

We value your comments as they can help us improve our services.

Tell staff about any issues as soon as possible.

If you would like to make a comment or raise issues about the care you have received we ask you to:

1. Talk to the staff involved with your care

The staff looking after you may be able to help you. There is also a local manager or team leader in each unit or ward who can answer your questions or help resolve problems.

2. Contact a Patient Representative or Facility Manager

If the staff or local manager are unable to help, you can contact the Patient Representative or Facility Manager.

Call the feedback line.

The feedback line is attended during business hours, Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 5pm on 1800 605 172. You can call this number if you aren't sure how to contact the facility or if you aren't sure where to send your feedback. Our friendly staff will help put you in touch with the right person to help you with your concerns. We also like to hear compliments via the feedback line!

3. Write to the Chief Executive

If you are still not satisfied write to the Chief Executive of the Local Health District:

Hunter New England Local Health District
Locked Bag 1,
New Lambton NSW 2305

4. Contact the Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC)

The HCCC is an independent body that deals with complaints about health services, providers and health workers. The HCCC can be contacted at:

Health Care Complaints Commission

Locked Mail Bag 18

Strawberry Hills, NSW 2012

Telephone: 1800 043159 or 9219 7444

TTY: 9219 5444 Fax: 9281 4585

Email: hccc@hccc.nsw.gov.au

5. NSW Ombudsman

The NSW Ombudsman is an independent and impartial watchdog. It can assist with complaints about service providers.

Telephone: 9286 1000

Website: <https://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au/>

Parking

Parking may be available on the hospital grounds for a fee.

All NSW health facilities are smoke free. Smoking is not permitted inside buildings or on the grounds except in designated smoking areas where provided.

For assistance to quit call the Quitline™ on 137 848

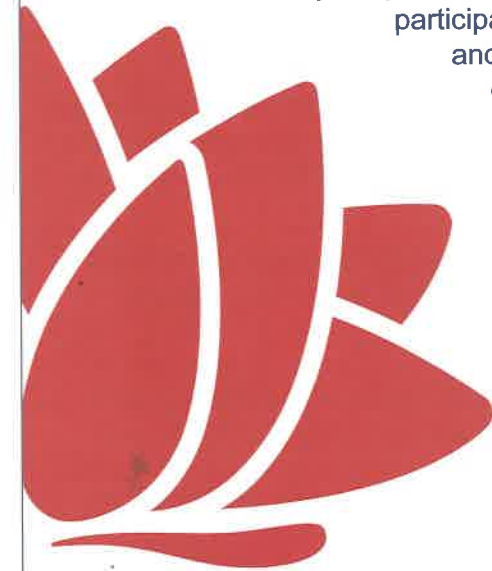
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Your Rights and Responsibilities

as a patient, carer or community member of the Hunter New England Local Health District

Everyone seeking or receiving healthcare in Australia has certain rights and responsibilities. They include the right to access, safety, respect, communication, participation, privacy and to comment on their care.



This brochure provides information about your rights and responsibilities as a consumer of health care in the NSW public health system. For more detailed information ask a staff member for a copy of the NSW Health booklet *Your Healthcare – Rights and Responsibilities*.

Access

Health care services are available to everyone regardless of gender, marital status, disability, culture, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, age or income. If the care you need is not available in your local area we will find a service that can help you.

You have a right to access health services on the basis of a medical assessment and the urgency of your need for treatment.

Tell us if you have special needs or need an interpreter.

Safety

You are entitled to safe, high quality health care. We can improve the safety and quality of care we provide by partnering with you, your family and carers.

Look out for the safety information displayed in all our health services and on our website.

Respect

Patients, families, carers and visitors have a right to be treated with courtesy, dignity and respect while in our health services, regardless of culture, beliefs, values, gender or disability.

We ask you to show respect to our staff, volunteers, other patients and visitors.

Communication

Good communication is needed for good care. Health care workers will explain your condition, the recommended treatment, as well as the risks and the alternatives in a way that you can understand. We want you to ask questions, be open and honest and let us know if we need to explain things further.

Give us as much information as possible about your health, including any allergies, medical conditions or disabilities.

Tell your health care worker:

- what medicines or remedies you take and whether you smoke, use alcohol or recreational drugs.
- if you have a carer or want a support person to be with you.
- about any changes to your condition and any reactions during treatment.
- if you are being treated for the same problem by someone else.
- if you do not understand why you have been referred for tests or treatments.
- if religious or cultural beliefs make it difficult to have treatment.
- if you do not plan to follow treatment advice, do not wish to or are unable to attend appointments
- if you want to be treated as a private patient and need an estimate of the costs.

Participation

It is your right to partner with health care workers in discussing and making decisions about your health care. This includes transfer to other services and your discharge home. You will need to agree to treatment, except in emergencies, unless you have a legal guardian.

In most cases this will be verbal consent. Written consent is required for some procedures such as surgery.

Before making decisions, you have a right to talk with other health care providers and your relatives and seek a second opinion for the treatment that has been recommended to you.

Interpreter Services

You can have an interpreter provided free of charge if you have a Medicare card. Interpreter services, including Auslan, can be provided in person or by phone and are available seven days a week. Ask our staff to arrange an interpreter for you.

Support people

You can have a relative, carer or other support person to help you communicate with health professionals but you must agree to that person being involved.

Privacy

Your information will be kept in a confidential and secure manner.

You are entitled to request access to your health information that is held in NSW health services. Normally you will be asked to apply for access in writing and provide identification. You may be charged a fee.

We may share your health information with other health care workers so that we can give you the best possible care.

Ask for a copy of the NSW *Health Information Privacy Leaflet for Patients* if you would like more information.