

14 MAR 2008

on Safety and Quality
in Health Care

7 March 2008

Professor Chris Baggoley
Chief Executive
Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare
GPO Box 5480
Sydney, NSW 2001

Dear Professor Baggoley

Draft National Patient Charter of Rights

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft National Patient Charter of Rights. The Charter and Principles provide a useful addition to the information available to patients and health care staff.

While the charter sets out what patients can expect from health services, I believe it is also helpful to document patient responsibilities to ensure an appropriate balance and to recognise the partnership that is required for high quality care. I have included at Attachment 1 the responsibilities we have articulated within our health service. While the principles that are set out are clear, they do not always adequately convey the patient responsibilities.

It would be useful to articulate that patients may need to be transferred to a service better equipped to meet their health care needs. This would make it easier to discuss with patients when the needs are not able to be met at a given hospital and transfer is required.

I would also suggest that the charter is made available in a variety of community languages. Given our diverse community, opportunities to present this information in a variety of languages helps to build shared understanding.

Yours sincerely



Shelly Park
Chief Executive

Attachment 1: Patient Responsibilities

Cooperating with the treating team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep appointments arranged for you • Understand the consequences of any decision you make to refuse care or treatment
Provide, to the best of your ability, information to assist with your treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide accurate information about your own and any relevant family medical history; including all medications, drugs, remedies or substances that you are taking
Tell us when you have questions or concerns about your care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask questions so we can assist you to understand your medical condition, treatment and care
Support us in providing an environment that is safe, clean and pleasant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the rules regarding no smoking areas and the prohibition of alcohol and illicit drugs on Southern Health premises • Keep noise to minimum for the benefit of those around you • Allow staff to use equipment to assist them to lift or move you • Leave valuables at home as Southern Health will not accept any responsibility for loss or damage to property brought to the facility
Show respect for the people taking care of you and other users of our services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect the privacy, needs and dignity of others by being courteous and considerate • Respect our visiting hours and comply with visitor guidelines.