

Content

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

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

Question 1 Answer

1a.

Scotland's population is made up of people/persons obviously the majority [I hope] at any time are not in need of medical advice or care so this document will not be of specific interest. People who are well will glance at the charter and file it in their minds for future reference when it is needed.

It will be useful and relevant when a person becomes a PATIENT. When does a person become a patient?

I believe a person becomes a patient when he or she goes to an appointment at a surgery or to a hospital appointment. It is when that person becomes a PATIENT that the greatest need for information is required. So how are patients, feeling vulnerable to be made aware of the charter and its content and how it will affect them? Large eye-catching notices (A1 or A2) illustrating main points should be displayed on the walls, in all waiting areas (surgeries, hospitals et al) where most patients are gathered, prior to their appointments. Copies of the charter (A4 or A5) could be available - either offered by a member of the medical staff or on request.

Other areas where such information would be appropriate would be in hospital wards, Maggie's Centres, dentists, optometrists, care homes and by voluntary associations, Red Cross, Citizens' Advice Bureau and many others.

1b.

The role of carers is paramount and multifaceted but it is short-changed in the charter and is in need of clarification with detailed advocacy.

1c.

Explanation of 12 weeks' waiting time a patient might assume that that refers to each and every procedure at what stage does the 12 weeks start - what are the exceptions? Guarantees? Staff move on so how is, hopefully, the smooth running of the workforce maintained? How and by whom are such possible difficulties to be collated if/when future guarantees might have to be modified?

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?

2a.

If it is a well person reading it..... yes. If it is a vulnerable patient it would be reassuring initially.

2b.

Generally yes.....but for specificity less so which is understandable. I should think that many patients will only realise there is such a charter if it is brought to their notice or when a copy will hopefully be given out at the surgery or hospital.....

2c.

Better in the sense that it reaches more patients and carers rather than the general population initially? In that case there could be articles by medical/health correspondents in Scottish newspapers telling readers how to get a copy. Websites too.

Distributing it in the places where most patients are gathered - and in need of up to date information in surgeries and hospital waiting areas and very importantly, carers.

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

3.

The design is acceptable.....Is A4 preferable to A5?

When the final document is decided I hope that a change of font and colours highlights the difference which I hope will have been thrashed out between 'Rights' and law/statute...!!!!!!

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

4a. Initially it is patients and carers who should have copies before persons so that means the best method would be at surgery or hospital appointments and for carers or other relevant places Maggie's Centres, etc.

4b.

On a surgery website people/patients could request a copy or the surgery could download a copy including other language versions.

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

5a./5b.

The word "Rights" is bandied around these days and many persons/patients may have preconceived ideas about its meaning in the charter!

So in the document what is the definition of 'Rights'?

One definition of 'Rights' - legal, social, or ethical principles of freedom or entitlement.

If this doubt is not clarified what interpretation might some patients put on such ambivalence?

General

Question 6

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

Question 6 Answer

6.

The emphasis in this Charter seems to rest on patients..... rightly so.....but surely, not totally . It depends on a similar commitment from others in the NHS -staff in hospitals, care homes, ambulance staff and staff in prisons . First step I would ask that a more equivalent commitment and responsibility be allotted to General Practices.

Some have already got a 'Practice Charter'[Dr Ross and Partners in Leven]. This is a statement of aims and objectives and responsibilities allied with those expected of patients , I am sure it is on public display on the walls of the waiting area of the surgery.....if not what is the use of it?

Such an A2 or A3 'charter' should be on the walls of every general surgery in Scotland incorporating the most important parts of the Charter of Patients' Rights and Responsibilities. Patients in surgery and hospital waiting areas are a captive audience , in need of some reassurance and support while they are waiting.....

Added to that every surgery should have its website up to date , including change of staff and other relevant data,including the removal of out of date websites.....!