

Content

The Charter contains information on rights and responsibilities in six areas: Access, Communication and Participation; Confidentiality; Respect; Safety; and Comments and Complaints.

There are also sections describing what you can do if your rights have not been respected, and where you can get further information and support.

A leaflet will be produced to summarise this information further, and factsheets will provide practical examples of your rights and responsibilities in the six areas described above.

Question 1

- a) Do you think the level of detail in the Charter is useful and appropriate?
- b) Is there any information not included in the Charter that should be covered?
- c) What would make it better?

Question 1 Answer

The document is, on the whole, clearly written and comprehensive. It would however, benefit from the inclusion of more detail on an individual's responsibilities in managing their own health (for example, avoiding behaviours that are harmful to their health and taking up health screening opportunities etc).

The charter might also benefit from the inclusion of information around the NHS providing appropriate food and choice and assistance to eat where necessary; with a responsibility on patients to cooperate with treatment regimens to which they have agreed, including diet.

Accessibility

We want the Charter to be as accessible as possible. This means that the language is easy to understand, and it is set out in a way that is easy to read.

Question 2

- a) Do you think the information in the Charter is written in a way that is easy to understand?
- b) Does the format of the Charter make it easy to find the information you need?
- c) What would make it better?

The information is presented and written in an accessible way. The document makes use of text boxes however, and these may pose difficulties to individuals that use screen readers.

It is important to note that certain groups, such as children and people with certain disabilities and mental health issues, may need to be provided with assistance to ensure that they fully understand the content of the document and their rights that are outlined within it. Provision of the document alone is insufficient for these groups and arrangements to meet their needs must be considered.

Design

The Charter is presented in A4 format, with a different colour and icon for each section.

Question 3

Do you have any comments on the design of the Charter?

Question 3 Answer

No.

Availability

The Patient Rights (Scotland) Act 2011 says Health Boards must make copies of the Charter available without charge to patients, staff and members of the public.

The Charter will also be published online, and supporting information such as a summary leaflet and fact sheets will be available.

We are considering what the most appropriate alternative formats for the Charter or the supporting information is. For example, different languages, large print or audio may be produced. We would normally make available alternative formats on request.

Question 4:

- a) What do you think is the most appropriate way for people to get a copy of the Charter?
- b) Do you agree that we should only make alternative formats available on request?

Question 4 Answer

Although in many cases an electronic only copy of the charter may be appropriate there will be certain groups, such as older people, where this is not appropriate. Consideration should be given to ensuring that hard copies are available in key public facing locations (such as hospitals and surgeries). These hard copy versions should conform to accessibility requirements in terms of the fonts used, the size of the text and the colours used.

It is important that the website hosting the charter is itself conforms to accessibility standards and is compatible with screen readers etc. Consideration should also be given to hosting alternative versions of the document on the website (e.g. an easy read version for people with learning disabilities, a children and young person's version, large print version, an audio version, a video for sign language users etc).

Where alternative hard copy formats are required it is appropriate for them to be made available on request.

Rights and Responsibilities

The Charter outlines responsibilities as well as rights. These are things that people using health services can do to help the NHS in Scotland work effectively and deliver quality care and treatment.

Question 5

- a) Do you have any comments on the balance of rights and responsibilities set out in the Charter?
- b) What would make it better?

Question 5 Answer

As per the response to question 1, further detail around an individual's responsibilities in managing their own health should be included (for example, avoiding behaviours that are harmful to their health and taking up health screening opportunities etc).

General

Question 6

Do you have any additional comments to make about the Charter of Patient Rights and Responsibilities?

Question 6 Answer

The document, as it stands, fails to identify the rights and responsibilities of children within NHS Scotland. Whilst it is appreciated that there may be separate guidance in this respect, as presented, it would appear to be an omission. This should be remedied by appropriate cross-references to relevant guidance relating to children.