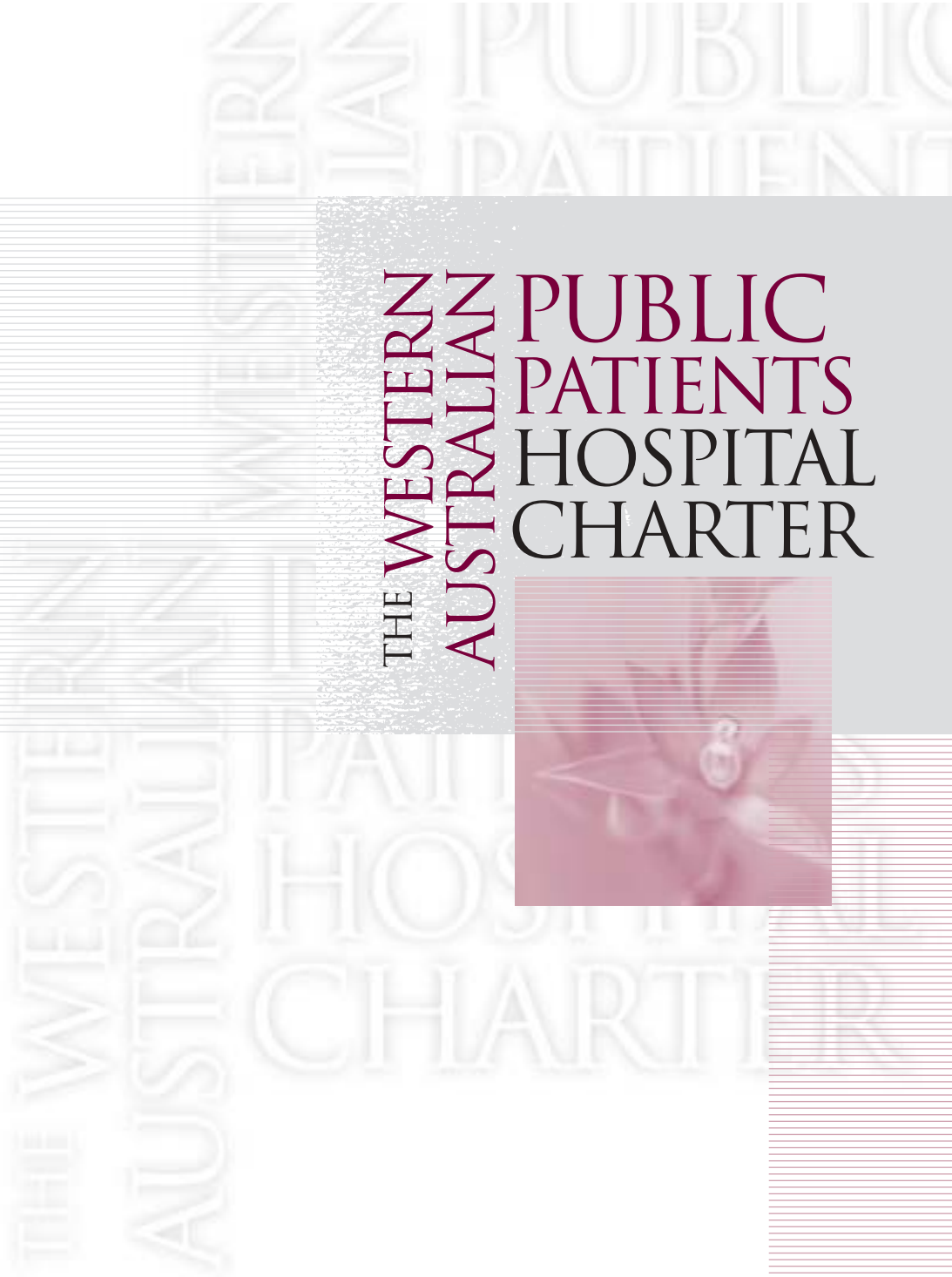
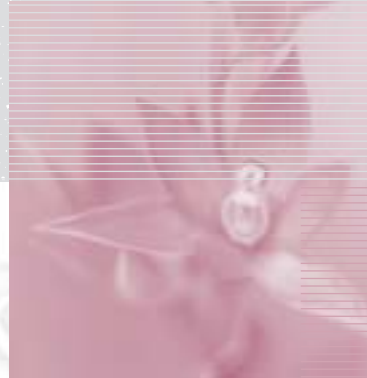


THE WESTERN
AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC
PATIENTS
HOSPITAL
CHARTER



THE WESTERN
AUSTRALIAN
PUBLIC
PATIENT
HOSPITAL
CHARTER

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MULTILINGUAL INFORMATION

People from a non-English-speaking background who are unable to understand the information in this booklet can ask for an interpreter.

