



**TRINITY**  
HEALTH

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# Patient Rights *and* Related Information

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## **Welcome to Trinity Health!**

Whether it's helping to bring a new baby into the world or giving mobility back to a joint replacement patient, all of us at Trinity Health are focused on you, the patient. Trinity Health's mission is to improve the health of the people and communities we serve. Our goal is for you to achieve the best possible medical outcome and experience the best in service quality during your stay. We use the latest technologies and newest techniques available, we bring together outstanding physicians, staff, and volunteers to serve as your healthcare team, and we strive to reinvent how we serve our patients every day.

Please take a few minutes to read the important information in this handbook. We have made every effort to ensure that your needs are met; however, if at any time you need further assistance, just ask any associate and they will assist you.

# Discrimination is Against the Law

Trinity Health complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Trinity Health does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

Trinity Health:

- Provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
  - Qualified sign language interpreters
  - Written information in other formats (audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)
- Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
  - Qualified interpreters

If you need these services, please call the main Trinity Health phone number: 800-862-0005; TDD 1-800-366-6889 and our operators will connect you with someone who will assist you.

If you believe that Trinity Health has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you can file a grievance with: Corporate Compliance Officer, PO Box 5020, Minot, ND 58702; phone: 701-857-5207; You can file a grievance in person or by mail, fax, or email. If you need help filing a grievance, the Corporate Compliance Officer is available to help you.

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 Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

200 Independence Avenue, SW

Room 509F, HHH Building

Washington, D.C. 20201

1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD)

Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

### **Arabic**

رقم هاتف ( 1-701-857-5000 ملحوظة: إذا كنت تتحدث انكسر اللغة، فإن خدمات المساعدة اللغوية تتوافر لك بالمرجان. اتصل برقم: 1-800-366-6889 الصم والبكم).

### **Chinese**

注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-701-857-5000 (TTY: 1-800-366-6889)

### **French**

ATTENTION : Si vous parlez français, des services d'aide linguistique vous sont proposés gratuitement. Appelez le 1-701-857-5000 (ATS : 1-800-366-6889).

### **German**

ACHTUNG: Wenn Sie Deutsch sprechen, stehen Ihnen kostenlos sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zur Verfügung. Rufnummer: 1-701-857-5000 (TTY: 1-800-366-6889).

### **Japanese**

注意事項：日本語を話される場合、無料の言語支援をご利用いただけます。1-701-857-5000 (TTY:1-800-366-6889) まで、お電話にてご連絡ください。

### **Kirundi**

ICITONDERWA: Nimba uvuga Ikirundi, uzohabwa serivisi zo gufasha mu ndimi, ku buntu. Woterefona 1-701-857-5000 (TTY: 1-800-366-6889).

### **Korean**

주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. 1-701-857-5000 (TTY: 1-800-366-6889)번으로 전화해 주십시오.

### **Nepali**

ध्यान दिनुहोस्: तपाईंले नेपाली बोल्नुहुन्छ भने तपाईंको निम्ति भाषा सहायता सेवाहरू निःशुल्क रूपमा उपलब्ध छ । फोन गर्नुहोस् 1-701-857-5000 (टिडिवाइ: 1-800-366-6889) ।

### **Norwegian**

MERK: Hvis du snakker norsk, er gratis språkassistanstjenester tilgjengelige for deg. Ring 1-701-857-5000 (TTY: 1-800-366-6889).

### **Oromo**

XIYYEEFFANNAA: Afaan dubbattu Oroomiffa, tajaajila gargaarsa afaanii, kanfaltiidhaan ala, ni argama. Bilbilaa 1-701-857-5000 (TTY: 1-800-366-6889).

### **Russian**

ВНИМАНИЕ: Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода. Звоните 1-701-857-5000 (телетайп: 1-800-366-6889).

### **Spanish**

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-701-857-5000 (TTY: 1-800-366-6889).

### **Swahili**

KUMBUKA: Ikiwa unazungumza Kiswahili, unaweza kupata, huduma za lugha, bila malipo. Piga simu 1-701-857-5000 (TTY: 1-800-366-6889).

### **Tagalog**

PAUNAWA: Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, maaari kang gumamit ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad. Tumawag sa 1-701-857-5000 (TTY: 1-800-366-6889).

### **Vietnamese**

CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số 1-701-857-5000 (TTY: 1-800-366-6889).

# National Patient Safety Goals

*How our staff helps you to make your healthcare experience as safe as possible.*

**Identifying you correctly** – Our staff is to use two (2) ways to identify you; for example, your name and date of birth. This is done to make sure that you get the correct medicine and treatment ordered for you or the correct blood type, if you need a blood transfusion.

**Improve communications between staff** – Our staff is to make sure all your important test results get reported to your provider quickly.

