

NSW PHYSIOTHERAPISTS
REGISTRATION
BOARD

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Ten Rights
of People Receiving Physiotherapy

Ten Responsibilities
of People Receiving Physiotherapy

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People have the right to:

- **be treated with respect**
- **be free from discrimination, coercion, harassment and exploitation**
- **their dignity and independence**
- **services of an appropriate standard**
- **effective communication**
- **be fully informed**
- **make an informed choice and give informed consent**
- **have support**
- **be the subject of medical research or teaching only with informed consent**
- **make a complaint**

People have the right to **be treated with respect**. You, your family and your carers should be treated courteously. You should be treated with full recognition of your needs, culture and beliefs. Your privacy should be respected and information held about you should be kept confidential. Information about you should only be given to another person with your permission unless it is required by the law.

People have the right to **be free from discrimination, coercion, harassment and exploitation**. You should not be coerced into any treatment or plan you do not agree with. You should not experience any sexual or exploitative behaviour such as unwanted touching or suggestions. You should not be refused treatment on the basis of your sex, age, ethnic background or sexual preference.

People have the right to **their dignity and independence**. Your personal dignity should be respected. You have the right to drapes or gowns during treatments. Services should be provided which take into account your level of independence.

People have the right to **services of an appropriate standard**. You have the right to services provided with care and skill in keeping with recognised standards, practices and ethics. You should expect that people providing your services will cooperate to ensure quality and continuity of care. You should expect that treatment provided will minimise any potential harm and enhance your quality of life. You should expect that accurate and current records of your progress will be kept. You should expect to be referred to another more suitably qualified physiotherapist if necessary and that you would not be expected to continue treatment unless there was some benefit from doing so.

People have the right to **effective communication**. You should expect that your physiotherapist will communicate openly, honestly and effectively with you. If English is not your first language and it is reasonably practicable, an interpreter should be arranged for you.

People have the right to **be fully informed**. You should have the physiotherapy treatments explained to you including the risks and benefits, as well as other options for treatment in a way that you can understand. You should be informed of the approximate number, and the costs of treatment. You have the right to **be informed** of the results of any physiotherapy tests or procedures. You should be told if the physiotherapist to treat you could be a student or in training. The physiotherapist should assist you in obtaining a second opinion if you require it. You have the right to view your record of treatment however you should discuss this with the physiotherapist involved. You have a right to receive on request a written summary of information related to your treatment.

People have the right to **make an informed choice and give informed consent**. You should only receive treatment that has been explained to you and with your agreement or consent,

except in emergencies or where legally restricted. You have a right to refuse any physiotherapy intervention or to withdraw your consent at any time.

People have the right to **have support**. You should be able to have someone accompany you during treatment except where your or their safety might be compromised.

People have rights with **respect to teaching and research**. You can decide whether or not to take part in medical research. The clinical experiences of student physiotherapists are very important for their profession development, nonetheless, you can choose whether or not to have a physiotherapy student treat you or be a part of student education. All rights in this code extend to those occasions when you agree to participate in either teaching or research.

People have the right to **make a complaint**. You may make a complaint or a compliment verbally or in writing. Your complaint should be treated confidentially. You should first direct your complaint to the physiotherapist responsible for your intervention. The physiotherapist treating you should try to resolve the complaint fairly, promptly and effectively. If you do not receive a satisfactory response from the physiotherapist you may direct your complaint to one of the following:

1. The Patient Advocate Unit at the local hospital or Area Health Service, if you are receiving hospital physiotherapy
2. The Physiotherapists Registration Board
PO Box K599, Haymarket NSW 1238
Phone (02) 9219 0255
3. The Health Care Complaints Commission
Locked Bag 18, Strawberry Hills NSW 2012
Phone (02) 9219 7444 or toll free 1800 043 159

These bodies should acknowledge your complaint within 14 days and inform you of the plans and outcome for handling your complaint.

Ten Responsibilities of People Receiving Physiotherapy

People have a responsibility to:

- **treat the physiotherapist with respect and courtesy**
- **ensure that they not be discriminatory** in their dealings with a physiotherapist
- **respect the right to privacy and dignity** of other patients and the physiotherapist
- **observe policies** on the payment of accounts and appointments
- **comply with the agreed treatment** and follow advice or instructions given
- **observe the rules and policies** of the physiotherapy department or practice
- **communicate their concerns and needs effectively** and in a timely manner
- **make an informed decision** on the treatment for themselves
- **inform the physiotherapist of the effects of treatment** whether it was negative or positive
- if a complaint is made, people have the responsibility to **ensure that the complaint is not petty or simply for the purpose of troublemaking**.

Acknowledgements:

NSW Health: Guidelines to Health Services for the development of local *“You and Your Health Service”* publications. March 1999.

HCCC: *Guidelines for Complaint Handling* 1996

NZ Health and Disability Commissioner: *Operation of the Health and Disability Commissioner*. November 1996.