A short pamphlet on the Public Patients' Hospital Charter is available in English, Italian, Spanish, Arabic, Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, Somali, Thai, Macedonian, Persian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Indonesian and Malaysian. If the hospital does not have a copy in the language that you need, please contact the Department of Health, on (08) 9222 4222.

Italian

Sono disponibili informazioni in italiano sul Public Patients Hospital Charter (Carta dei diritti del paziente negli ospedali pubblici).

Spanish

Información sobre la Carta de Privilegios de los Pacientes Públicos en los Hospitales se encuentra disponible en Español.

Arabic

المعلومات حول ميثاق المستشفيات للمرضى على نفقة الحكومة متوفرة ايضا باللغة العربية

Bosnian

Informacije o Pravilniku za bolničke pacijente u državnom zdravstvenom sektoru, također su dostupne i na bosanskom jeziku.

Croatian

Informacije o pravima bolesnika u Državnom zdravstvenom sustavu možete dobiti na hrvatskom jeziku.

Serbian

Информације о Public Patient's Hospital Charter-у (Повељи државних здравствених болничких осигураника) су доступне на Српском језику.

Somali

Waxaad heleysaa war ku saabsan Axdiga Isbitaalku ugu tala galay Bukannka Guud oo ku qoran Af Soomaali.

Thai

มีข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับกฎบัตรของโรงพยาบาลผู้ป่วยสาธารณะเป็นภาษาไทย

Macedonian

Информации за јавните документи се на располагање на македонски јазик.

Farsi

اطلاعات در مورد بیماران عمومی بستری در بیمارستانهای دولتی، به زبان فارسی نیز موجود است.

Chinese

公立醫院病人實權 也有中文本。

Vietnamese

Tin tức về Những Đặc Quyền của Bệnh Nhân tại bệnh viện công cũng có sẵn bằng tiếng Việt Nam.

Indonesian

Informasi mengenai hak sebagai pasien umum di rumah sakit juga tersedia dalam bahasa Indonesia.

Malaysian

Maklumat mengenai Piagam Hospital Pesakit Awam juga disediakan dalam bahasa Melayu.



INTRODUCTION BY THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH

As a patient in a public hospital in Western Australia you are entitled to have access to the highest quality health care. The Western Australian Government is committed to ensuring access to quality public hospital care and the highest standards of safety, for all Western Australians.

It is our aim to make your hospital visit as comfortable as possible in an environment which is welcoming, friendly and responsive to your individual needs. You can expect to be provided with high quality health services; treated with privacy, dignity and respect; and, where possible, have any special needs accommodated.

This booklet is designed to provide general information to patients on their rights and responsibilities within Western Australia's public hospitals and to help explain:

- your overall rights as a public patient;
- your right to choose to be treated as either a public or private patient in a public hospital;
- your right to a basic range of information about the treatment you receive and to have the proposed treatment explained to you;

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- the standard of service and quality of care you should expect within a public hospital;
- your right to privacy;
- your right to be treated with respect and dignity;
- your right to refuse to take part in medical training or research;
- your right to refuse treatment;
- your right to seek a second medical opinion; and
- how you can complain if you are unhappy with the treatment you receive.

As a patient in our public hospitals, your comfort and the quality of care you receive is our top priority. We strive to give you excellent medical care in a friendly environment.

Jim McGinty MLA

Minister for Health

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC PATIENTS' RIGHTS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC HOSPITALS

All patients in Western Australian public hospitals have a number of fundamental rights. These rights are detailed below.

Access to Health Services

- 1 To choose to receive quality public hospital services as a public patient free of charge, or as a private patient.
- 2 To receive services on the basis of clinical need as promptly as circumstances permit regardless of financial or health insurance status.
- 3 To be treated with respect, dignity and consideration for privacy and special needs.
- 4 To have access to a basic range of public hospital services regardless of where you live in Western Australia.

Information About Your Health Care

- 5 To be given a clear explanation of any proposed treatment including possible risks and alternatives before agreeing or refusing to have the treatment.

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- 6 To seek a second opinion.
- 7 To be given information about your continuing health care before you leave the hospital.
- 8 To see your medical records, subject to some legal provisions, and to have personal information kept confidential.