**Using your medicines safely** – Staff will take extra care if you take medicines to thin your blood. Staff will label all medicines that are not already labeled when placed in syringes, cups, or basins.

**Preventing infections** – Our staff uses the hand cleaning guidelines as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Trinity Health uses proven guidelines to prevent infections that are difficult to treat and to prevent infection of the blood. Trinity Health uses safe practices to prevent an infection at your surgical site.

**Checking your medicines** – We find out what medicines you are taking. Please make sure you give us an accurate medicine list including any of your medicines you buy over the counter such as vitamins, etc. We will make sure that it is OK for you to take any new medicines with your current medicines.

If you get medicine during an outpatient procedure, we will make sure it is OK for you to take them with your current medicines.

We will give you an up-to-date list of your medicines before you go home. We will explain the list to you.

We will make certain this list of medicines also gets sent to your regular provider when you go home.

**Identifying your safety risks** – We will ask you if you have any thoughts of harming yourself.

**Preventing you from falling** – We want you to be alert to the possibility that you could fall and we want to help prevent you from falling. We will assess you to find out if you are likely to fall. We will check to see if you are weak, dizzy, or sleepy. Please let us know if you need assistance. We are here to help you.

**Preventing bed sores** – We will assess you to find out if you are likely to develop a bed sore. We will take actions to prevent bed sores from occurring. We will check you from time to time for bed sores.

**Helping you to keep from getting the pneumonia or flu** – We will ask you if you have had a pneumonia shot and offer you one if you should have one.

We will ask you if you have had a flu shot during the flu season (usually October through February) and offer you one if you should have one.

Staff will identify any new cases of flu and will take action if there is an outbreak.

**Watching you closely for changes in your health and responding quickly if you need help** – You or your family member may call the Rapid Response Team to get help from specially trained staff if you think your health is getting worse. Be persistent if you feel you need more help until you get it.

**Preventing errors in surgery** – The staff makes certain that all your documents needed for surgery are on hand before surgery starts. Your physician will identify and mark your surgery site before the procedure. You will be asked to participate in marking the site, if you are able.

**Helping you be involved in your care** – Staff will ask you to share your health information with us. Staff will encourage you to ask questions about your care and tell a staff member if you have any safety concerns.

For a list of the people you can report a safety concern to, please refer to page 8, the first bullet under Complaints/Grievances.

**We want to make your healthcare experience as safe as possible for you.**

The exact language of the National Patient Safety Goals can be found at [www.jointcommission.org](http://www.jointcommission.org) Source – The Joint Commission

# Be Involved in Your Healthcare

Sometimes doctors and their patients have trouble communicating. Patients need to be involved in their healthcare to make informed decisions. Here are some suggestions to help you:

## **Most importantly**

- Be an active member of your healthcare team and participate in all decisions about your treatment.

## **Medication Safety**

Medications are often times a vital element of your care at home and in the hospital. Medications can cure disease and improve symptoms such as pain. Medications are also powerful chemicals that must be used properly. Taking medications routinely can be very complex, so it is important that you or your family, in conjunction with staff at Trinity Hospitals, have an open communication about your medications. Your doctor, nurse, and pharmacist have major roles in safe medication use. They should prescribe the correct dosage, dispense the product correctly, and label it clearly. It is also their job to tell you what you need to know about your medications. Once you've started the medication, they should make sure it is working and that you are not having significant ill effects from the medications.

As a patient or family member, you are part of the healthcare team too. You share the responsibility for safe medication use. There are some things you can do to help ensure safe medication use for you and your family.

## **How We Need You and Your Family to Help Us**

- When you are admitted to the hospital, bring a list of medications you are taking with you. This includes medications you take at home, including over-the-counter (OTC) medications, vitamins and other herbal supplements or natural products. If there isn't time to make a list, bring the medications. Keep them in their original containers.
- After your medications have been evaluated, we will send them home with your family. While you are in the hospital, you may not need the same medications. Hospital safety policies do not allow you to use your own medications.
- List all medication or food allergies and your reaction to them.
- Ask your doctor for a list or the names of each medication and the reasons for taking them.
- Look at all medicines before you take them. If it doesn't look like what you usually take, ask why. In some cases, the answers are simple. For example, if you've been taking a brand-name product at home, the hospital might be using a generic product. In other situations, it might be a substitution of a similar medication.

- Do not let anyone give you medications without checking your ID bracelet every time. This helps prevent you from getting medicines that are not intended for you.
- When you are ready to go home, have the doctor, nurse or pharmacist go over each medication with you and a family member. Update your medication list from home if any prescriptions change or if new medications are added.
- Most importantly, be involved with your medication therapy by asking questions.
- PCA pumps (patient controlled analgesia) should only be activated by the patient.

