

Youth Rights in Health Care

1. Confidentiality

“Confidentiality” in healthcare is about keeping things private between you and a healthcare professional. This way you can be confident in talking openly and honestly to staff so that they can provide you with the best care.

Your rights

Details of anything you say, anything written about you or any treatment you receive will be kept secret from your family, teachers, employers and any other organisations.

You have the right to see your records and have them explained to you at any time. To do this, ask to see the “Practice Manager” at your GP Surgery or “Record Manager” at the Hospital.

Exceptions

Healthcare professionals have a duty to keep you and everyone else safe. This means sometimes they have to share information about you on a need-to-know basis. If they think that you are putting yourself or others in danger it is their job to share information with family, school or the relevant authorities. It is your right to be told if this is going to happen.

2. Consent to Treatment

“Consent” in healthcare is all about giving permission for things to happen to you. For example at times you may have to make choices on the treatment you receive.

Your rights

Everybody regardless of age is entitled to make their own decisions about things that happen to their own bodies. It’s often important to use our families to help make good decisions but ultimately it’s your body and you have the choice. You can even refuse treatment that you don’t want.

Exceptions

If a healthcare professional thinks you are unable to make informed decisions they have to find someone else to consent for you. This could be parents, doctors, courts, local authorities or an appointed proxy. (A person who is appointed, by you, to represent you). This will only happen on occasions where you do not have the capacity to make the decision yourself. Things like mental health conditions or substance misuse may contribute towards decreased capacity to make the right choices.

3. Feedback

Your feedback on services (whether good or bad) is essential for GP's surgeries, dental surgeries, hospitals and clinics to know what's working and what's not. Without it they won't be able to improve.

Your rights

Any person, no matter how young they are, has the right to give feedback without it affecting their services. You can complain about services you've received in the past or are still receiving now. There are NO EXCEPTIONS.

Complaints

If you are comfortable trying to resolve a problem directly with a GP, Dental Surgery or clinic ask for the "Practice Manager" and tell them your complaint. If you don't feel like you can speak to them directly tell the commissioner at www.england.nhs.uk/contact-us/ or call 0300 311 22 33

If it is a hospital you want to resolve a problem with directly ask for the "Sister in Charge" (if on a ward) or the "Complaints Manager".

Alternatively you could contact the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) if you want to resolve a problem without speaking to the hospital directly.

If you're under 18You have rights in the NHS!