



# Patient Services Guide

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Improving the health of our community in all we do.

# WELCOME FROM THE CEO

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On behalf of everyone at Northeast Georgia Health System (NGHS), I welcome you to Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC). For many years, we have been your community hospital. We are committed to providing our communities convenient access to personalized, high-quality care.

This guide will provide you and your family members with valuable information about the hospital and its services. Please let a member of our care team know if you have any questions or concerns, or if anything is unclear about your care. We recognize it is difficult to be away from home, and we will do our best to make you as comfortable as possible.

We know you have a choice in where you receive care, and we thank you for entrusting yours to us.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew L. Hanley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Matthew L. Hanley, MD  
President and CEO  
Northeast Georgia Health System

“*We are committed to providing our communities convenient access to personalized, high-quality care.*”

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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|                                     |    |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| MYCHART                             | 3  |
| PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY         | 3  |
| GETTING SETTLED                     | 4  |
| GOOD QUESTIONS FOR YOUR GOOD HEALTH | 5  |
| YOUR CARE TEAM                      | 6  |
| MANAGING YOUR PAIN                  | 8  |
| “CHAMPS” SAFETY PROGRAM             | 11 |
| PARTNERING FOR SAFETY               | 12 |
| IMMUNIZATIONS                       | 14 |
| SAFETY                              | 16 |
| ROAD TO RECOVERY                    | 19 |
| HOSPITAL BILLING AND INSURANCE      | 20 |
| PATIENT/FAMILY DECISIONS            | 21 |
| DISCRIMINATION IS AGAINST THE LAW   | 23 |
| PATIENT RIGHTS                      | 25 |
| PATIENT RESPONSIBILITIES            | 27 |
| PATIENT EXPERIENCE IS OUR PRIORITY  | 28 |
| NOTES                               | 29 |

# MYCHART

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Securely connect with your doctor or provider and access your health information at any time, day or night. With a free MyChart account you can:

- Get your test and lab results
- Stay in touch with your provider
- Schedule and manage your follow up appointments

▶ Visit [nghs.com/mychart](https://nghs.com/mychart) for more information or to sign up.

## PATIENT/FAMILY REQUESTS FOR PHOTOGRAPHING AND/OR VIDEOTAPING

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When patients or family members (on behalf of patients) request photography and/or videotaping, care must be taken to ensure that other patients or employees are not included without their consent. Ask your nurse for a HIPAA Authorization Form to get permission from everyone included in the photography and/or videotaping.



# GETTING SETTLED

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In addition to this guide, you may receive educational materials related to the department where you receive care.

## The staff will talk to you about the following when you arrive:

- **Bedside Shift Report** occurs in the morning and evening, is performed at the bedside and includes the patient. The purpose of Bedside Shift Report is to ensure a safe hand-off of care between nurses by involving the patient and family and improve the patient experience.
  - Intentional rounding
  - How to use:
    - Call light
    - Bed control
    - Phone
    - TV
    - Internet services
    - Other equipment you may need
  - How our staff keeps you safe:
    - Hand hygiene when entering and leaving your room
    - Your fall prevention plan
  - Restroom location
  - How to store valuables and medications if you cannot send them home with a responsible person
  - Please let staff know as soon as possible if you have any personal preferences in the way we provide care or interact with you, such as religious preferences, gendering, dietary restrictions related to allergies or personal preferences.
  - Visitation
- ▶ See the latest visitation guidelines at [nghs.com/visitation](https://www.nghs.com/visitation).
- Get Well
    - Get Well is a patient education and infotainment experience designed to engage, empower and inform patients and families throughout their stay at Northeast Georgia Medical Centers. Your care team may assign education and safety videos through Get Well; these videos are typically three to five minutes long. Patients and families can access Get Well 24-hours a day from the in-room television or from your own personal smartphone or tablet. If you have questions about Get Well, please ask your care team.

## Remember:

- All NGHS facilities are smoke-free.