## **Complementary and Alternative Medicine Policy**

Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) covers a broad range of healing philosophies, approaches, and therapies. CAM includes therapies such as chiropractic, massage, herbal therapy, acupuncture, and homeopathy. Generally, it includes treatments and healthcare practices not taught widely in medical schools, not generally used in hospitals, and not usually reimbursed by medical insurance companies. **Hence, in the interest of patient safety, Trinity Hospitals does not dispense complementary and alternative medicine that would consist of herbal or "natural" products to hospitalized patients.**

Unlike prescription or over-the-counter medicines, herbs and other food supplements do not have to undergo review for safety or effectiveness before they are sold to consumers. Some "natural" products, like herbs, may have powerful effects on a person that could present certain risks if they take other medications or have specific medical conditions.

**If you are currently utilizing or are pursuing the use of alternative and complementary therapies, you should inform your physician—especially if you are taking prescription medications or are receiving treatments or surgery for a medical condition.** Unfortunately, nearly one-third of patients who receive CAM do not tell their primary-care physician. Your physician(s) needs to be aware of this important information in order to avoid possible adverse reactions to other treatments and therapies both in the hospital and after discharge. *Although CAM treatment may have been demonstrated in healthy people with certain conditions, safety in patients with other medical problems has not been extensively evaluated. If you have any questions about CAM or your treatment plan at Trinity Hospitals, please ask your physician or member of the medical team.*

## **Additional Hints for Knowing More About Your Medication**

- What are the brand and generic names of the medication?
- What is the purpose of the medication?
- What does the medication look like?
- What is the dose?
- How should I take this medication?
- How often should I take this medication?
- What should I do if I miss a dose?



# Be Involved in Your Healthcare: cont.

- Does this medication have any side effects? What are they? What should I do if they occur?
- Does this medication interact with any other medicines? With foods? What are these interactions, and what should I do if they occur?
- How should I store this medication?

**Remember: Please advise your doctor or nurse about any alternative or conventional treatments or therapies you may already be receiving, as this information will be used to consider the safety and effectiveness of your treatment plan at Trinity Hospitals.**

## **For Your Safety**

- You will be identified in two ways, on admission, and throughout your stay to assure that you are receiving the care that is ordered for you. (*for example name, and date of birth*) Pay attention to the care you are receiving. Make sure you are getting the right treatments and medications by the right healthcare professional.
- All healthcare workers who have direct contact with you should have washed their hands, or used an approved alcohol based hand sanitizer. If you see that this is not occurring, remind the healthcare worker to do so.
- When you are being discharged from the hospital, ask your doctor to explain the treatment plan you will use at home.
- Alarms are set so nurses can hear them. If you have concerns, talk to your nurse.

## **Other Steps You Can Take**

- Speak up if you have questions or concerns. If you don't understand, ask again.
- Make sure that all healthcare professionals know your health information.
- Ask a family member or friend to be your advocate (someone who can help get things done and speak up for you if you can't).
- Know that "more" is not always better.
- If you have a test, don't assume that no news is good news.
- Learn about your condition and treatment plan by asking your doctors and nurses.

## **Surgery**

- If you are having surgery or a procedure, make sure that you, your doctor, and your surgeon all agree and are clear on exactly what will be done. The patient should assist the surgeon in marking the site when it is appropriate.

Resources from Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Centers for Disease Control (CDC) & Joint Commission Patient Safety Goals.

# Patient Rights & Responsibilities

At Trinity Hospitals our primary objective is to provide you the best care possible in accordance with your caregivers' recommendations. However, patient care is most effective when patients are aware of their rights as well as their obligations to themselves, their physicians and Trinity Hospitals.

## **As a Patient, You have a Right to the Following:**

### **Access to Care, Treatment and Services**

- To receive equal treatment at all times and under all circumstances regardless of age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, language, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, infectious disease, ability to pay, or advanced directive.
- To exercise your rights without being subjected to discrimination or reprisal.

### **Respect and Dignity/Personal Safety & Security**

- To expect and receive safety in the Trinity Hospitals environment and the procedures performed there.
- To be free from all forms of abuse, neglect or harassment.
- To be free from seclusion and chemical and physical restraints of any form that are not medically necessary or are used as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience, or retaliation by staff.
- To receive considerate and respectful care; including psychosocial, spiritual, and cultural aspects.
- To access protective services (e.g., guardianship and advocacy services, conservatorship, and child or adult protective services).
- To receive prompt and reasonable responses to your requests for service.

### **Privacy & Confidentiality**

- To refuse to see or talk with anyone not connected with Trinity Hospitals, including visitors or staff who are not directly involved in your care.
- To expect that personal privacy be respected to the fullest extent possible.
- To have another staff member present during a physical exam if requested.
- To expect all communications and records about patients' care, including source of payment be kept confidential. Anyone not directly involved in your care, including family members, should have your permission to get this information.
- To request a transfer to another room if the action of another patient or visitor is disturbing.