Consent to Take Part in Training and Research

- 9 To agree or refuse to participate in health professional training or medical research.

Complaints Procedure

- 10 To comment or complain about the health care you receive and to be given information about how to lodge a complaint.

INFORMATION ON PUBLIC PATIENTS' RIGHTS

ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES



The right to choose to receive quality public hospital services as a public patient, or as a private patient. Public patients will receive these services free of charge.

All Western Australian residents have the right to receive quality public hospital services either free of charge as a public patient, or as a private patient with an associated cost.

If you have private health insurance, you may still choose to be treated at a public hospital. Conversely, if you do not have private health insurance, you may still elect to be treated as a private patient. However, you should be aware of the personal costs associated with choosing to be treated as a private patient without private insurance.

Before being admitted to a public hospital in Western Australia, you will be asked to choose to be treated as a public patient or a private patient. You will be required to fill in an election form which will explain the consequences of your choice. Hospital staff will be available to assist you if you have any queries.

If you elect to be treated as a public patient then you will receive care provided by a doctor allocated to your case by the hospital. If you elect to be treated as a private patient then you will be treated by the doctor of your choice.

If you are not able to make a decision when you are admitted, you will be asked to choose to be a public or private patient and fill in the relevant form as soon as you are able. In such cases, your choice to be a public or private patient will be backdated to your date of admission. You may not subsequently change patient status

(public/private) unless it can be shown that you were not fully informed of the consequences of your first choice, or that your circumstances have significantly altered.

Visitors from other countries which have special health care agreements with Australia can also choose to be treated as public patients.

These countries currently include the United Kingdom, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Finland and Ireland.

Services available to public patients free of charge

If you choose to be treated as a public patient you will not have to pay for most care and treatment provided by a public hospital. The services which are available to public patients at no charge include:

In-patient services

Medical, nursing, and other care and treatment provided to public patients who are formally admitted into a public hospital.

Out-patient services

Health services or procedures provided by a public hospital to a person not formally admitted as a patient of the hospital.

Emergency services

Services provided when a patient requires immediate treatment at a public hospital as a result of accident, trauma or acute illness. It is important to note that all emergency services are provided free of charge to all patients, as there is no option to be treated as a private patient with respect to emergency services.

Services for which a public patient may be charged

A fee will be charged for some services which may be provided to public patients by a public hospital. These services include:

In-patient services

You will be asked to pay for personal expenses such as TV hire and telephone calls.

Out-patient services

A charge may apply to dental and optical services, hearing aids, prescription drugs, surgical supplies, artificial body parts, aids and appliances and home modifications.

Charges applying to private and other types of patients in public hospitals

Costs may be incurred by the following types of patients:

Private patients

If you choose to be treated as a private patient in a public hospital, charges will apply. The cost of most medical services provided to private patients is covered under current Medicare arrangements. Medicare will refund 75% of the Medicare recommended fee for medical services and procedures provided to private inpatients. If you have private health insurance, your health insurance fund will refund the remaining 25% of the recommended fee. However, you will have to meet any charges raised by a medical practitioner in excess of the recommended fee. You have the right to be informed of the likely cost of treatment before it starts.

In addition to medical costs, private patients will be charged a fee for hospital accommodation and related costs, including the costs of artificial body parts. If you have private insurance, these costs, or a proportion of these costs, may be paid by your health insurance company. The actual out-of-pocket cost to patients with private health insurance will depend on the services provided and the type of insurance cover held. Private patients are advised to check with their insurance company regarding any possible out-of-pocket expenses. Private patients without insurance will be liable for the full cost of accommodation and related expenses.

Nursing home type patient

A nursing home type patient is a person who has been assessed as requiring nursing home care. Like residents in a nursing home, such patients may have to pay a fee while in a public hospital.

Person with an established right to compensation

Costs incurred by a public hospital when treating a patient who is claiming compensation for their illness or injury, such as workers compensation or third party motor vehicle insurance, are to be paid to the hospital from the compensation settlement. If you are claiming compensation you have the right to be advised of the likely cost of all treatment provided.

Person who is not an Australian resident

Charges apply for services provided to patients who are not Australian residents who come from countries which do not have special health care agreements with Australia (countries which do have special agreements with Australia are listed on page 8). Such patients are required to meet the full cost of treatment and accommodation provided by a public hospital.



The rights to receive services on the basis of clinical need as promptly as circumstances permit regardless of your financial or health insurance status.

