
S T A T E M E N T O F P A T I E N T R I G H T S

The North Carolina Medical Board has endorsed the following statement of Patient Rights for all medical practices in the state. We consider it a part of our standard of conduct as well.

1. The patient has the right to receive information from physicians, and to discuss the benefits, risks, and costs of appropriate treatment alternatives. Patients should receive guidance from their physicians as to the optimal course of action. Patients are also entitled to obtain copies or summaries of their medical records, to have their questions answered, to be advised of potential conflicts of interest that their physician might have, and to receive independent professional opinions.
 2. The patient has the right to make decisions regarding the health care that his or her physician recommends. Accordingly, patients may accept or refuse any recommended medical treatment.
 3. The patient has the right to courtesy, respect, dignity, responsiveness, and timely attention to his or her needs.
 4. The patient has the right to confidentiality. The physician should not reveal confidential communications or information without the consent of the patient, unless provided for by law or by the need to protect the welfare of the individual or the public interest.
 5. The patient has the right to continuity of health care. The physician has an obligation to cooperate in the coordination of medically indicated care with other health care providers treating the patient. The physician may not discontinue treatment of a patient as long as further treatment is medically indicated, without giving the patient reasonable assistance and sufficient opportunity to make alternative arrangements for care.
 6. The patient has a basic right to have available adequate health care. Physicians, along with the rest of society, should continue to work toward this goal. Fulfillment of this right is dependent on society providing resources so that we deprive no patient of necessary care because of an inability to pay for the care. Physicians should continue their traditional assumption of a part of the responsibility for the medical care of those who cannot afford essential health care. Physicians should advocate for patients in dealing with third parties when appropriate.
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