



Blind River District Health Centre  
Pavillon Santé du District de Blind River

# Patient Relations Process

Approved by:

**Senior Management**

Date:

**March 2011**

The Blind River District Health Centre is committed to responding to client concerns in a positive and supportive manner consistent with the Health Centre's Mission, Vision and Corporate Values statements.

## ***Mission –***

**The Blind River District Health Centre is committed to work with our various partners and the community to provide safe, progressive and compassionate health care.**

## ***Vision –***

**The Blind River District Health Centre will be recognized for excellence in the provision of rural health care and service delivery in an integrated model.**






## ***Corporate Values –***

**The Blind River District Health Centre is committed to:**

- **Providing care and services in a team environment that reflects dignity, integrity, privacy and mutual respect.**
- **Addressing ethical issues by using an ethical decision making framework.**
- **Collaboration and open communication in the delivery of client and family focused care.**
- **The pursuit of excellence in quality care through continual improvement and education.**
- **Providing a safe environment for clients, volunteers and employees.**
- **Ensuring financial integrity through effective and accountable utilization of our resources.**
- **Collaborating with the North East Local Health Integration Network and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, along with all partners that assist in meeting the Health Centre's Mission and Vision.**

In order to mesh the Blind River District Health Centre's corporate values with those values that the client population believes to be fundamental to the care and services received at the Health Centre, an extensive community engagement process occurred. Over six hundred and twenty one (621) individuals of varying age groups were surveyed and/or participated in small focus group interviews. They have identified the following values as being important or somewhat important when receiving care or services at the Blind River District Health Centre. These values are at the core of our **Patient Relations Process**.

The following are the core values identified by those individuals who participated in our survey and focus groups, along with the patient-centred care descriptors:

WHAT IS VALUED -	PATIENT-CENTERED CARE DESCRIPTOR -
 <b>RESPECT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ As a patient I am treated with consideration and dignity.</li> <li>☞ As a patient I have my expressed wishes for care followed with respect to my culture, language and age.</li> </ul>
 <b>OPEN COMMUNICATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ As a patient I know the name, position and qualifications of my health care providers involved in my care.</li> <li>☞ As a patient I have adequate time to ask questions about my health.</li> <li>☞ As a patient I am able to voice my concerns to administrative personnel or the appropriate department without fear of jeopardizing my care or treatment.</li> </ul>
 <b>PARTICIPATORY ENGAGEMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ As a patient I am able to access information about my health in a timely manner.</li> <li>☞ As a patient I understand my diagnosis, treatment procedure choices and prognosis.</li> <li>☞ As a patient I receive the information I need to make an informed decision about procedures and treatment.</li> <li>☞ As a patient I am able to participate in my health assessment and treatment decisions, including ethical and cultural discussions.</li> <li>☞ As a patient I am able to refuse treatment, and/or obtain a second opinion regarding treatment plans.</li> </ul>
 <b>PRIVACY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ As a patient I have my health record and information kept confidential.</li> </ul>
 <b>QUALITY CARE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ As a patient I receive prompt and courteous processing of my concerns.</li> <li>☞ As a patient I receive necessary health care services.</li> <li>☞ As a patient I receive appropriate evaluation and treatment of my pain.</li> </ul>

## **PURPOSE**

The patient, family members, and the public may express concerns about the health services they receive at the Blind River District Health Centre (BRDHC). The ***Patient Relations Process*** will allow us to receive suggestions, and compliments in regards to the care and services provided at the Health Centre. We seek to facilitate the investigation and resolution of patient, family and visitor issues, concerns and complaints.

Patient satisfaction affects health outcomes. The BRDHC acknowledges that patient complaints are an important source of client feedback. Patients have a “right to voice their complaint” and need to know that their issues are appropriately dealt with. We try to understand patient specific dissatisfactions and take action to rectify or limit deficiencies. Most complaints can be responded to and resolved at the time the patient or relative, friend, other patients, makes them known to us.

Most complaints are made known because the patient believes that their core values – ***Respect, Open Communication, Participatory Engagement, Privacy, and Quality Care*** - have been disregarded.

## **STEPS OF PATIENT RELATIONS PROCESS**

The BRDHC’s ***Patient Relations Process*** has three steps and all concerns and complaints received (in person, phone, email or fax) will initially be dealt with at Step 1 of the 3 Step process.

## **INFORMING PATIENTS OF THE PATIENT RELATIONS PROCESS**

For the benefit of patients the BRDHC’s ***Patient Relations Process*** will be posted in all departments and the BRDHC’s web-site, and displayed on posters and in brochures in all waiting areas.

## **EDUCATING EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS ABOUT THE PATIENT RELATIONS PROCESS**

All BRDHC’s employees and volunteers will be made aware of the ***Patient Relations Process*** upon orientation and through annual employee refresher training.

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## **WHAT DO YOU DO FIRST IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM OR A CONCERN?**

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### **Step 1 – Talk with a member of the health care team:**

- When you or your family has a concern, please share these concerns as soon as possible. Feel free to speak with any member of the health care team. They will listen and respond to your concerns.