Access to public hospital services is based on a person's health, regardless of their financial or health insurance status. Waiting times vary depending on the services required. You should be told how long you are likely to wait for the service you need and which hospital you will be attending.

Emergency treatment

Emergency centres in public hospitals use a system which places incoming patients in an order of priority based on medical need. This priority system is known as the triage system and ensures that the patients with the most urgent needs are dealt with first and other patients treated as the services of medical staff in attendance at the hospital become available.

Elective surgery

If you do not need to have a surgical procedure immediately you may be placed on a hospital waiting list. Such surgery is commonly referred to as elective surgery, and is provided by the public hospital system on the basis of medical need. The length of waiting lists can vary considerably between hospitals. It can also vary according to the medical specialty involved. You have the right to ask for details of the expected waiting time for the type of surgery you require.

If the expected waiting time seems too long you can ask your general practitioner/specialist to find out if the procedure can be done sooner by a different practitioner/specialist or in a different public hospital. Alternatively, you can contact the Central Wait List Bureau on 1800 654 807, which can inform you of the public hospital with the shortest waiting list for your procedure and arrange for you to be referred on to that hospital.

If your condition deteriorates while you are on a hospital waiting list, you should raise the matter with your general practitioner who should be able to arrange for a review of your case by the relevant hospital or specialist, or discuss with you possible referrals to a different public hospital.

Out-patient clinics

Attendances at public hospital out-patient clinics are usually based on an appointment system. Waiting times vary between clinics depending on the demand for the service and the availability of the specialist. However, clinics do make provision for urgent situations based on medical need.



The right to be treated with respect, dignity and consideration for privacy and special needs.

As a public patient you are entitled to receive safe and competent care and be treated with respect, dignity and consideration for your privacy and any special needs that you have. This means that you are entitled to:

- be interviewed and examined in privacy;
- expect that people not directly involved with your care and treatment will not be consulted about your care and treatment without your prior permission; and
- refuse to talk with or see anyone not officially associated with your care and treatment.



The right to have access to a basic range of public hospital services regardless of where you live in Australia.

Hospital services in rural and remote areas

Public hospitals located in rural and remote areas of Western Australia provide access to a basic range of public hospital services including emergency and in-patient services. If you need a more complex service than the local hospital can provide, you will be referred to a public hospital where the service is available.

Financial assistance towards travel and accommodation costs may be available. Your doctor will be able to discuss this with you.

Treatment at a public hospital when away from home

If you are away from your normal place of residence and need hospital treatment you can seek treatment at any nearby public hospital.

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR HEALTHCARE



The right to be given a clear explanation of any proposed treatment, including possible risks and alternatives, before agreeing or refusing to have the treatment.

Information

You should be given sufficient information by the attending practitioner/specialist to enable you to fully understand your condition, the proposed treatment including any risks and details of any tests that may be needed. You have the right to participate in making decisions about your health care.

If you are being treated for a medical condition you should generally be given information on the following topics:

- the nature of your illness or disease;
- the proposed approach to investigation, diagnosis and treatment;
- who will undertake the treatment;
- the general qualifications and relevant professional experience of the person/s who will undertake your treatment;
- whether the proposed treatment is conventional or experimental;

- the expected outcomes, common side-effects and risks involved in any proposed treatment;
- whether there are any alternative treatments;
- the anticipated time involved in the treatment including time in hospital;
- the degree of certainty about the diagnosis;
- the degree of certainty about the outcome of the proposed treatment;
- the likely result of not choosing the proposed treatment or of not having any treatment at all; and
- any long-term physical, emotional, mental, social, sexual or other outcomes which may be associated with the proposed treatment.

You have the right to know the names of the various health care professionals responsible for your care and treatment while in hospital. If you want more information on your condition during your stay in hospital you can ask to speak to the responsible health care professional at any time.

Interpreter services

You have the right to be given information about your condition in a language that you understand. If you need help in talking to the health professionals who are responsible for your care you can ask for a professional interpreter. Arrangements can be made to use a professional interpreter from the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS). This service will be provided to you free of charge. Also, if you have a hearing impairment you have the right to a sign language interpreter free of charge.

Consent to treatment

In most circumstances, medical treatment cannot be carried out unless you give permission for the service to proceed. As well as your right to consent, you have the right to refuse any or all treatment at

any time including life-sustaining treatment. However, where urgent treatment is required and you are not able to consent at the time (for example because you are unconscious), you will be deemed to have consented. Also, if you are a patient with a mental illness who is admitted as an involuntary patient, you can be given treatment without your consent.

