

MEDICARE PATIENT RIGHTS CHECKLIST

YOUR RIGHTS AS A MEDICARE PATIENT ADMITTED AS AN INPATIENT

1. Right to Receive the “Important Message from Medicare” (IM)

What It Is: A notice explaining your hospital discharge rights.

When You Get It: Within 2 days of admission and again before discharge.

Regulation Hospitals Must Follow: 42 CFR § 489.27(b) & § 405.1205

Expert Tip: Ask for this form if you have not received it—it is your protection if you disagree with a discharge.

2. Right to Appeal a Hospital Discharge

You Can Say “I’m Not Ready to Leave”: File a fast appeal with the QIO (Quality Improvement Organization).

Call Within: Midnight the day of discharge.

Regulation Hospitals Must Follow: 42 CFR § 405.1206

Expert Tip: Keep the QIO number from your IM handy. It is often buried in fine print, but it’s your hotline to stop a premature discharge.

3. Right to Understand and Approve Your Care Plan

Includes: Medications, therapies, discharge goals, and follow-up.

Regulation Hospitals Must Follow: 42 CFR § 482.13(b)(2)

Expert Tip: Ask “What is today’s plan of care?” during morning rounds. Make sure your voice is part of the plan.

4. Right to Be Free from Discrimination or Abuse

Includes: Equal treatment regardless of age, gender, race, or disability.

Regulations Hospitals Must Follow: Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act

Expert Tip: If you feel mistreated, ask to speak with a hospital patient advocate, social worker, or case manager immediately.

5. Right to Ask Questions and Get Clear Answers

You Can Say: “I do not understand. Can you explain that another way?”

Regulation Hospitals Must Follow: 42 CFR § 482.13(b)(2)

Expert Tip: Use a notebook or app to track your questions—then bring it to rounds. You have the right to know everything about your care.

MEDICARE PATIENT RIGHTS CHECKLIST CONTINUED

6. Right to Receive Medically Necessary Care

Includes: All services deemed “reasonable and necessary” under Medicare.

Regulation Hospitals Must Follow: 42 U.S.C. § 1395y(a)(1)(A)

Expert Tip: If told “Medicare won’t cover that,” ask: “*Can you show me the written denial or provide the policy number used for that decision?*”

TIPS FROM A NURSE CASE MANAGER TO YOU:

Don’t Go It Alone: Always ask to speak with a case manager, social worker, or patient advocate if you feel overwhelmed.

Be Present and Proactive: Families should attend rounds or call for updates daily.

Request a Care Conference: If care is complicated or the discharge plan doesn’t make sense, ask for a team meeting.

Document Everything: Write down names, dates, and what was said. This helps with appeals and future care.

Questions or Problems? Call 1-800-MEDICARE.

You Have the Right to Understand, Speak Up, and Be Heard.

Never Be Afraid to Ask for Help.