



## PATIENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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### Policy Statement

People's Health Centers is a health care delivery system that protects patients' *rights*. As such, it is reasonable to expect and encourage patients to assume reasonable *responsibilities*. Greater involvement by patients in their care increases the likelihood of achieving the best outcomes and helps support quality improvement and a cost-conscious environment.

### Rationale

In providing patients with a set of rights and protections, People's Health Centers will provide a written set of patient rights and responsibilities to each patient, communicate those rights and responsibilities online and have a set of those beliefs on display at each location. Responsibilities create benefits not only for patients and their families but also for the health care system and society as a whole. Improved health status reduces medical costs for the patient, the payer, and the community.

People's Health Centers is dedicated to providing the best in health care. Along with technical expertise, we want to provide a positive patient experience. We respect patient rights and understand patient's responsibility as a partner in their care, these **principles and general rights**:

**Information Disclosure.** Patients have the right to accurate and easily understood information about their health plan, health care professionals, and health care facilities. If a patient speaks another language, has a physical or mental disability, or does not understand something, assistance will be provided so patients can make informed health care decisions.

**Choice of Providers and Plans.** Patients have the right to a choice of health care providers that is sufficient to provide them with access to appropriate high-quality health care.

**Access to Emergency Services.** If patients have severe pain, an injury, or sudden illness that convinces them that their health is in serious jeopardy, they have the right to receive screening and stabilization emergency services whenever and wherever needed, without prior authorization or financial penalty.

**Participation in Treatment Decisions.** Patients have the right to know their treatment options and to participate in decisions about their care. Parents, guardians, family members, or other individuals that they designate can represent them if they cannot make their own decisions.

**Respect and Nondiscrimination.** Patients have a right to considerate, respectful and nondiscriminatory care from People's Health Centers doctors, health plan representatives, and other health care providers.

**Confidentiality of Health Information.** Patients have the right to talk in confidence with health care providers and to have their health care information protected. Patients also have the right to review and obtain a copy of their medical record and request that their physician change the record if it is not accurate, relevant, or complete.

**Complaints and Appeals.** Patients have the right to a fair, fast, and objective review of any complaint they have against their health plan, doctors, health center or other health care personnel. This includes complaints about waiting times, operating hours, the conduct of health care personnel, and the adequacy of health care facilities.

### Specific Patient Rights

People's Health Centers is committed to providing you with respectful care as we meet your health care needs. For this reason, we want you to have a summary of **your rights** as a patient.

- You have a right to considerate and respectful care.
- You have the right to participate in the development and implementation of your plan of care.
- You will not be denied access to care due to race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability, or source of payment.
- You have the right to information about your diagnosis, condition, and treatment in terms that you can understand.
- You have the right to refuse treatment to the extent permitted by law and to be informed of the possible consequences of the refusal.
- You may consent or refuse to participate in experimental treatment or research.
- You are entitled to be free from all forms of abuse or harassment.
- You have the right to make or have a representative make informed decisions about your care.
- You have the right to formulate advance directives and have them followed.
- You have the right to appropriate assessment and management of pain.
- You are entitled to information about rules and regulations affecting your care or conduct.
- You have the right to know the names and professional titles of your physicians and caregivers.
- You have the right to know that People's Health Centers is a federally qualified community health center.
- Resident physicians, student nurses, and other supervised health care providers in training may become involved in your care. You have the right to ask if any of your health care providers are in training.
- You can request a change of provider or second opinion if you choose.
- You have the right to personal privacy and to receive care in a safe environment.
- You have the right to a prompt and reasonable response to any request for services within the capacity of the health care team.
- You have the right to express concerns or grievances regarding your care to enabling center staff.
- The confidentiality of your clinical and personal records will be maintained.
- You have the right to see your medical record within the limits of the law.
- You have the right to an explanation of all items on your bill.

### **YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES**

**As a patient, you and /or your representative are expected to:**

- Provide complete and accurate information about all matters pertaining to your health, including present condition, past illnesses, medications, natural products and vitamins, and any other matters that pertain to your health.
- Provide complete and accurate information including your full name, address, home telephone number, date of birth, Social Security number, insurance carrier, and employer when it is necessary.
- Provide your doctor or the health center with a copy of your advance directive if you have one and want it to apply during your admission.
- Ask questions when you do not understand what your doctor or other member of your health care team tells you about your care, diagnosis or treatment. You should inform your doctor if you anticipate problems in following prescribed treatment. Inform your doctor if you are considering alternative therapies.
- Keep appointments, be on time for your appointments, and call as soon as possible if you cannot keep your appointments.

