

RIGHTS & DUTIES

Patients' rights and duties in the National Health System (NHS) are established in [Law n.º 15/2014](#), of 21 March. This is a summary aiming at helping patients and should not avoid consulting applicable national legislation.

RIGHT TO CHOOSE

- The patient has the right to choose health services, taking into account available resources and health services' organisation rules.

RIGHT TO RECEIVE AN ADEQUATE HEALTHCARE PROVISION

- Patient has the right to receive the healthcare he/she requires, swiftly or within a clinically acceptable period of time, according to the situation.
- Patient has the right to receive the most adequate and technically correct healthcare.
- Healthcare should be provided in a human manner and with respect by the patient.

RIGHT TO CONFIDENTIALITY

- Health services' users have the right to confidentiality of their personal data.
- Healthcare professionals are obliged to the duty of confidentiality regarding facts occurred within the exercise of their duties, except if a specific law or judicial decision imposes its revelation.

RIGHT TO SPIRITUAL AND RELIGIOUS ASSISTANCE

- Patient has the right to religious assistance, regardless of his/her religion.
- The NHS should ensure necessary conditions to a free exercise of spiritual and religious practice to inpatients belonging to churches and religious communities legally recognized.

RIGHT OF ASSOCIATION

- The patient has the right to constitute entities which represent and defend his/her rights and interests, namely in the way of associations for the promotion and protection of health and other groups of friends of health establishments.

RIGHT OF MINORS AND DISABLED

- Minors' legal representatives and disabled may exercise their rights, namely the right to refuse assistance, taking into account constitutional provisions.

RIGHT TO CONSENT OR REFUSAL

- The consent or refusal should be declared in a free and informed manner.
- At any moment of healthcare provision, the patient may revoke his/her consent.

RIGHT TO THE PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA AND PRIVATE LIFE

- The patient holds fully its rights of data protection and reserve of private life.
- The management of health data should respect applicable legislation, be adequate and not excessive.
- The patient may access his/her personal data and demand its rectification and/or the addition of missing information, according to the law.

RIGHT TO INFORMATION

- Patient has the right to be informed by his/her healthcare provider on his/her situation, on treatment alternatives and the evolution of his/her clinical condition.
- The information should be conveyed in an accessible, objective, complete and clear manner.

RIGHT TO PRESENT COMPLAINS

- The patient has the right to complain and present a complaint in health institutions, as well as to be indemnified by losses he/she may have incurred.
- Complaints may be presented in the Complaints Book (yellow book), by letter, fax, email: gabinete.cidadao@chln.min-saude.pt, or in the electronic form available at the Health Regulator website at <https://www.ers.pt/pages/50>. Replies are mandatory, as foreseen in the applicable law. Patients may also access to Frequently Asked Questions available by the regulator at <https://www.ers.pt/pages/382>.
- Health services, suppliers of goods and health services and health operators must have a Complaints Book (yellow book), that may be filled by whoever requests it.

RIGHT OF ACCOMPANY

The right of accompany is recognised:

- In NHS emergency services.
- To inpatient pregnant in NHS health institutions, during all phases of labor.
- To inpatient children in NHS health institutions, disabled, people with dependency or persons with an incurable disease or terminal condition.

PATIENT SHOULD

- Respect the rights of other patients.
- Respect the rights of healthcare professionals.
- Respect the rules of organization and functioning of health services and institutions.
- Collaborate with healthcare professionals in all aspects related with his/her condition.
- Pay charges related with the healthcare provision, if applicable.