

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
US ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY
FORT HUACHUCA, ARIZONA 85613-7079

MEDDAC Memorandum
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Medical Services
RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PATIENTS

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1. **HISTORY.** This issue publishes a revision of this publication.
2. **PURPOSE.** To establish the patient rights and responsibilities for all patients treated at Raymond W. Bliss Army Health Center (RWBAHC) and all outlying clinics.
3. **SCOPE.** This publication applies to all areas of MEDDAC health care.
4. **REFERENCES.**
 - 4.1 Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Ambulatory Care, current edition.
 - 4.2 MEDDAC Memo 40-22, Medical Treatment of Minors.
 - 4.3 MEDDAC Memo 40-42, Consent for Medical Treatment.
 - 4.4 MEDDAC Memo 40-136, Organizational Ethics.
 - 4.5 MEDDAC Memo 40-140, Advance Medical Directives and Advance Consent for Organ Donations.
 - 4.6 MEDDAC Memo 40-163, Pain Management.
 - 4.7 MEDDAC Memo 380-3, MEDDAC/DENTAC Security Plan.
 - 4.8 MEDDAC Pamphlet 315, Patient Rights and Responsibilities.

*This publication supersedes prior editions of MEDDAC Memo 40-49,

5. GENERAL.

5.1 This organization recognizes that a patient has the fundamental right to receive medical care or treatment in a facility, which safeguards their personal dignity and respects their cultural, psychosocial, and religious values.

5.2 We hold that this facility's treatment of our patients will have a significant impact on their experience and response to care.

6 PATIENT RIGHTS: RWBAHC respects and demonstrates support for patients' rights as follows:

6.1 Confidentiality. Federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability(HIPAA) and Army regulations address the requirement to protect the confidentiality of patient information. The patient is informed of our facility's policy on confidentiality at the time of entering into treatment.

6.2 Privacy. The patient's right to privacy is respected at all times.

6.3 Security. Patients have the right to feel safe and secure at RWBAHC. All areas in which patients receive care are secure. MEDDAC/DENTAC Security Plan.

6.4 Communication.

6.4.1 RWBAHC respects the patient's right to and need for effective communication. For example, patients have a right to know who is providing their care. All staff members wear picture identification tags and will introduce themselves to patients, providing their name and if applicable their rank.

6.4.2 The organization's Patient Rights and Responsibilities is prominently displayed in poster form in the various patient care areas, in pamphlet form in the various patient care areas, and provided upon request from the Patient Advocate(Appendix A).

6.4.3 Documents such as consent forms, patient rights and responsibilities statements and educational materials are available in English. However, patients who have difficulty

communicating in the English language will be offered translation and interpreter services and sign language services for the hearing impaired (Interpretive services are provided by Language Line. The phone number for the service is 1-866-874-3972 with MTF Code 544127.) MEDDAC Memo 600-4, Language Interpreters, contains information to access this contracted service.

6.4.4. During emergency situations, RWBAHC will maintain flashing emergency lights to help warn the hearing impaired. Also, each clinic has employees who will ensure that all physically and mentally challenged patients, including the hearing impaired, are safe and properly cared for.

6.5 Access, Transfer, and Continuity of Care.

6.5.1 Physical Access: RWBAHC will maintain ramps and doors that are easily opened for patients using wheelchairs, walkers or other equipment.

6.5.2 When this facility cannot provide the care a patient requires, the staff will fully inform the patient of his or her needs and the alternatives available for care.

6.5.3 Patients may be transferred to another facility only after explanation of the need for the transfer and acceptance by the new facility.

6.6 Resolution of complaints. Patients and their families will be informed of their right to make complaints and the procedures for resolving their complaints. Patients are encouraged to address any concerns directly to the clinic staff or clinic leadership. The complaint process involves the Patient Advocate who reviews the complaint and consults with the appropriate staff. Issues that cannot be resolved in this manner can be referred to the senior leadership for assistance and resolution.

6.7 Considerate care that respects the patient's personal values and beliefs. RWBAHC's staff will respect a patient's personal dignity, cultural, psychosocial, spiritual and personal values.

6.8. Advance Directives. Adult patients have the right to formulate an advance directive concerning their decisions about medical care. MEDDAC Memo 40-140, Advance Medical Directives and Advance Consent for Organ Donations, addresses the

procedures for advanced directives. Each clinic area will have information sheets on advanced directives available to patients. Patients may also contact the Patient Administration Division or the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate for assistance.

