

## **What are my rights as a patient?**

We know that meeting your health care needs requires trust between you and the people taking care of you. As a patient of Sanford Health, our goal is to protect your rights. You also have responsibilities. Knowing them will help you to make choices about your care that is best for you. Your rights and responsibilities can be read to you in a language you best understand. If you are not able to make choices for yourself, your legal representative may do so on your behalf.

### **You have the right to be treated with kindness**

You have the right to have treatment. You will be treated with respect and worth regardless of your:

- Age
- Race
- The country where you came from
- Religion
- Beliefs
- Language
- Physical and/or mental status
- Sex (Male or Female)
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity or expression
- Type of sickness
- If you are able to pay for your care

### **You have the right to know the names and duties of all the people involved in your care.**

Staff should:

- Tell you their name.
- Tell you their role in your care.
- Give you their work phone number and address when asked.

### **You have the responsibility to treat others with kindness**

It is important to treat others with the same respect and value that you would want for yourself and your family. This includes other patients, their visitors, staff and providers who are giving you care. In the health care environment, you can do this by:

- No loud voices.
- No foul language/swearing.
- Limit the number of guests visiting you at one time.
- Keep a quiet environment when guests are visiting.
- Use your T.V., radio, phones as you need, but quietly.
- Being considerate of your roommate.
- No weapons of any kind.
- No physical or verbal threats or abuse.

### **You have the right to privacy**

Your personal privacy is an important part of your care. We will respect your privacy during:

- Your exams.
- Your talks with your provider and staff.

While you are a Sanford patient, you have the right to:

- Have a person of your same sex in the room with you during certain parts of an exam or care.
- Close the curtain around your bed.
- Close your door for privacy.
- Respect and privacy during bathing and/or other cares.
- Ask for no guests to visit you.
- Ask for your status to be confidential.
- Privacy of your:
  - Mail
  - Phone calls
  - E-mails
- Have staff knock on the door and ask to come into your room.

Your privacy rights maybe limited in situations due to safety reasons.

### **You have the responsibility to respect the privacy of others**

We ask that you be considerate of other patients. Give them privacy and a quiet environment.

### **You have the right to confidentiality**

Your information is confidential. We will respect your privacy when talking about your health/medical care.

Your health care record and financial information will be read:

- Only by the health care team involved in your care.
- For health care daily work.
- For billing and insurance reasons.

As health care providers, we are legally required to report information to state and federal agencies. This information may include, but is not limited to:

- Harm after a crime
- Suspected abuse and neglect
- Public health concerns
- Duty to warn if someone is in imminent danger from another person.

The law also permits us to release your health care information in certain situations, such as an emergency.

Otherwise, you must give your permission before your information will be released.

You also have the right to receive copies of your medical records within a reasonable time frame.

### **You have the responsibility to respect the confidentiality of others**

We ask that you respect the privacy of other patients and families. It is not right to:

- Look into other patient rooms.
- Ask staff for information about other patients.
- Ask staff why a person/patient is here at Sanford.

### **You have the right to information about your treatment**

Your diagnosis and proposed treatment will be explained to you in terms and language that you can understand. You may have family members or friends included in this discussion.

You can expect your doctor to explain:

- Your diagnosis.
- Other choices for care or treatment.
- The risks and benefits for each of these choices.
- Likely outcomes.

As a Sanford patient, you can expect:

- Information about pain and pain relief measures.
- Staff commitment to partner with you to manage your pain.
- Staff who will listen and respond to your reports of pain.

### **You have the responsibility to ask for clear explanations**

If you do not understand your medical problem and/or your treatment plan is not clear to you, you must tell your health care team. You are responsible for asking questions if you do not understand.

You should ask:

- Why is this treatment suggested?
- What other choices do I have?
- What might be the results of this treatment?
- Is this treatment new and/or experimental?
- How long will this treatment take?
- What will this treatment cost?
- What are the risks of this treatment?
- What are the side effects of this treatment?
- What are the credentials of the person providing this treatment?

When you and your doctor agree on the best treatment for you, it is important that you follow this plan.

