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TITLE: Patients' Rights and Responsibilities

PURPOSE: To provide consistent language and guidelines for each of The University of Vermont Health Network (UVMHN) hospital located in Vermont that meets regulatory and legal requirements.

The University of Vermont Health Network is committed to ongoing, careful and meaningful action in the effort to create a culture that is equitable, diverse and inclusive for our employees, patients and the communities we serve. This includes respect for all regardless of age, race, skin color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, culture, place of birth, national origin, HIV status, religion, marital status, language, socioeconomic status, physical or mental disability, protected veteran status or obligation for service in the armed forces. Consistent with Vermont laws that give patients specific legal rights, while you're at University of Vermont Medical Center:

- We will treat you with consideration and respect, including calling you by your preferred name and pronouns.
- An attending physician will coordinate your care from admission through discharge. The attending physician or delegate will explain your diagnosis, possible treatment, expected outcomes, and continuing health care needs to you or, if that is not possible, to a family member or person close to you.
- Except in emergencies, we will treat you only if you give us your permission. We will offer the information necessary to make an informed decision, including the medical consequences of refusal of care.
- You have the right to refuse treatment, except in exceptional circumstances.
- We will respect your privacy. You can always have another person present during an examination. Only people directly involved in your care will be present unless you give others permission to be there.
- You can wear your own clothes, except when they interfere with your medical care.
- Your medical information will be kept confidential. In general, we will only share it with others if you give us permission or as otherwise permitted by law.
- The people taking care of you will tell you who they are and about any professional roles they hold relevant to your care. You can also ask to know who is responsible for a particular treatment or procedure.
- Consistent with your care needs, we will try to accommodate your request for another room in our hospital.
- You may be moved to another hospital only if medically permissible, the other hospital accepts you for transfer, and you have been given complete information about the need for and alternatives to transfer.
- We will ask your permission if any part of your care involves research. You can always say no.
- We will use restraints or seclusion only if they are necessary to ensure physical safety, and if no less restrictive intervention is possible.
- Family and friends are an important part of your recovery, and visiting hours are usually flexible. For children and dying patients, families may visit any time.

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- We will provide an interpreter to facilitate effective and collaborative communication, as needed and/or requested. This applies if you are Deaf or hearing impaired, an English Language Learner, or in need of Health Literacy support.
- We will treat your pain promptly and professionally.
- We will tell you about any hospice and palliative care services that may be available.
- We will post the number of nursing staff working on your unit. We will also post the number of patients there.
- You will have access to our resources, including ethics and palliative care consultations, if you need help in any way, including making difficult health care decisions.
- Your hospital bill will be understandable and specific. We will provide you with information about financial assistance that may be available, and about our billing and collection practices.

As a patient, to ensure you get the best care possible in a trusting clinical environment, it is your responsibility to:

- Help us get to know you. We understand it can be hard to talk about private health issues, but we hope you will feel comfortable sharing your story with us. As health care professionals, we are here to provide the best possible care, without judgment.
- Let us know if you have questions or concerns about your care. We want to know so we can help. If you don't understand something or if you have any questions about your care, please let us know.
- Keep your appointments. This will allow us to give you our full attention. If you cannot keep your appointment, please let us know ahead of time so we can help someone else instead.
- Treat others with respect. It can be stressful to be sick, or to have a loved one who is sick. We care, and we want to help. In return we ask that you be respectful toward other patients, visitors and all staff. Disrespectful or threatening behavior will not be tolerated and could lead to termination of non-emergent care and/or separation from the clinical site. This includes but is not limited to disrespectful reference to a person's age, race, skin color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, culture, place of birth, national origin, HIV status, religion, marital status, language, socioeconomic status, physical or mental disability, protected veteran status or obligation for service in the armed forces.
- Respect and adhere to the policies restricting items brought into the hospital. These restrictions are designed to help keep you safe.