It is important that you understand the decision you are making when you consent to treatment. If you do not understand any detail of your condition or the procedures or drugs being used, you should ask your doctor or nurse for more information. If you are not sure whether you have been told about all the possible risks associated with the treatment, ask your doctor or nurse to explain the risks. You should be given enough time to decide whether or not you will have the treatment.

Generally a child requires consent from a parent or guardian before treatment can commence, except in emergency cases. However, a child can consent to their own treatment if they have been assessed as being of sufficient maturity to fully comprehend and understand the consequences.



The right to seek a second opinion.

In Western Australia all public hospital patients have the right to seek a second medical opinion. Where possible, hospital management will help you obtain a second medical opinion, subject to the nature of your illness, your location and the availability of an alternative medical practitioner.



To be given information about your continuing health care before you leave the hospital.

You should be consulted about your needs and circumstances and involved in planning for your discharge from hospital. If you have concerns about being discharged or about what will happen after you have left hospital, you should raise them with the hospital health care professional responsible for your care. The hospital will make arrangements for your discharge including:

- notifying you and others as appropriate of the expected time of your discharge;
- providing you with discharge advice in a written form if needed, including hospital contact telephone number; and
- helping you retrieve your personal property and effects.

Where appropriate the hospital will also:

- notify community-based services of your discharge so that any services received prior to your hospitalisation are reinstated;
- ensure a post-discharge medical appointment has been arranged; and
- help you arrange transport.



The right to see your medical records, subject to some legal provisions, and to have personal information kept confidential.

Subject to some legal and administrative provisions, you have the right to see and obtain copies of information in your medical record. The medical record cannot be removed from the hospital but can be viewed under the supervision of a health care professional. Access to your medical record can be denied if reading any part of the record could endanger your health, risk the safety of a member of the community and/or endanger the privacy of another person.

Confidentiality of medical records

The health professionals who care for you need to see your medical records. Some other hospital staff may also need to see your medical records for certain hospital procedures. Health care professionals and hospital staff are legally and ethically obliged to keep personal information confidential, although the hospital may be required to release some information, for example, for the registration of births and deaths.

Administrative information about patients admitted to hospitals in Western Australia is used by the State Department of Health to continually improve our services to you. Only summary information is used in reports, which does not allow individual patients to be identified.

CONSENT TO TAKE PART IN TRAINING AND RESEARCH



The right to agree or refuse to take part in health professional training or medical research.

Part of the role of public hospitals is to provide teaching and training for health professionals and to create an environment where medical research can be undertaken and new medical/surgical procedures trialed. This is an important component of the public hospital system as it ensures the continued supply of highly skilled health professionals and enables new and improved medical/surgical techniques to be developed.

As a patient in a public hospital you may be asked to participate in student training, medical research, or trialing new medical/surgical techniques. You have the right to choose whether or not you wish to participate in these activities. You should be given adequate time to decide whether or not you want to participate in student training, medical research, or trialing of new medical/surgical techniques. You should not be placed under any pressure to take part or made to feel that your decision will in any way affect the quality of care you receive in the hospital.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE



The right to comment on or complain about the health care you receive, and to be given information about how to lodge a complaint.

If you wish to comment on, or complain about, any service received in a public hospital, you should first raise your concerns with attending hospital staff either verbally or in writing. This should be done as soon as you are able to do so.

Alternatively, many public hospitals in Western Australia have a complaints co-ordinator or a patient liaison officer with whom you can raise your concerns. You can also contact hospital management or the Chief Executive/General Manager of the health service regarding your complaint. Another option is to contact the Office of Health Review. Information regarding the Office of Health Review is provided on page 20.

Making a complaint about services in a Western Australian public hospital may help hospital staff better meet your needs and those of other patients.

Mental Health Patients

Voluntary mental health patients have the same rights as any other public patient.

However, because of the special circumstances of mental health patients detained against their will (involuntary patients), there are agencies established to protect their rights. These agencies are:

- Council of Official Visitors;
- Mental Health Review Board; and
- the office of the Chief Psychiatrist.

On admission, involuntary mental health patients should be provided with a pamphlet detailing their rights under the *Mental Health Act 1996* and contact details of these agencies.

What is the Office of Health Review?

The Office of Health Review (OHR) provides an impartial means of having complaints about the provision of health services reviewed, reconciled and dealt with in confidence. The OHR was established by Parliament as an independent authority. The legislation governing the OHR defines health services broadly to include diagnosis and treatment, health care, preventative programs, research and ambulance services. It also covers public and private health services, including alternative medicine.