- Ask your doctor or nurse what to expect regarding pain and pain management, and work with them to develop a pain management plan. You should tell your doctor or nurse about any changes in condition, symptoms or even worries you have about taking pain medication.
- Leave valuables at home and bring only those items necessary during your health center stay.
- Abide by all health center rules and regulations.
  - Comply with the **NO SMOKING** policy.
  - Comply with the visitor policies to ensure the rights and comfort of all patients. Be considerate of noise levels, privacy, and safety. Weapons are prohibited on premises.
  - Treat health center staff, other patients, and visitors with courtesy and respect.
- Provide complete and accurate information for registration and work with the health center and billing office to make payment arrangements.
  - Know your health insurance status/coverage and related policies concerning required pre-approvals, proof of income, co-pays, covered services, admissions, and the health center and doctors covered by your insurance provider.
  - Pay your health center bills in a timely manner and/or make arrangements.
  - Ask questions of your insurance company or health center and physician billing departments if there is a financial issue that you do not understand.
- Take responsibility for maximizing healthy habits, such as exercising, not smoking, and eating a healthy diet.
- Become involved in specific health care decisions.
- Work collaboratively with health care providers in developing and carrying out agreed-upon treatment plans.
- Disclose relevant information and clearly communicate wants and needs.
- Use the health center's internal complaint processes to address concerns that may arise.
- Avoid knowingly spreading disease.
- Recognize the reality of risks and limits of the science of medical care and the human fallibility of the health care professional.
- Be aware of a health care provider's obligation to be reasonably efficient and equitable in providing care to other patients and the community.
- Become knowledgeable about his or her insurance coverage and options (when available) including all covered benefits, limitations, and exclusions, rules regarding use of network providers, coverage and referral rules, appropriate processes to secure additional information, and the process to appeal coverage decisions.
- Act in a considerate and cooperative manner; show respect for other patients and health workers.
- Make a good-faith effort to meet financial obligations.
- Abide by administrative and operational procedures of insurers, health plans, health care providers, and Government health benefit programs.
- Report wrongdoing and fraud to appropriate resources or legal authorities.
- You are responsible for following the instructions and advice of your health care team.

## **OUR RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **As a patient at People People's Health Centers you can expect:**

- Considerate, respectful, and compassionate care regardless of your age, race, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability.
  - Attention when you request help, with the understanding that other patients may have more urgent needs.
  - To be addressed by your proper name.
  - Care provided in a safe setting.
  - Care provided by concerned staff committed to pain prevention and management.

- Coordination of sign language or foreign language interpretation services, if you need them.
- To be told the names of the doctors, nurses, and other health team members directly involved in your care.
- Information about your care, diagnosis, treatment, and expected result to be provided by your attending physician.
  - Information on the planned course of treatment, including an explanation about procedures.
  - Information on the risks, benefits, and alternatives of your treatment.
  - Information about pain and pain relief measures.
  - Freedom from the use of seclusion or restraints in any form unless clinically required.
- To make decisions about your plan of care before and during treatment, when medically possible.
- To refuse a recommended treatment to the extent permitted by law, and to be informed of the medical consequences of your refusal.
- That you have the right to leave the health center against the advice of your doctor. If you choose to do so, the health center and doctors will not be responsible for any medical consequences that may occur.
- That if you are asked to participate in a research study related to your illness, you can decline to participate in or withdraw from that study at any time. Your refusal to participate will not affect your health center care.
- Within the confines of the law, all communications and records pertaining to your care will be treated as confidential. You have the right to review or obtain a copy of your medical record according to health center policy, and to have the information explained as needed by a physician. You have the right to add additional information to your medical record by contacting the Health Information Management Department.
- To be able to make health care decisions in advance.
  - If you provide us with a copy of your advance directive, we will respect your wishes to the extent permitted by law and health center policy.
  - If you do not have an advance directive, we will provide you with information about an advance directive, and assist you in completing one, if desired.
  - **BJK People's Health Centers does NOT honor advance directives within the health center. In cases of medical emergency when resuscitation is medically warranted, the health center will resuscitate the patient, transfer the patient to an appropriate higher level of care and transfer the patient's paperwork (including any available advance directives).**
- To be informed of care options when health center care is not available.
- To question the accuracy of your health center and physician bills. You have the right to request a summarized list of charges and to obtain information about those charges. You can expect to be informed about any payments made to your bills.
- Assistance from staff in resolving complaints or grievances regarding your treatment.

### Questions or Concerns?

If you and your family share a concern or complaint, your care will not be affected in any way. The first step is to discuss your concerns with your doctor, nurse, or provider of care. If you have concerns that are not resolved, please contact the Compliance Hotline at 314.367.7848 x 1223. Should you continue to remain concerned after contacting that Hotline, you may contact the Corporate Compliance Officer at 314.367.7848 x 1145, email [dbuchannon@phcenters.com](mailto:dbuchannon@phcenters.com) and lastly contact the Joint Commission's Office of Quality Monitoring by calling 1-800-994-6610 or e-mail [complaint@jointcommission.org](mailto:complaint@jointcommission.org). For Laboratory concerns contact: Missouri's CLIA (Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act) Division at 1-573-751-6318. For Mammography concerns contact: American College of Radiology, 1891 Preston White Drive, Reston, VA 20191-4397 or (703) 648-8900.