6.9 Ethical Behavior. Patients have the right to participate in discussions regarding ethical issues impacting their care. RWBAHC operates under strict military code of conduct and ethics. Ethical issues are addressed in Memo 40-136 Organizational Ethics. Ethical behaviors and concerns are further monitored by the Ethics Committee.

6.10 Payment. Information about fee schedules and payment policies are available to patients and are maintained by the Unified Business Office (UBO), within the Resource Management Division. Conflicts over billings generated by the UBO will be addressed with this office. Other billing issues will be addressed with the Tricare Service Center (TSC) staff or the Health Benefits Advisor, which falls under the Managed Care Division. RWBAHC does not have a financial interest in outside health care agencies; nor does it have any potential conflicts of interests.

6.11 Making informed care decisions.

6.11.1 MEDDAC Memo 40-22, Medical Treatment of Minors; and, MEDDAC Memo 40-42, Consent for Medical Treatment; govern giving informed consent and making decisions for medical care or services. Staff members will clearly explain any proposed treatments or procedures to the patient, and when appropriate, the family. This explanation will include: Potential benefits and drawbacks, potential problems related to recuperation, likelihood of success, alternatives to the proposed treatment, possible consequences of no treatment, name of the physician or other practitioner who has primary responsibility for the patient's care, and identification and professional status of individuals responsible for performing procedures or treatments.

6.11.2 Family Participation in care decisions. If a patient so desires, he/she may permit their families to participate in their care decisions. Medical records should indicate who other than the patient has been included in the care decisions. All staff members will honor such requests from the patient.

6.11.3 Resolving conflicts about care decisions. MEDDAC Memo 40-40 Patient Advocate, addresses the process of resolving conflicts about care decisions and includes TRICARE Conflict Resolution procedures.

6.11.4 Making care decisions throughout the care process. When involved in investigative studies and clinical trials a patient will be informed of any clinical trials or research studies, which are being conducted by the facility that would involve them. Patients have the right to refuse to participate in such projects or clinical trials. Clinical trials: Currently, clinical research trials projects are not conducted at this facility

6.12 Patients have the right to appropriate assessment and management of pain. Staff will document initial assessment and regular reassessment of pain. Patients will be screened, assessed, and educated, and families when appropriate, regarding pain management, including the limitations or side effects of pain treatments in accordance with IAW current JCAHO requirements and MEDDAC Memorandum 40-163, Pain Management. Providers will consider a patient's personal, cultural, spiritual, and/or ethnic beliefs when communicating to a patient and his/her family that pain management is important part of care about pain management.

7. PATIENT RESPONSIBILITIES. Just as patients have rights - they also have responsibilities to adhere to the following:

7.1 Provide information. Patients are requested to provide, to the best of their knowledge, accurate and complete information about present complaints, past illnesses, prior hospitalizations, current medications, and other health-related matters. Patients are requested to report unexpected changes in their condition to their health care provider and whether they clearly understand their treatment plan and what is expected of them.

7.2 Adherence to the care plan. Patients are expected to follow the treatment plan outlined by their health care provider, to include following the instructions of nurses and allied health personnel as they carry out the coordinated care planned. Patients are expected to keep appointments and to

notify the responsible clinic at least 24 hours in advance when an appointment cannot be met, so that the appointment slot can be appropriately cancelled and rebooked.

7.3 Refusal of treatment. Patients are responsible for their own actions when refusing treatment or not following the health care provider's instructions.

7.4 Pay health center charges. Patients are responsible for any charges incurred for their health care that are not covered under the healthcare plan.

7.5 Respect and consideration. Patients are expected to be considerate of the rights of other patients and health care providers at the medical facility. Patients will assist in controlling noise, and limit the number of additional persons they bring to the health center in a non-patient role.

7.6 Compliance with rules: Patients will comply with health center's rules and regulations.

7.7 Report concerns. Patients are requested to report compliments, recommendations, questions and complaints to the Patient Advocate or to the MTF Assistant Inspector General.

The proponent for this publication is Behavioral Health Service. Users are invited to send comments or suggested improvements to the Commander, USA MEDDAC, ATTN: MCXJ-MH, Fort Huachuca, AZ 85613-7079.

