MIDDLE GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY
HEALTH CLINIC

PATIENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Any discussion with a physician, nurse practitioner, nurse, technician, counselor, or other health care professional can be valuable to the patient in terms of both health and learning. Patients are encouraged to take an active part in the exchange. If they do not feel that their concerns are being addressed or that their questions are being answered, they are encouraged to tell their clinician or restate their specific needs. MGA health services staff has an obligation to establish a climate that diminishes anxiety and encourages and embraces honest open communication between the provider and the patient.

The health clinic may terminate the rights of patients, thus ending the Patient-Provider relationship, and refuse medical care to a patient for situations including, but not limited to, the following circumstances when a patient may be: non-compliant, unreasonably demanding, threatening to the provider or staff, or otherwise contributing to a breakdown in the Patient-Provider relationship.

As a patient, you have the **RIGHT** to:

Dignity: The patient has a right to have their dignity as an individual recognized and respected. They have a right to the same considerations and respect as anyone else, regardless of their age, race, beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, and lifestyle.

Privacy: The patient has a right to privacy whenever and wherever possible. They should expect that their discussion, examination, and treatment would be conducted in a private environment and that medical information be maintained in accordance with accepted medical records privacy and security guidelines.

Confidentiality: The patient has a right to confidential treatment of all communications and records relating to them. Permission must be obtained before health clinic staff gives information to anyone not directly connected with the patient's case. This requirement applies to parents, relatives, close friends, and college/university personnel. There are limited exceptions required by laws, such as reporting certain communicable/infectious diseases, parent or guardian permission to treat minors (under age 18), or situations which threaten the patient's safety or the safety of others.

Access: The patient has a right to access and utilize health clinic services, but with this right comes the responsibility to understand the scope and range of available services and make appropriate use of these services and related provider time. The patient has a right to have reasonable access to information regarding diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis.

Provider Change: the patient has a right to change providers. The health clinic has a right to assign patients to providers based on patient demand and staff availability.

As a consumer of health services, the patient has **RESPONSIBILITIES** as well as rights. The patient can help by being responsible by:

Being Honest: The patient is responsible for being honest and direct about everything that relates to his/her needs for health clinic services. The patient needs to tell those who are helping him/her how they feel about the things that are happening to them.

Making Sure They Understand: The patient is responsible for the understanding of their health problems or needs to their satisfaction. If they do not understand the treatment plan, test procedure, or patient education information, they should ask the interviewer or practitioner about it. The patient needs to be sure they understand – ask questions!

Making Appropriate Use of Services and Staff Time: The patient has a responsibility to understand the scope and range of available services and make appropriate use of the services and related provider time.

Following the Prescribed Plan: It is the patient's responsibility to advise the health clinic staff trying to help them, whether or not they can and want to follow the prescribed plan. If the patient is in agreement with the plan, they need to follow it. If they are not in agreement with the plan, they should be encouraged to talk to their health care provider about their concerns.

Reporting Changes: It is the patient's responsibility to tell the health clinic staff about any changes in their health in relationship to the treatment provided.

Keeping Your Appointment: It is the patient's responsibility to keep appointments at the scheduled time, or notify the health clinic staff if they cannot keep or will be late for an appointment.

Knowing Your Interviewer or Practitioner: The patient should try to know or remember the name of the personnel who serve them. The health clinic staff will try to make this an easy task by introducing themselves and wearing nametags. The patient is encouraged to make a note of this, either mentally or on paper. The patient's health is a shared responsibility with the health clinic staff.

Being a Participant: It is the patient's responsibility to become an active participant in decisions regarding his/her own care.