# GOOD QUESTIONS FOR YOUR GOOD HEALTH

Ask Me 3<sup>®</sup> is an educational program developed by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement in Boston, Mass., that encourages you and your family to ask three specific questions when you're receiving health care:

1. What is my main problem?
2. What do I need to do?
3. Why is it important for me to do this?



Designed by health literacy experts, Ask Me 3 is intended to help you become more active members of your health care team, and provide a critical platform to improve communications between patients, families and health care professionals.



# YOUR CARE TEAM

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## What is a Hospitalist?

A **hospitalist** is a physician who specializes in the care of patients in the hospital. They have completed medical school and a residency, usually in internal medicine.

Since hospitalists are on-site **24-hours a day, seven days a week**, they are able to provide you with around-the-clock care. During your inpatient hospital stay, your nurse may page your hospitalist at any time, day or night.

## What is an Intensivist?

An **intensivist**, also known as a critical care physician, is a medical doctor with special training and experience in treating critically ill patients. An intensivist completes a fellowship in critical care medicine after finishing a residency in internal medicine, pulmonary medicine, anesthesia or surgery.

## What is a Specialist?

A **specialist** is a doctor who specializes in a defined area of medicine, such as an orthopedist, podiatrist or cardiologist.

## What is a Nurse Practitioner (NP)?

**Nurse practitioners** are advanced practice registered nurses who are educated and trained to diagnose and treat acute illnesses and chronic conditions. According to the International Council of Nurses, these nurses have at least a master's degree and the expertise to manage acute and chronic medical conditions, both physical and mental. NPs are qualified to diagnose medical problems, order tests and treatments, perform advanced procedures, prescribe medications and make referrals for a wide range of acute and chronic medical conditions.

## What is a Physician Assistant (PA)?

**Physician Assistants** practice medicine as a part of a healthcare team with collaborating physicians and other providers. In the United States, PAs are nationally certified and state-licensed to practice medicine. Their work may include conducting physical exams, ordering and interpreting tests, diagnosing illnesses, developing treatment plans, care coordination, performing procedures, prescribing medications, clinical research, advising on preventive health care and assisting in surgery.



### What is a Resident Physician?

A **Resident Physician** is a physician who is participating in a training program for a specialized area of medicine. When their training is complete, residents will be able to practice and become board certified in that specialty. They are practicing physicians, but are under the supervision of a board-certified physician.

- ▶ Visit [doctors.nghs.com](https://doctors.nghs.com) to learn more about our physicians and advanced practice providers or schedule a follow-up appointment.



# MANAGING YOUR PAIN

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Our team will regularly review your pain management goals and discuss options with you during your hospital stay. While we might not be able to take your pain completely away, we want to manage the pain with your help. When your pain is controlled, you will have the ability to perform your daily activities, participate in therapy and improve faster.

## Medication Pain Management

Pain comes in many ways and requires different treatment methods specific to each patient. Your team may use multi-modal pain management, a strategy that involves the use of more than one medication that act in different ways in the body to lessen the pain. This approach aims to lower pain, decrease side effects, minimize opioid use and improve patient care and recovery time.

## What You Can Do to Help

- Tell the clinical team about chronic or acute pain you have. The more they know about your pain, the better they can treat it.
- Describe your pain from 0 to 10, with 10 being the worst pain. This helps the clinical team treat your pain effectively.
- Tell them when and where it hurts.
- Describe how your pain affects your sleep or prevents you from doing your normal activities like dressing or walking.

## What the Clinical Team Will Do

- Assess your type of pain.
- Choose the right treatment, which may include medication.
- Review the effectiveness of the treatment and side effects that you may experience.
- Repeat the process until your pain is manageable with minimal side effects.

### Possible Side Effects of Opioid Use include:

- Upset stomach
- Ulcers
- Increased bleeding
- Dizziness
- Sleepiness
- Headache
- Dry mouth
- Nausea
- Constipation
- Mental confusion
- Skin flushing

Any of these side effects in excess may result in a longer recovery and delay in discharge from the hospital.

### Additional Pain Management Options

There are also other ways to treat pain that may help medication work better or that can be used in place of medication.