# Patient Rights & Responsibilities cont.

## ***Identity/Information/ Communication/Informed Consent***

- To have a family member/representative of your choice and your own physician notified promptly of your admission to the hospital.
- To know the identity and professional status of people providing care, services and of the doctor responsible for your treatment.
- To be informed of any professional relationships that might suggest a conflict of interest, any relationship to educational institutions involved in your care, and any business relationships between individuals treating you, or between the organization and any other healthcare, service, or educational institutions involved in your care.
- To receive complete and current information concerning your diagnoses, treatment, and prognoses in terms you can reasonably be expected to understand.
- To participate actively in determining your course of treatment. (This right should not be used to demand a treatment or service that is considered medically unnecessary.)
- To have family involved in care decisions if that is your wish.
- To designate who is allowed to visit regardless of whether the visitor is a family member, a spouse, a domestic partner (including a same-sex domestic partner), or other type of visitor.
- To receive, or have your representative be fully informed about your treatment or procedure and receive information related to the risks, benefits of, and alternatives to the proposed procedure or treatment and the expected outcomes so you can make an informed decision regarding your care.
- To have appropriate assessment and management of pain.
- To, at your own request, consult a specialist or request a second opinion from another physician.
- To have access to communication such as visitors, mail, telephone calls and other forms of communication. (Sometimes it may be necessary to limit communication as part of the patient's care. The patient and/or responsible person(s) is included in any such decision.)
- To have access to an interpreter for those who do not speak English or effective communication for the hearing, speech, visually and cognitively impaired.
- To request other assistive equipment and devices.
- To be included in discussions of ethical issues regarding your care such as with-holding resuscitative services or foregoing or withdrawing life sustaining treatment.
- To have the right to information regarding Trinity Hospitals process for resolving conflicts in decision making.
- To present or formulate an advance medical directive and then have staff and practitioners comply with that directive. (Written information about advance directives will be made

available to each patient. Lack of an Advanced Medical Directive does **not** compromise a patient's care or future care.)

- To assist in completing and processing insurance forms relating to Trinity Hospitals services.
- To access information contained in your medical records within a reasonable time frame.
- To know what Trinity Hospitals policies/procedures apply to you as a patients.
- To see and request amendments to your health records.
- To give or deny consent for recording or filming made for purposes other than identification, diagnosis, or treatment.

## ***Pastoral Care and Other Spiritual Services***

- To have access to pastoral care and other spiritual services as requested.
- To wear your own clothing and religious items as long as they do not interfere with treatment.
- To express spiritual beliefs and cultural practices that do not harm others or interfere with their treatment.
- To have your wishes regarding organ donations honored.

## ***Refusal of Treatment***

- To refuse care, treatment or services unless otherwise prohibited by law. (Patients should be told what effect this may have on your health and be informed of other potential consequences of refusal.)
- To leave against medical advice. (The patient will be given a release to sign which states their physician, Trinity Hospitals, and its employees are not responsible for any ill effects resulting from the patient's personal decision to leave.)
- To be given a full description for any research project that you are being asked to take part in. This includes the risks, benefits and alternatives for the procedure, and the right to refuse to take part in the research project.

## ***Discharge/Transfer***

- To be informed by the physician and other staff members of the need for continuing care upon discharge.
- To receive a complete explanation of the reason(s) for the transfer and alternatives to such a transfer when it is necessary to be transferred to another facility for healthcare services.
- To request and receive an itemized and detailed explanation of the total Trinity Hospitals bill, regardless of the source of payment.
- The GI/Ambulatory Surgery Center is required to transfer patients who require emergency care to the nearest appropriate local hospital in the event of an emergency.

## ***Complaints/Grievances***

It is important for us to know about your complaints so we can improve the quality of your care. Your input helps us evaluate how we can do things differently to improve your care.

# Patient Rights & Responsibilities cont.

Any patient, family member, or visitor that has a complaint about the care they or the patient has received should feel free to contact us and to know that the expression of a complaint/grievance will not compromise a patient's current or future care.

We encourage you to let your care provider know if you have any concerns, questions or complaints about your care, treatment or safety. We want to answer your questions and resolve your complaint as soon as possible. If you have voiced complaint/grievances and feel they have not been resolved, please ask to speak with:

1. The Charge Nurse, Nurse Manager, or the Department Director, or
2. Call the hospital operator and ask to speak with the Nursing Supervisor, (there is a supervisor available 24 hours a day) or
3. Call the Patient Representative at 800-862-0005 or Clinical Excellence and Patient Safety between 8 am and 4:30 pm Monday through Friday.
4. You may also write out your grievance. Please include your name, address, telephone number, or e-mail address so we can follow up with you. Send your written communication to:

Patient Representative  
Trinity Hospitals  
PO Box 5020  
Minot ND 58702-5020

You may receive a questionnaire or a follow-up telephone call related to your stay. You may share your complaints/grievances at that time as well.

