

M E R C Y

HEALTH & AGED CARE

Australian Commission

10 MAR 2008

on Safety and Quality  
in Health Care

5 March 2008

Professor Chris Baggoley  
National Patient Charter of Rights  
Australian Commission on Safety and  
Quality in Healthcare  
GPO Box 5480  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Prof Baggoley,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft National Patient Charter of Rights.

Mercy Health & Aged Care Health Services offers the following points for consideration.

Firstly, the organisation supports the development of a National Patient Rights Charter. In relation to specific consultation questions, we offer the following:

1. Charter and Principles

*The existence of both the Charter and the Principles are useful, although the language of "I am entitled to..." does sound more like the patient is "owed" something, rather than has the right to their treatment etc.*

2. Rights included in the Charter

*The rights included are sufficient.*

3. Point included in the Principles

*There needs to be more information in both the Charter and Principles on the concurrent responsibilities of the patients and in turn the rights of the staff.*

4. Rights and Responsibilities

*There needs to be more emphasis on the responsibilities of the patients in conjunction with the rights. The responsibility of patients to inform staff about their current treatment and medication, and of any changes in their condition is very important and is part of the draft Principles, however, is not clear in the Charter. The responsibility to respect the treatment team and behave in a manner which does not endanger themselves, other patients or staff is extremely important and should be included in both the Charter and Principles.*

5. Existing Charters

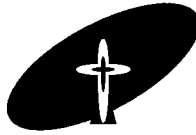
*The new Charter could be used as universal statement of rights and responsibilities for all health facilities in Australia. This would replace many of the existing state Charters.*

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6. Possible uses of the charter

*The draft Charter could be used as a set of standards against which services could be assessed. It would also be important in education of staff and patients.*

7. How the Charter applied in different sectors and settings

*This Charter is quite broad and should be applicable in a variety of health settings.*

I hope this feedback will be useful and once again, would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Yours sincerely,

**Stephen Cornelissen**  
Chief Operating Officer, Health Services

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