Ask your nurse about:

- **Repositioning, stretching and increasing activity** – Changing your position can help with pain.
- **Pillows** – Use pillows to support your arms, legs and back.
- **Increase physical activity gradually** – Your clinical team will work with you to guide increased activity after surgery.
- **Comfort items** – Warm blankets, extra pillows and mouth swabs are available to help you feel more comfortable.
- **Hot and cold therapies** – Hot therapy may help relax muscles, relieve spasms and improve healing. Cold therapy may numb a painful area and decrease circulation to control swelling and bruising.

### What Your Family Can Do

- **Touch or Light Massage** – Friends and family may help provide the healing power of touch.
- **Relaxation Options** – Music, personal headphones, closed doors and quiet time may help you to relax. Ask your family to bring items for activities you enjoy or ask your nurse about what may be available.
- **Distraction** – Music, TV, books, magazines, crossword puzzles, word searches, cards, board games and personal computer devices can help take your focus away from pain. Ask your family to bring items for activities you enjoy or ask your nurse about what may be available.

### What Services You Can Request

- **Chaplain Visit** – Chaplains are available to make pastoral visits, administer holy rites, provide scriptures and contact your minister upon request. If you would like a chaplain to visit, ask your nurse to contact the chaplain team.
- **Spiritual Care Services** – Grounded in a variety of religious traditions and trained to support those of all faiths – even those who are not comfortable with religious beliefs – chaplains meet you where you are and can provide prayer, meditation, readings, relaxation techniques and guided imagery.

▶ Visit [www.nghs.com/spiritual-care](http://www.nghs.com/spiritual-care) to learn more

- **Live Therapeutic Music** – Live therapeutic music can decrease pain and anxiety, promote relaxation and facilitate healing. Ask your nurse if this is available for you.
- **Pet Therapy** – NGMC has pet therapy volunteers and therapy dogs that provide a comforting source of healing touch. Ask your nurse if this is available for you.



## “CHAMPS” SAFETY PROGRAM

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Caring for your health is a team effort, and you are an important member of the team. **CHAMPS** is an acronym we use to help us put safety first! You and your family can use it while you are a patient in the hospital as well. We have included some examples of when you could use **CHAMPS** during your hospital stay, but there are many other ways you and your family can help us provide you with the safest care possible.

**COMMUNICATE CLEARLY** – Tell us about pain or when you need to use the restroom

**HANDOFF EFFECTIVELY** – Let hospital staff know if you have concerns about returning home

**ACT WITH A QUESTIONING ATTITUDE** – Mention to staff when medications do not look familiar to you

**MAINTAIN YOUR WINGPERSON AT ALL TIMES** – Family members can speak up for safety concerns

**PAY ATTENTION TO DETAIL** – Make notes for yourself to make it easier to remember details when you get home

**SPEAK UP FOR SAFETY** – Always ask questions when things do not make sense, or do not match what other staff members have told you

# PARTNERING FOR SAFETY

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## FALL PREVENTION

As it is our goal to keep you safe during your hospital stay, staff will assess your risk for falling throughout your hospitalization.

- Your risk for falling during your hospital stay may change depending on your condition.
- It is important for you and your family to be involved in the effort to keep you safe while you are here.
- NGMC uses items, such as fall mats, that help prevent an injury if you fall while in the hospital.

Our goal is to keep every patient safe, so staff will use basic safety measures for all patients.

- Staff reduce the risk of falling by:
  - Keeping the call light within reach
  - Making sure you are wearing non-skid footwear (like slippers or non-skid socks) when out of bed
  - Keeping needed items within reach
  - Reducing clutter in your room
- Staff may use items to assist you with walking, such as gait belts, canes or walkers. You may be asked to use a bedpan or bedside commode rather than walking into the bathroom.
- **Only staff should help you get out of bed or from a chair.** It is important for you to call the staff for help even if a family member is present.
- Sometimes the staff may use alarms to alert them if you are trying to get out of bed or the chair. **Only staff may turn the alarms on or off.**

Additional safety measures that may be used based on your risk for injury (should you fall) include the use of a mat, helmet or hip protectors.

