

About the Charter

Everyone who is seeking or receiving care in the Australian health system has certain rights regarding the nature of that care.

The Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights allows patients, consumers, families, carers and providers to share an understanding of the rights of people receiving healthcare.

We all have an important part to play in achieving healthcare rights and contributing to a safe and high quality healthcare system. A genuine partnership between patients, consumers and healthcare providers is important so that everyone achieves the best possible outcomes.

Healthcare providers are aware that in some circumstances, your ability to interact with the healthcare system may be restricted. Where possible they will alert family or support services about your circumstances if they consider that you need assistance.

For more information on the Charter and how you can contribute to achieving healthcare rights visit www.safetyandquality.gov.au

Contact us

Visit our website

www.oho.qld.gov.au

Call

133 OHO (133 646)

Email

Health service complaints
complaints@oho.qld.gov.au

General enquiries and questions
info@oho.qld.gov.au

Write

PO Box 13281 George Street
Brisbane Qld 4003

Make an appointment

Call 133 OHO (133 646) and make an appointment to talk to us in person at our Brisbane office.

Fax

(07) 3319 6350

The Charter is an initiative of the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care and is supported in Queensland by the Office of the Health Ombudsman.



Office of the
**HEALTH
OMBUDSMAN**

Listen. Respond. Resolve.

The Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights

A guide for
**health service
providers**



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AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION
ON SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTH CARE

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Achieving healthcare rights

Healthcare rights are essential in making sure that, wherever and whenever care is provided, it is safe and of a high quality.

Your healthcare rights

The Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights describes the rights of everyone using the health system. You are encouraged to read the Charter, or have it explained to you, and to discuss the Charter with your healthcare provider or family or carer. Healthcare staff should be able to advise you how to obtain further information about your rights.

The Charter

There are seven healthcare rights that all Australians are entitled to.

Access - a right to access healthcare

To help consumers access adequate and timely care, consider their whole treatment needs. Tell them how to access continuing treatments and out of hours services, and refer people to appropriate services.

Discuss with the consumer, family and carer where they can access health services, so they understand the choices they have and any constraints that exist.

Safety - a right to safe and high quality care

Provide healthcare services with professional skill, care and competence. Be actively involved in patient safety systems. Ensure the healthcare you provide is based on evidence of safety and effectiveness.

Respect - a right to be shown respect, dignity and consideration

Deliver healthcare in a way that respects the consumer's culture, beliefs, values and characteristics like age and gender. Treat consumers with dignity and compassion. Act in line with ethical standards and professional codes of conduct.

Communication - a right to be informed about services, treatment, options and costs in a clear and open way

Tell consumers about their proposed treatment and options in a way they can easily understand. Be alert to any signs of confusion and act quickly to clear up any misunderstandings. Be open with consumers when plans change or things go wrong.

If you are experiencing difficulties with communication, ask the consumer if they would like a carer or family member involved. Request support services, such as qualified interpreters, when needed. Interpreter services are free and can be provided in person or by phone.

Participation - a right to be included in decisions and choices about care

Encourage consumers to participate in decisions about their care. Ensure consumers understand their treatment and its consequences. Inform consumers of their right to refuse treatment or withdraw consent at any time.

Consider the consumer's circumstances when providing care, and understand their needs may change over time.

Privacy - a right to privacy and confidentiality of provided information

Be sensitive to consumer privacy. Ensure the consumer's information is only shared with appropriate healthcare professionals.

Provide consumers access to their records if requested, and discuss the information with them.

Comment - a right to comment on care and have concerns addressed

Encourage consumers to tell you about problems with their care and be attentive to their concerns.

Tell consumers how they can provide feedback and make suggestions on ways services could be improved.

Use your organisation's complaint resolution policies and processes, and look for healthcare improvements that come from interactions with consumers, their families and carers.

How we can help

If you feel your rights have not been respected or you have concerns about your healthcare, talk with your healthcare provider as soon as possible.

If you're not satisfied with your provider's response, or feel uncomfortable talking with them directly then contact the Office of the Health Ombudsman. We are Queensland's independent health service complaints agency.

We work with healthcare consumers and health service providers to resolve complaints as quickly as possible.