- Partial treatment may not help you.
- If you cannot follow the treatment plan, you need to tell a staff member.

## **You have the right to make decisions about your care**

We value the partnership between you and your caregivers. We want you to have an active role in your own healthcare.

We respect your right to:

- Choose your provider.
  - This may be at your own cost. Some care models such as Psychiatry, Hospitalists, and Laborists do not allow switching providers unless extreme issues arise.
- Communicate with your provider.
- Give informed consent after you receive a clear explanation of:
  - Your disease.
  - The risks and benefits of the treatment and other options you may choose.
- Ask for the right care.
- Not be transferred to another facility. The exception to this is:
  - If you were given a complete explanation for the transfer need.
  - If you were given other options to the transfer.
- A prompt response to your questions and requests.
- Give your consent or decline to be a part of research studies.
- Refuse a diagnostic procedure or treatment.
- Be told of what may happen if you refuse the procedure or treatment.
- Consult with a different specialist.
- Help to develop and carry out your plan of care.
- Have your spiritual and/or cultural needs met. If these needs may impact your care, you will need to tell your doctor and/or the staff taking care of you.
- Know of any professional relationship that may exist between:
  - Your doctor
  - Sanford Health
  - Other institutions
  - Other doctors

State law may require the consent of a relative or legal guardian if you are:

- Under the age of 18
- Unconscious
- Too ill to give informed consent

You may be treated without consent if:

- There is a medical emergency.
- Immediate action must be taken for your well-being
- There is a court ordered mandate.

## **You have the responsibility to make informed decisions**

You are responsible for the decisions you make about your care. We encourage you to gather as much information about your illness as you can. This will help you to make an informed decision. You may be asked to sign a written consent tests and/or procedures.

- Make sure you understand each document that you are asked to sign.

- If you change your mind or refuse treatment:
  - Tell the staff right away.
  - Talk to your doctor about your concerns and/ or reasons.

**You have a right to develop an Advance Directive**

Advance Directives are written instructions for a patient’s health care in the event he or she is unable to make or communicate decisions. As part of an Advance Directive, a patient may choose someone to make health care decisions on his or her behalf.

An Advance Directive may also be known as or include a:

- Living Will.
- Health Care Directive.
- Power of Attorney for Health Care.

You have the right to:

- Information about Advance Directives.
- Prepare an Advance Directive.
- Have staff follow your wishes as stated in your Advance Directive:
  - To the degree permitted by state law.
  - To the extent medically appropriate.
  - Subject to limitations on the basis of conscience or other reason permitted by state law.
  - I.C.A. § 144A.8, I.C.A. § 144B.9, N.D.C.C. § 2306.5-09, N.D.C.C. § 23-06.5-12, M.S.A. § 145B.06, M.S.A. § 145C.11, M.S.A. § 145C.15, S.D.C.L. § 3412D-12, S.D.C.L. § 34-12D-19 may be referenced for further details.

Sanford’s policy is to follow a patient’s Advance Directive once we have knowledge of its contents and the extent to which it is consistent with the law and reasonable standards of medical practice. If a provider cannot honor an Advance Directive, the option of transferring the patient’s care to another provider who will comply with the patient’s wishes must be discussed.

You are not required to have an Advance Directive. Sanford will not condition care or discriminate against you based on whether or not you have an Advance Directive.

If you have an Advance Directive, you have a responsibility to:

- Give your provider a current copy of your Advance Directive.
- Talk with the person you have selected as your decision maker about your wishes for your care.
- Remove or replace an advanced care directive if it is no longer current. Failing to do so may lead to Sanford giving care in a manner that is no longer in line with your wishes.

**You have the right to personal property**

You have the right to have your personal items with you. You may keep your personal items with you at all times unless:

- There is not enough space for you to keep them.
- Due to medical reasons, you cannot have them.
- For your safety, personal property is not allowed on some units.
- Use or presence of your personal items disrupts Sanford's ability to give you care.