If we have been unable to resolve your concerns to your satisfaction, you are welcome to file with any of the following:

## 1) The Joint Commission's Office of Quality Monitoring

Telephone: 1-800-994-6610  
Fax: 630-792-5636  
e-mail: [complaint@jointcommision.org](mailto:complaint@jointcommision.org).  
Mail: Office of Quality Monitoring  
The Joint Commission  
One Renaissance Boulevard  
Oakbrook Terrace IL 60181

## 2) State Health Department —

North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services  
Health Facilities Unit  
1720 Burlington Dr Suite A  
Bismarck ND 58504-7736  
[hfconcerns@nd.gov](mailto:hfconcerns@nd.gov)

## 3) Acentra Health

5201 West Kennedy Blvd, Suite 900

Tampa, Florida 33609

Toll Free: 1-888-317-0891 Fax: 1-844-878-7921 TTY: 711

## 4) Regional Manager, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Civil Rights —

Telephone: 800-368-1019, 303-844-2024

TDD: 303-844-3439

Fax: 303-844-2025

Mail: Federal Office Building

1961 Stout Street

Room 1185 FOB

Denver Colorado 80294

## 5) Medicare Beneficiary Ombudsman:

[https://www.medicare.gov/claims-and-](https://www.medicare.gov/claims-and-appeals/medicare-rights/get-help/ombudsman.html)

[appeals/medicare-rights/get-help/ombudsman.html](https://www.medicare.gov/claims-and-appeals/medicare-rights/get-help/ombudsman.html)

## Resolution of Complaints/Grievances

- To be informed of who to contact if you have complaints, and to know that the expression of complaint will not compromise your current or future care.
- To information regarding Trinity Hospitals mechanism for the initiation, review and, when possible, the resolution of patient complaints within a reasonable time frame.
- The complaint/grievance is documented, investigated and acted on by the manager or designee in order to resolve the problem. Some complaints can be handled quickly at the time, for example, cold food, wait times, etc. For those who require additional or extensive research and follow up, initial contact regarding the resolution of the complaint/ grievance should take place in seven business days. If the complaint is not resolved at this time, assurance is given that steps are being taken to resolve the complaint and a time for future contact is established. The hospital will attempt to resolve all complaints/grievances as soon as possible.

## As a Patient You have a Responsibility:

- **To be involved and actively participate in your own healthcare.**
- To provide complete information to your doctor and Trinity Hospitals staff about your health problems, illnesses, changes in your condition, medications and other data related to your health.
- To carefully follow the directions given by the healthcare team. You are reminded to ask your doctor, nurse, or caregiver any questions that you have about your care needs or concerns.
- To respect the privacy of roommates and respect the rights of others, including staff, by assisting in the control of noise, numbers of visitors received, or behaviors that may be abrasive, irritating or disruptive to others.
- To respect the "no smoking" policy of Trinity Hospitals.
- To respect Trinity Hospitals property and the property of other patients.

# Patient Rights & Responsibilities cont.

- To provide Trinity Hospitals with a copy of advance directives if you have one and wish it to be followed in the event of terminal illness or inability to speak for yourself.
- To be prompt in payment of Trinity Hospitals bills, in asking questions concerning bills, and in providing information necessary for insurance processing.
- To keep appointments and, if unable to do so, notify the person with whom you have the appointment.

## Making Healthcare Decisions

### Advance Directives

A competent adult has the right to accept or reject medical or surgical treatment affecting their person. This policy was adopted to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Patient Self Determination Act (42 U.S.C. 1395cc (a) (1) and in accordance with the North Dakota Uniform Rights of the Terminally Ill Act (N.D.C.C. § 23-06.1-01, et al.) and the North Dakota Family Health Care Consent statute (N.D.C.C. § 23-12-13).

The Patient Self-Determination Act is a federal law that requires healthcare providers to educate their patients and the community on issues related to advance directives.

It requires hospitals, nursing facilities, hospice, home health agencies and HMOs certified by Medicare and Medicaid to furnish written information so that patients have the opportunity to express their wishes regarding the use or refusal of medical care, including life-prolonging treatments, nutrition and hydration.

Although you aren't required to complete an advance directive, it can be a helpful guide to families who are faced with making a decision for a loved one during a medical crisis. It's important to know that an advance directive can be changed or withdrawn by you at any time.