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APPENDIX A
**PATIENT RIGHTS
AND
RESPONSIBILITIES**



**RAYMOND W. BLISS
ARMY HEALTH CENTER
FORT HUACHUCA, ARIZONA
85613-7079**

GENERAL

Raymond W. Bliss Army Health Center (RWBAHC) is committed to providing the very best in military medical health care within our available resources to all eligible recipients. The basic rights of human beings for independence of expression, decision, and action, as well as concern for personal dignity and human relationships are always of great importance. It is imperative that staff members be concerned about each patient as a human being and adheres to the spirit of the Patient's Bill of Rights.

PATIENT RIGHTS

Access to care. You have the right to medical treatment without discrimination as to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, political belief, or disability.

Respect and dignity. You have the right to receive considerate, respectful care at all times and under all circumstances, recognizing personal dignity.

Identity. You have the right to know the name and function of any person providing you services. You may receive the identity, upon request, of all health care personnel and health care institutions authorized to assist in your treatment.

Communication. You have the right to obtain from the person responsible for your health care complete and current information concerning your diagnosis, treatment, and expected outcomes in terms that which you can be reasonably expected to understand. You have the right to an interpreter for a foreign language in your preferred tongue. If you are hearing-impaired, you have the right to a sign language translator.

Informed consent. You have the right to receive information necessary to give informed consent prior to the start of any procedure, treatment, and/or pain management plan. Information shall include as a minimum an explanation to the specific procedure or treatment itself, its value and significant risk, and an explanation of other possible treatment methods, if any.

Pain. You have the right to the appropriate assessment and management of pain. Please consult the pamphlet "Pain Management" for details.

Transfer and continuity of care. You should expect reasonable continuity of care and to be informed by the person responsible for your health care, of possible continuing health care requirements, if any. When it is not medically advisable to give you such information, the information shall be made available to any appropriate person you have named on your behalf.

Safety/Security. You have the right to feel safe and secure at RWBAHC. You may alert any staff member or the Patient Advocate of your safety or security issues or concerns.

Refusal of treatment. You have the right to refuse treatment and be informed of the medical or other consequences of your action.

Privacy and confidentiality. You have the right to reasonable privacy and confidentiality regarding your care. Discussions, consultation, examination, and treatment involving your health care are considered confidential and will be conducted in a private setting. In addition, written or electronic records pertaining to your treatment cannot be shared with others without your consent, except as otherwise provided by law or third party payment contract.

Safety and Security. You have the right to feel safe and secure at RWBAHC. You may alert any staff member or the Patient Advocate of your safety or security issues or concerns.

Report concerns. You have the right to access an impartial patient advocate in order to voice your concerns or to help you solve problems involving your care.

Advanced directives. You have the right to receive information by request from our Patient Administration Division (PAD) about living wills or durable powers of attorney for health care decisions.

Charges. You have the right to receive, upon request, an explanation of billing issues, regardless of the payment source.

Health center rules and regulations. You have the right to receive information about the health center's rules and regulations applicable to your conduct as a patient.

PATIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Provide information. To the best of yourtheir knowledge, you will provide accurate and complete information about present complaints, past illnesses, prior hospitalizations, current medications, and other matters relating to yourtheir health. Report unexpected changes in yourtheir condition to yourtheir health care provider. Report whether youthey clearly understand yourtheir treatment plan and what is expected of youthem.

Comply with instructions. Follow the treatment plan outlined by yourtheir health care provider, to include instructions of nurses and allied health care personnel, as they carry out the coordinated care plan. Keep appointments and notify the responsible organization at least 24 hours in advance when an appointment cannot be met. Assume responsibility for yourtheir own actions when refusing treatment or not following the health care provider's instructions.

Comply with health center rules and regulations.

Give respect and consideration. Consider the rights and property of other patients, health care providers and the medical facility. YouPatients will assist in controlling noise, smoking, and the number of persons in a non-patient role.

Maintain medical records. When in possession of outpatient records promptly return them to the primary treatment facility's records repository after all medical appointments are completed. All medical records are the property of the U. S. government and must be returned for filing at the appropriate medical treatment facility.

Report Comments. Report complaints, recommendations, questions or concerns to the Patient Advocate (533-2313) or to the Assistant Inspector General (533-0661).

The Joint Commission addresses complaints that pertain to patient safety or quality-of-care issues. We encourage you to bring your concerns first to the attention of the facility leadership through the Patient Advocate. Should you fail to achieve resolution of concerns related to quality-of-care or patient safety, you may contact the Joint Commission. The toll-free number for the Joint Commission hotline is 800-994-6610. You can also access their Quality Incident Report Form at www.jointcommision.org or email your concern to www.complaint@jcaho.org.