**You have the responsibility to secure your valuables**

It is your responsibility to make sure that your valuables are secured at all times unless secured by staff per specialty unit policy or protocol. Things that are considered valuable are (but are not limited to):

- Hearing aids
- Dentures or partial dentures
- Eyeglasses
- Jewelry
- Cell phones
- Tablets
- Computers
- iPads

Do not leave your valuables where they may be mistakenly disposed of. Examples of this include (but are not limited to):

- Bedside table
- Meal tray
- Your hospital bed

Sanford Health does not accept financial responsibility if you choose to keep your personal items with you.

## **You have the right to safe care**

Our goal is to have a safe and comfortable environment for you while you are a patient at Sanford Health.

We respect your right to:

- Have care and services that are within professional standards of practice.
- Medical and personal health care based on your own individual needs.
- Be cared for in a safe environment.
- Be free from being restrained or secluded (separation from others) unless needed for safety reasons.
- Freedom from maltreatment (abuse or neglect).
- Not be given medication you do not need.
- Have the least amount of restrictions to achieve the goals of your treatment plan.
- Be cared for by staff members who know about you and your plan of care.
- Be told what you need to do if there is an emergency.
- Expect reasonable continuity of care when you no longer need to be in the hospital and need care after discharge.

## **You have the responsibility to:**

- Give correct and complete information about your:
  - Health history
  - Medications
  - Treatments
- Tell your doctor or person caring for you, about any changes in your health status.
- Tell your doctor or the person caring for you about pain you are having.
- Keep your appointments for your follow-up care.
  - If you need to cancel or reschedule, give plenty of notice.
- Follow the treatment plans given to you.
- Follow Sanford policies that may affect patient care and conduct, such as:
  - Restrictions in the use of tobacco, cigarettes, vaping/ e-cigarettes.
  - Dietary limits.
  - Visiting policies.
- Tell us of any safety concerns you may have.

## **You have the right to know about your bill**

You have the right to:

- Be told of the services that are included in your daily room charge. This information will be available before you are admitted and/or during your stay.
  - Information for services that are an added charge will also be available.
- Sanford will help you get information about:
  - The expected payments for your care from:
    - Medicare
    - Medicaid

- A third-party payer
  - What you may be expected to pay.
- Have your total bill explained to you no matter how your bill is being paid.
  - You may call Patient Financial Services at (877) 629-2999.
  - You can request an itemized bill from them.

**As a Sanford patient, you have a responsibility to:**

- Know your insurance coverage policy.
- Know your financial responsibility.
- Pay your bill.
- Give Sanford Health the correct insurance information.
  - Sanford will bill your health insurance company.
  - You are responsible for paying what is not covered by your insurance.

Sanford Health has a Community Care Program. This program gives discounted or free care to a patient that meets the eligibility rules. To find out more information, you can:

- Call Patient Financial Services: (877) 629-2999
- Look on our website: [www.sanfordhealth.org](http://www.sanfordhealth.org)

**You also have the right to:**

- Have a family member or other representative, and your provider told promptly of your admission to Sanford, if you so desire.
- Have visitors whom you choose for emotional support during your stay. This can include, but is not limited to your:
  - Husband or wife
  - Domestic partner (including a same sex domestic partner)
  - Family member
  - Friend

Sanford may need to limit visitation. This is to protect the health, safety, or privacy of you or others.

- Withdraw or deny visitation consent at any time.
- Reasonable access at reasonable times to protection or advocacy (support) services.
- Refuse services.
- Telephone and mail communication.
- Exercise all civil rights. This includes the right to habeas corpus (hey-bee-uh s kawr-puh s). This is defined as a protection from illegal confinement (being held against your will).
- Routine opportunities for outdoor physical activity unless not allowed by specialty units, or if your health does not allow.
- Participate in the religious worship of your choice.
- Be told of the policies and practices that relate to:
  - Patient care
  - Treatment



▪ Responsibilities

Sanford will not discriminate or retaliate against you (treat you badly) for using your rights. All rights expressed in this document are for all patients regardless of:

- Age
- Race
- The country where you came from
- Religion
- Beliefs/Culture
- Language
- Physical and/or mental status
- How much money you make/what you do for a living
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity or expression

**Concerns about Your Care:**

Sanford will not retaliate or discriminate against anyone who has a complaint about his or her care.