Trinity's Pastoral Services Department offers the North Dakota statutory forms and more detailed information about advanced directives. Or you may visit the following planning tool on the ND Department of Human Services' website: [Aging Healthcare Directives Guide](#) **This information is not intended to provide specific legal advice regarding these matters.**

### Your Right to Make Your Medical Decisions

As a competent adult, you have the right to control decisions about your own healthcare. You have the right to accept or to

refuse any treatment, service, or procedure used to diagnose, treat or care for your physical or mental condition.

You have the right to make your own healthcare decisions as long as you have the ability to understand:

- your medical condition; and
- the benefits, risks, and burdens of a particular course of treatment and care and its alternatives.

Your right to decide includes the right to control the use of medical technology in regard to your health care. Part of your right to make your own medical decisions is your right to decide, based upon your values, the extent to which medical technology should be used and under what circumstances.

Your right to decide also includes the right to make decisions regarding the artificial giving of food and water (nutrition and hydration).

### ***To Exercise Your Right to Make Your Own Medical Decisions, You Should do the Following:***

1. Make certain you understand your medical treatment options. If you do not understand something or need more information, ask your healthcare provider(s). You have the right to an explanation in terms that you actually understand.
2. If you have ethical or moral concerns about your decisions, you should speak to your minister, rabbi, priest, or other advisor, or perhaps members of your family or a close friend.
3. Discuss your desires with your doctor or healthcare provider. Make sure that your healthcare provider understands what you want in the event you are unable to make your own medical decisions.

There may come a time when, due to your mental or physical condition, you may be unable to make your own healthcare decisions. Then your healthcare providers will look to any prior written advance directives or to family members to make decisions on your behalf. A determination that you are unable to make your own healthcare decisions must be made by a doctor.

North Dakota has an *INFORMED HEALTHCARE CONSENT LAW* which authorizes other persons to make healthcare decisions for you if you are either a minor or are unable to make your own medical decisions. These forms may be obtained from Pastoral Care or Social Services.

## Informed Healthcare Consent Law

This law can be found in Section 23-12-13 of the North Dakota Century Code.

The *INFORMED HEALTHCARE CONSENT LAW* establishes a priority list of persons who are authorized to provide consent for minors or persons who are incapacitated and, therefore, unable to make or communicate their own medical decisions. This law is particularly useful when a person does not have an Advanced Medical Directive.

# Making Healthcare Decisions cont.

The law applies to two groups of people: minors and adults who are “incapacitated.” You are considered a “minor” if you are under age 18. You are considered “incapacitated” when you are unable to make or communicate responsible decisions regarding personal matters such as medical treatment.

This law requires that a person who is authorized to provide informed consent on your behalf must first determine that you would have consented to the proposed healthcare if you were able. If such a determination cannot be made, the authorized person may consent only after determining that the proposed healthcare is in your best interests.

## North Dakota Healthcare Directive

### PART I:

In the North Dakota Healthcare Directive you name another person (called the healthcare agent) to make healthcare decisions for yourself if you are unable to decide or speak for your care. The healthcare agent must make healthcare decisions for you based on the instructions you provide in the Advanced Medical Directive. Carefully select the person you want to act as your Agent and/or alternate Agent. Discuss the role of your Agent and/or alternate Agent with the person(s) you select and ensure they are willing to accept the responsibilities.

Tell your Agent what kinds of healthcare decisions you want your Agent to make on your behalf. You should also consider any written instructions you might wish to include to limit the Agent’s authority or to provide guidance for your Agent.

AND/OR

### PART II:

If you have named a healthcare agent, these instructions are to be used by the agent. If you do not select a healthcare agent then these instructions may also be used by your healthcare providers, others assisting with your healthcare and your family, in the event you cannot make decisions for yourself.

AND/OR

### PART III:

Allows you to make an organ and tissue donation upon your death by signing a document of anatomical gift.

## Ethical Issues

### The Meaning of “Code Status”

At the time of your admission to Trinity Hospitals, your doctor will discuss with you what you would want done if your

heart or breathing were to stop during your hospital stay. Many factors should go into that decision:

1. Do you already have specific wishes?
2. What is the reason that you are in the hospital?
3. Would cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) be successful?
4. Would aggressive treatment improve your situation or make it worse?

“Code Status” has nothing to do with your living will which only takes effect if you have a terminal illness and are unable to express your wishes. You may wish to discuss your code status with your family, chaplain, social worker and/or nursing staff. This is a serious decision which allows you to be an active participant in your medical care.

“Code Level 1” means that CPR and ventilator will be used if your heart stops.

“Code Level 2” means that appropriate medications and treatments will be used for your illness, but if your heart stops you won’t be put on a ventilator or receive CPR.

“Code Level 3” means that you will receive medications and treatment to keep you comfortable, but CPR and other more aggressive measures will not be used.

“Code Level 4” means comfort measures only: Treatment is to be limited to nursing and medical therapy appropriate for hygiene and comfort.