How does the Office of Health Review work?

Initially, complaints are referred back to the provider to try to resolve the problem. If this is unsuccessful, the OHR makes enquiries and determines whether there is any basis for dealing with the complaint further. The matter may then be closed, dealt with by a confidential process or in some serious circumstances by formal investigation. If a health system error is revealed, then steps are taken to have the error rectified. The OHR refers matters of professional conduct and judgement to the Medical Board or other registration Boards as only they can take disciplinary action. Registration Boards refer complaints that are suitable to the OHR.

The OHR can be contacted at:

17th floor, St Martins Tower
44 St Georges Terrace, Perth
GPO Box B61, PERTH WA 6838
Free call number: 1800 813 583
Telephone: (08) 9323 0600
Facsimile: (08) 9221 3675

HOW YOU CAN HELP

There are a number of things patients can do that will help the hospital to provide better care.

Information you should provide

- Tell hospital staff about your medical history and that of your family.
- Advise hospital staff about any treatment or any medication you were receiving when you were admitted to hospital.
- Tell hospital staff about any change in your condition, including any problems you may have with any treatment you are receiving.
- Tell hospital staff about any special needs you have, particularly those with a cultural or religious significance.
- Follow treatment instructions or let hospital staff know if you are unwilling or unable to do so.
- Tell hospital staff if you require more information, or if there is anything you do not understand or are worried about.

Consideration for staff and other patients

- Try to keep appointments. If you are unable to keep an appointment, advise the hospital as soon as possible to allow the appointment to be rescheduled.
- Be aware and considerate of the needs of other patients. Be courteous and respect the role of hospital staff. Where people behave aggressively and hospital staff feel threatened, then they have the right to withdraw care.
- Be aware that hospitals have a special role in the training of health care professionals. Such training is essential to the continuation and improvement of Western Australian health care services. Your treatment may provide an opportunity for such training.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The Western Australian Public Patients' Hospital Charter is also summarised in a short pamphlet which answers common questions about these rights.

To order free copies of these publications or for more information about patients' rights, you can contact the Department of Health at:

Department of Health, Western Australia
Executive Services
189 Royal Street
East Perth WA 6004
Telephone: (08) 9222 4222

If you have further queries, then please contact the relevant hospital. For the Perth Metropolitan area, the contact details for hospitals are:

Armadale Kelmscott Memorial Hospital

3056 Albany Highway, ARMADALE WA 6112

Telephone: (08) 9391 2000

Bentley Hospital

Mills Street, BENTLEY WA 6102

Telephone: (08) 9334 3666

Fremantle Hospital

Alma Street, FREMANTLE WA 6160

Telephone: (08) 9431 3333

**Graylands Selby-Lemnos and Special
Care Health Services**

Brockway Road, MOUNT CLAREMONT WA 6010

Telephone: (08) 9347 6600

Joondalup Health Campus

formerly Wanneroo Hospital

Shenton Avenue, JOONDALUP WA 6027

Telephone: (08) 9400 9400

Kalamunda District Community Hospital

Elizabeth Street, KALAMUNDA WA 6076

Telephone: (08) 9293 2122

King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women

374 Bagot Road, SUBIACO WA 6008

Telephone: (08) 9340 2222

Osborne Park Hospital

Osborne Place, STIRLING WA 6021

Telephone: (08) 9346 8000

Peel Health Campus *formerly Mandurah Hospital*

Lakes Road (cnr Murdoch Rd), MANDURAH WA 6210

Telephone: (08) 9531 8000

Princess Margaret Hospital for Children

Roberts Road, SUBIACO WA 6008

Telephone: (08) 9340 8222

Rockingham/Kwinana District Hospital

Elanora Drive, ROCKINGHAM WA 6168

Telephone: (08) 9592 0600

Rottnest Island Nursing Post

ROTTNEST WA 6161

Telephone: (08) 9292 5030

Royal Perth Hospital

Wellington Street, PERTH WA 6000

Telephone: (08) 9224 2244

Royal Perth Rehabilitation Hospital

Selby Street, SHENTON PARK WA 6008

Telephone: (08) 9382 7171

Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital

Hospital Avenue, NEDLANDS WA 6009

Telephone: (08) 9346 3333

Swan District Hospital

Eveline Road, MIDDLE SWAN WA 6056

Telephone: (08) 9347 5244

*Further information on these hospitals can be found at
www.health.wa.gov.au/services*



Department of Health
Government of Western Australia

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