If you have any questions or complaints about your rights as a patient at Sanford Health, you may contact your nurse or any local Sanford facility. You may also call or write to Patient Relations at the following locations:

Patient Relations Sanford Health of Northern Minnesota 1300 Anne St. NW Bemidji, MN 56601 (218) 333-5000 or (218) 333-5576	Patient Relations Sanford Bismarck 300 N. Seventh St. Bismarck, ND 58501 (701) 323-2873
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Patient Relations Sanford Fargo 801 Broadway Fargo, ND 58122 (701) 234-5876	Patient Relations Sanford Sioux Falls 1305 W. 18 <sup>th</sup> St Sioux Falls, SD 57105 (605) 333-6546
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For Joint Commission Accredited locations, at any time, you or your representative may contact:

The Joint Commission  
Office of Quality and Patient Safety  
One Renaissance Blvd  
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181  
(800) 994-6610 Fax: (630) 792-5636  
[www.jointcommission.org](http://www.jointcommission.org)

At any time, you or your representative may contact the following:

South Dakota Department of Health  
600 E. Capitol Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501-2536  
Telephone: (605) 773-3361  
Toll Free (in state): (800) 738-2301

Minnesota Department of Health  
Office of Health Facility Complaints  
P.O. Box 64970  
St. Paul, MN 55164-0970  
Telephone: (651) 201-4201  
Toll Free: (800) 369-7994

Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals  
Health Facilities Division Lucas State Office Building  
321 E. 12th St.  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0083  
Telephone: (515) 281-4115  
Fax: (515) 242-5022

North Dakota Department of Health  
600 E. Boulevard Ave.  
Bismarck, N.D. 58505-0200  
Telephone: (800) 472-2622

Minnesota Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy  
2829 University Avenue SE, Suite 210  
Minneapolis, MN 55414  
Telephone: (612) 548-2177

MN Department of Human Services Licensing Division  
444 Lafayette Road  
St Paul, Mn 55155  
Telephone: (651) 431-6500

Office of Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities  
121 7th Place E, Suite 420  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2117  
Telephone: (651) 757-1800 or 1-800-657-3506

Behavioral Health Division North Dakota Department of Human Services  
1237 W Divide Ave, Suite 1C

Bismarck, ND 58501-1208  
Telephone: 1-701-328-8920 or 1-800-755-2719 (ND only)

If Medicare is paying your health care bills and you believe you are being discharged prematurely, you have concerns about your care, or you would like a review of coverage decisions, you may contact:

Minnesota Quality Improvement Organization  
Livanta LLC  
BFCC-QIO  
10820 Guilford Road, Suite 202  
Annapolis Junction, MD 20701-1105  
Telephone: (888) 524-9900  
TTY (888) 985-8775

South Dakota Quality Improvement Organization  
KEPRO  
5700 Lombardo Center Dr., Suite 100  
Seven Hills, OH 44131  
Toll Free: (888) 317-0891  
TTY: (855) 843-4776

Iowa Quality Improvement Organization  
Livanta LLC  
BFCC-QIO  
10820 Guilford Road, Suite 202  
Annapolis Junction, MD 20701-1105  
Telephone: (888) 755-5580  
TTY (888) 985-9295

North Dakota Quality Improvement Organization  
KEPRO  
5700 Lombardo Center Dr., Suite 100  
Seven Hills, OH 44131  
Toll Free: (888) 317-0891 TTY (855) 843-4776

If you feel Sanford Health has failed to provide services based on effective communication or language services, or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex, you can file a grievance with the Section 504 Coordinator.

Sanford Section 504 Coordinator  
900 E 54th Street N, Route 6227  
Sioux Falls, SD 57104

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights electronically through the portal at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/smartscreen/main.jsf> or by mail or phone.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 200 Independence Avenue S.W.  
Room 509F  
HHH Building  
Washington, DC 20201 (800) 868-1019  
(800) 537-7697 (TDD)