Review these categories so that when your doctor speaks with you about “Code Status” you will be prepared to ask questions and make an informed decision.

## The Meaning of Ordinary and Extraordinary Care

Ordinary care is all treatments, medicines and surgeries that can be obtained and used without excessive pain, expense or other serious inconvenience. Ordinary care also includes the expectation that this care offers a reasonable hope of benefit for the patient. When all of these conditions are present for any patient within their unique situation, then the care is ordinary.

If one of these conditions is absent, then care is extraordinary. Very briefly, any therapy is extraordinary when the burden or the risks resulting from it are disproportionate to (do not at least equal) the benefits hoped for or obtained.

### Important Decisions

Important healthcare decisions are often made during difficult times. In determining whether a therapy is ordinary or extraordinary, the following distinctions are useful:

- extending life vs. prolonging a dying condition
- critically ill vs. terminally ill (dying)
- reversible vs. irreversible disease
- euthanasia (mercy killing) vs. legitimate withdrawal of technology

### Trinity Hospitals Policy Concerning Ordinary/Extraordinary Care

- The decision to refuse extraordinary care is a medical decision



## Ethical Issues cont.

- made jointly with a competent patient.
- Competent patients are those who are conscious, able to understand the nature, severity, risk and alternatives associated with their illness, and able to participate in an informed decision-making process.
- The basic principle is that there are limits to one's moral duty to prolong life.
- Ordinary care must be chosen to preserve the precious gift of life that God has bestowed upon us, while extraordinary care is optional.
- Euthanasia or suicide is viewed as wrong and is not permitted.
- If a patient is dying and treatment will only prolong the dying process, it is appropriate to withdraw technology and simply to offer comfort and care to the patient.
- If the struggle to keep a person alive with a serious medical condition far out-weighs any other human benefit, the patient is not ethically obliged to accept medical intervention. A patient, for example, may judge in collaboration with his/her physician that the burdens of permanent renal dialysis are too overwhelming to endure and so may refuse to accept that treatment.
- When a decision is made to forego extraordinary care, this does not mean the patient is abandoned. The patient will continue to receive medical attention, nursing care, medicines, food and fluids as desired, comfort measures, emotional support, etc. In other words, the patient receives the same care and comfort all patients in the hospital are given with the exception of extraordinary measures.
- When a patient is medically determined to be incompetent, the decision to use or refuse extraordinary care is decided jointly by the physician and the patient's immediate family, guardian or legally recognized designee.

### **Help in Deciding About Extraordinary Care**

Trinity Hospitals pastoral care staff, social services personnel and nursing staff are ready to assist any patient or family with the emotional, moral and ethical concerns that accompany such a decision, in addition to the assistance received from your particular physician(s).

## Ethical Issues

Should a patient, family member, or designated representative, employee or medical staff member identify the need to address ethical issues/questions in patient care, the requesting individual should notify the patient care staff, who will notify the department manager. The department manager will then determine the appropriate action in accordance with the ethics committee. The patient has a right to participate in ethical questions that arise in the course of their care, including issues of conflict resolution, withholding resuscitative services, forgoing or withdrawal of life sustaining treatment and participation in investigational studies or clinical trials.

# Billing, Admission, Discharge Information

## Billing

### **Billing Procedure:**

Depending on the type of service provided at Trinity Hospitals, you may receive more than one statement. For example, for the services of a Trinity physician, including anesthesiologist and certified registered nurse anesthetist, you will receive statements from Trinity Medical Group. For services such as laboratory tests, radiology and/or anesthesia studies or supplies, you will receive statements from Trinity Hospitals.

If you have provided us with all necessary insurance information, we will file a claim to the appropriate payor for you. If you do not have hospital insurance, we encourage payment in full or we will accept a payment plan for the balance. Payments may be made by cash, check, or credit card.

### **Your Responsibility:**

Your statement will show either —

(1) insurance pending/responsibility (we have billed your insurance)

OR

(2) patient responsibility/self (this is the amount you owe)

WHERE TO CALL FOR BILLING AND PAYMENT QUESTIONS

If you have any questions about your statements or wish to visit with one of our representatives, call the number provided on your statement,

OR

800-862-0005 Business Services – Trinity Hospitals (GREEN STATEMENT)

800-862-0005 Business Services – Trinity Medical Group

These offices are located in the Town & Country Center, Trinity Health Support Services area.

## Insurance Representative

Our insurance representatives are ready to help you with all of your insurance questions. Whether it's Medicare, Medicaid or a private insurance program, our representatives are your friends with answers. The insurance representatives are in the Business Office at Trinity Health Support Services located in the Town and Country Center. Call our Trinity Insurance Hotline at 800-862-0005.