It is not our practice to reassign clinicians, learners or staff based on patient requests that are motivated by the identities of the clinician, learner or staff, such as, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression. In selected circumstances, we will give careful consideration to clinician, learner or staff reassignment based on the patient's religion, prior history of trauma and/or other personal factors that motivate a request that is not inappropriately biased. Careful consideration of factors such as clinical urgency, staffing availability, engagement with support services and the details of the request will be made on a case-by-case basis.

If you have any questions about your rights and responsibilities, ask your physician, nurse, social worker, case manager, or other hospital representative.

QUESTIONS and COMPLAINTS

If you have questions or complaints about your stay, please contact our Patient and Family Advocacy office. They will listen to your concerns and work with you to address them.

Patient and Family Advocacy
111 Colchester Avenue
Burlington, VT 05401
802-847-3500
PatientandFamilyAdvocacy@uvmhealth.org

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You can always contact the following agencies for assistance:

Vermont Board of Medical Practice
Vermont Department of Health
108 Cherry Street, P.O. Box 70
Burlington, VT 05402-0070
802-657-4220 or toll-free 800-745-7371
http://healthvermont.gov/hc/med_board/bmp.aspx *(Concerns about physicians)*

Vermont Board of Nursing
Office of Professional Regulation
89 Main Street, 3rd Floor
Montpelier, VT 05620-3402
802-828-2396
<https://www.sec.state.vt.us/professional-regulation/professions/nursing.aspx> *(Concerns about nurses)*

Vermont Secretary of State
Office of Professional Regulation
89 Main Street, 3rd Floor
Montpelier, VT 05620-3402
802-828-1505
<https://www.sec.state.vt.us/professional-regulation.aspx> *(Concerns about licensed health care professionals other than physicians or nurses)*

Vermont Board of Health
Vermont Department of Health
108 Cherry Street, P.O. Box 70
Burlington, VT 05402-0070
Toll-free 800-464-4343 *(Concerns about facilities)*

Division of Licensing and Protection
HC 2 South
280 State Drive
Waterbury, VT 05671-2060
Main phone number: 802-241-0480
Main Fax: 802-241-0343
Survey & Certification Intake/Complaint: 1-888-700-5330
Direct Fax for Complaint Unit: 1-802-241-0383
<https://dlp.vermont.gov/survey-certification-web-inquiry-form>
ahs.dailscintake@vermont.gov *(Concerns about regulatory compliance)*

The Joint Commission
One Renaissance Boulevard
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181
https://www.jointcommission.org/resources/patient-safety-topics/report-a-patient-safety-concern-or-complaint/?utm_content=dm-o-56 *(Concerns about hospital quality or safety)*

OTHER RESOURCES

The University of Vermont Network hospitals and agency have many resources available to help you and your family. Our main telephone number is 844-886-4325 You can also call individual departments for help:

Advance directives (including living wills and durable powers of attorney for health care)

- Call Clinical Ethics office at 802-847-4883

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Clinical ethics consultations

- Call 802-847-4883 @ UVMHC or call the operator at 802-847-0000 and ask them to page the Clinical Ethics Consultation Service

Medical records

- Contact your attending physician or call Health Information Management Department department 802-847-2846

Nurse staffing and patient census information

- Ask at the nursing station on your unit or call 802-847-0000

Concerns about patient abuse

- Call Case Management & Social Work 802-847-3553

Language Access Services

- Call Network Language Access Services Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. requests should be submitted via e-mail to InterpreterRequest@UVMHealth.org. for short notice or urgent requests, call 802-847-5826.
- Requests outside of normal business hours (Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.) should be submitted by calling Provider Access Services (PAS) at 847-2700

General concerns about care

Call of Patient & Family Advocacy 802-847-3500
customerservice@uvmhealth.org

Financial assistance or questions about bills

- Call [802-847-8000 or 1-800-639-2719

If you would like a complete copy of Vermont's laws on hospital patients' rights, more detailed information about any of your rights or responsibilities under the UVM Medical Center's policies, or more information about our services or resources, please visit our web site at <https://www.uvmhealth.org/medcenter/patients-and-visitors/patients/patient-rights/patient-bill-of-rights> or call the Patient & Family Advocacy office at 802-847-3500.

Reviewers for all local policies:

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