- Because your care team knows you best, discussing your concern with them may resolve the issue right away.
- If you have a concern about an employee, try to speak with them directly.
- The *BRDHC Patient Concern/Complaint Form* (appendix A) will be used to document concerns and complaints.
- The completed *BRDHC Patient Concern/Complaint Form*, if resolved, is to be forwarded to the Unit Manager. Unresolved concerns/complaints will be forwarded to the both Unit Manager and Chief Nursing Officer or designate.
- Patients are encouraged to bring reports of perceived **abuse or employee misconduct** directly to the attention of the Chief Executive Officer by contacting the Administration Office at (705) 356-2265 extension 2601.

**Step 2 – Ask to speak with another team member, if needed:**

- If you don't feel comfortable speaking with the person or your concerns do not get resolved to your satisfaction, ask to speak with the Charge Nurse or Department Manager.
- The departmental manager will call and meet you to review and document their concerns within 24 hours or the next business day after receiving the request from the Department.
- The manager will investigate the concern/complaint by speaking with all relevant stakeholders.
- The manager will report back to you on their findings and on a recommended solution to the concern/complaint.
- If unable to resolve the concern/complaint to your satisfaction the manager will forward the concern to Senior Management for follow-up.

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**USE OTHER HEALTH CENTRE RESOURCES TO RESOLVE YOUR CONCERNS:**

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We always try to work things out within the team and the unit. If for any reason this is not possible, the team will contact other Health Centre resources such as:

- Chief Nursing Officer
- Chief Executive Officer

**Step 3 – Ask to speak with a Senior Manager, if needed:**

- A Senior Management Representative or delegated Manager will contact you to review your concern/complaint within 24 hours or next business day after receiving the request from the Department Manager.
- The Senior Manager will collaborate with you on obtaining a satisfactory resolution to the concern/complaint.
- The response to the concern/complaint will be documented.

- A follow-up letter will be forwarded to you.

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**I'M AFRAID THAT IF I COMPLAIN THINGS WILL BE WORSE FOR ME AND/OR MY RELATIVE!**

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We welcome your feedback. Hearing from patients and families is the best way to improve the care and services we provide. Please be assured that raising a concern will not negatively affect your care (or a loved one's care) in any way.

Your concerns will receive our courteous and respectful attention at the earliest possible time.

Talking about serious issues can be upsetting. However, the best way to work together and find solutions is for everyone to behave in a respectful manner. Rude, hurtful, offensive or threatening words or actions are NOT acceptable.

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**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

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**AFTER HOURS:**

Please speak with the Charge Nurse and leave clear details of the situation, along with a number so that we contact you. You will receive a call within one business day.

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**HELPFUL TIPS:**

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Here are some suggestions for discussing concerns with Health Centre employees:

*"I understand that Health Centre employees would like to hear from patients and families. I would like to talk with someone about my concerns."*

*"I have some questions, when is a good time for us to talk."*

*"What you have said is not clear to me, could you explain?"*

*"I need some time to think about this. Can we talk again later?"*

*"I think we may need to have someone help us work through this issue?"*

## **AMENDMENT**

This process will be reviewed yearly and may be amended as required.

## **RELATED POLICIES**

Blind River District Health Centre. May 2007. *Access to Health Information and Release of Information*. May 2007. Author: Program Coordinator, Health Information Services.

Blind River District Health Centre. March 2011. *BRDHC Patient Concern/Complaint Form* (appendix A). Author: Senior Management.

Blind River District Health Centre. January 2008. *Code of Conduct*. Author: Senior Management Team.

Blind River District Health Centre. January 2008. *Confidentiality*. Author: Senior Management Team.

Blind River District Health Centre. March 2008. *Discipline for a Privacy Breach of Personal Health Information*. Author: Privacy Officer.

Blind River District Health Centre. February 2008. *Disclosure of Adverse Events and Errors*. Author: Chief Nursing Officer.

Blind River District Health Centre. November 2007. *Disclosure to Family Members or Friends*. Author: Privacy Officer.

Blind River District Health Centre. July 2007. *Referrals to Ethics Committee*. Author: Ethics Committee Chair.

Blind River District Health Centre. August 2010. *Risk Management Policy*. Author: Senior Management Team.

## **REFERENCES**

Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. June 8, 2010. *Excellent Care for All Act*. Section 6.

- (1) Every health care organization shall have a patient relations process and shall make information about that process available to the public.
- (2) The health care organization shall ensure that the patient relations process reflects the content of its patient declaration of values.



**Appendix – B-2 (To be completed by Manager or Senior Manager)**

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**Referral of Complaint:**

**Manager / Senior Manager:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Action Taken: (to be completed by appropriate Manager or Sr. Manager)**

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**Recommendation(s) / Preventive Action:**

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**Copies of *Patient Concern/Complaint Form* in Risk Management file located in Executive Office.**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Done**

**Acknowledgement of Complaint Letter sent to patient.**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Done**

**Situation resolved?**      **Yes**     **No**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_