Insurance company phone numbers —

- Medicare **1-800-633-4227**
- Blue Cross/Blue Shield **1-800-342-4718**
- Workforce Safety & Insurance **1-800-777-5033**
- Insurance Commissioner **1-800-247-0560**
- Acentra Health (QIO) **1-888-317-0891**

# Continuum of Care (Discharge Planning)

Continuum of care is a coordinated, inter-disciplinary process that ensures a plan of continuing care for each patient. Continuum of care assessment is implemented by matching an individual's ongoing needs with the appropriate level and types of services, i.e., psychosocial, functional, nutritional or spiritual care. Continuum of care is the clinical process by which healthcare professionals, patients, and families collaborate to ensure the patients have access to services for their continuing care.

If you or your family are in need of post-hospital care, ask your primary physician or nurse to contact the appropriate inter-disciplinary healthcare team member.

## Information

### Health Information Management

A complete medical record is maintained at Trinity Hospital and Trinity Health St. Joseph's Hospital for each individual who is evaluated or treated. All clinical information is incorporated into it. Your medical record is kept confidential. Generally, information from your medical record will not be released to outside agencies or persons without your authorization. You have a right to view, amend, and receive copies of your medical record per department policy, state and federal laws.

### Infection Prevention and Control

Trinity Hospitals strives to provide an environment that is safe from infection. Our primary concern is for the safety and well-being of our patients. The hospital has developed Infection Prevention Guidelines that help ensure the health of every patient by maintaining a safe and clean hospital environment. Prevention is basic to fighting infections and keeping everyone safe.

#### What Trinity Does to Prevent Infection

- Hand Hygiene is the **single most important procedure** within any health care setting for preventing the spread of infection. Hand hygiene consists of careful handwashing with soap and warm water OR using an approved hand sanitizer (waterless hand cleaner) when entering or leaving a patient's room and after touching the patient or surroundings. Clean hands are the MOST important means for protecting our patients and we require all staff to maintain clean hands and we ask that you and your visitors/family members do the same. Please help to remind everyone (including staff, family,

physicians, visitors) who enters your room or is about to make physical contact with you (such as in lab or radiology) to wash/sanitize their hands.

- Staff follows "Standard Precautions" on all patients which are to use protective barriers such as gloves, cover gowns, masks, and eye/face protectors to prevent the spread of disease. The type of protective barriers depends on the disease, however the "rule" is to treat all blood/body fluids as potentially harmful and use protective barriers when it is known or possible to come into contact with any body fluids.
- All equipment, instruments, and surfaces are disinfected and/or sterilized between each patient use to eliminate infectious agents. Many items are disposable, such as needles and syringes, and discarded after each use.
- Each patient room and bathroom is cleaned daily and between patients. All surfaces are disinfected with an EPA-registered hospital disinfectant designed to kill infectious agents.
- Trinity has an Infection Prevention and Control Department that develops Policies and Procedure Guidelines, based on the most current, up-to-date recommendations developed by nationally professional organizations such as OSHA, Centers for Disease Control, Joint Commission, APIC, SHEA, etc. These guidelines are for use by Trinity Health managers /supervisors during the development of their Departmental Policies and Procedures.

#### How YOU can protect yourself

- Remind EVERYONE entering your room to wash/sanitize their hands; this includes staff, physicians, family members and visitors.
- If you have a wound dressing, tell your nurse if it becomes loose or wet.
- Keep your IV dressing clean and dry. If it becomes wet, loose or the site becomes red or painful tell your nurse.
- If you have any "tubes" such as surgery drainage tubes, chest tubes, urinary catheters tell your nurse if it becomes loose, falls out or becomes painful.
- To help prevent pneumonia follow instructions about all your breathing treatments. Sitting up in bed or a chair, if allowed, will help in the prevention of pneumonia.
- Please wash your hands after using the bathroom, before eating and before any contact with your IV, dressings from surgery, etc.
- Please advise your friends and family members not to visit if they have a cold, flu or any other illness. This protects you and other patients, as well as staff members throughout the hospital.

**Please DON'T BE SHY!!!**  
**Our primary goal is to provide a safe and clean environment during your stay at Trinity Hospitals. Remind everyone to wash/sanitize their hands before they make contact with you.**

# Family and Friends Photo/Video Policy

Generally, formal patient consent is not required for family/friends to take photos during a stay at Trinity Health. However, taking photos is permitted only when (1) both the clinician and the patient agree (i.e., must be medically consistent with the patient's best interest and/or not disruptive of overall patient care), and (2) family and friends acknowledge they may be required to discontinue if a clinician deems it necessary.

Patients, family members and friends must be aware of their surroundings and ensure no photographs include Protected Health Information (PHI) or other people who have not consented to being photographed (e.g., patients in the background, information such as patient names and room assignments written on a white board, printed copies of patient information, etc.).





**TRINITY**  
HEALTH