## RAPID RESPONSE TEAM (RRT)

During your hospital stay, it's possible that your condition may change. We desire to partner with you and your family to maintain your safety, so some factors to look for include new onset chest pain, stroke symptoms, blood pressure being too high or too low, breathing problems or the patient just "does not look right." If any of these occur, please call 770-219-4357 from your personal device or 94357 from any hospital telephone to active a rapid response. We have a specially trained team that will provide any immediately needed care and determine if you need to move to a higher level of care. In addition to calling this number, please be sure your nurse is aware of the change in condition and your Rapid Response call.

# ISOLATION PROCEDURES

If you have an infection, we may place you on isolation precautions. This helps prevent germs from spreading to other patients, visitors and hospital staff.

For your safety and the safety of others, please:

- Stay in your room unless we take you for a test or treatment.
- Follow the hospital isolation precautions to help prevent the infection from spreading.
- Ask questions and talk with your healthcare team about any concerns.
- Our patients and visitors are encouraged to remind staff to perform hand hygiene.
- Visitors will be asked to wear personal protection equipment.
- Check with the nurse before entering a room if there is an isolation sign.

## HAND HYGIENE

Patients and Visitors: When to clean your hands.

### TRUTH

Your hands can spread germs.

#### THE NITTY GRITTY:

Make sure you and your visitors are cleaning your hands at these important times:



### Use soap and water:

- When hands look dirty
- If you have a *C. difficile* infection
- Before eating and after using the restroom



### Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer:

- When hands do not look dirty



# IMMUNIZATIONS

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## VACCINATIONS

The best way to prevent the flu and most common types of bacterial pneumonia is to get a shot or vaccination.

## PNEUMONIA

The pneumonia (pneumococcal) shot is safe and effective. While it does not protect against viruses that may cause pneumonia, it does protect you from most bacteria that cause pneumonia.

Things You Should Know About Getting a Pneumonia Shot:

- There are two different types of pneumonia shots; people 65 or older should get both shots.
- Medicare covers both pneumonia shots. Talk with your doctor to see if you need these shots.
- Even if you have had pneumonia, you can still get it again. Many different kinds of bacteria can cause pneumonia.
- Pneumonia shots can help protect you against most of them.
- You cannot get pneumonia from the shot; the shot contains killed bacteria that teach your body how to fight the disease.
- People of any age with a weak immune system or chronic disease (e.g., heart, lung, liver or kidney) should get a pneumonia shot.

## FLU (INFLUENZA)

Getting a flu shot helps protect you from coming down with the flu. Because the flu viruses change from year to year, you need a shot every year.

Things You Should Know About Getting a Flu Shot:

- Flu season begins as early as October and can last through May.
- Each year, 5 to 20 percent of the U.S. population gets the flu, tens of thousands are hospitalized and thousands die from flu-related illness.
- People older than six months should get a flu shot every year. This includes healthy people and people with chronic diseases.
- You need a flu shot every year because flu viruses change from year to year.
- It takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body and provide protection against the influenza virus.
- There is still a possibility you could get the flu even if you are vaccinated.

## COVID-19

The COVID-19 vaccine reduces the chance that you'll have severe symptoms, need hospitalization or die from the virus.

- ▶ The latest information about eligibility, doses, boosters, treatments and more is available at [nghs.com/covid-19](https://www.nghs.com/covid-19).



# SAFETY

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## **For your safety, NGMC provides Security Services 24 hours a day.**

We strive to maintain a safe and secure environment for our patients, visitors and staff. Our uniformed officers conduct random patrols of the hospital campuses, answer calls regarding security concerns and provide walking escort services to and from the parking areas upon request.

### **AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR WILL NOT BE TOLERATED**

This is a healing environment. There is zero tolerance for any and all forms of aggression. Examples of aggressive behavior include:

- Physical assault
- Verbal harassment
- Abusive language
- Sexual language
- Threats

Incidents may result in security action and/or removal from this facility. For help or concerns, contact the Patient Relations team. (See page 30.)

## **Securing your belongings and valuables**

Patients and visitors are responsible for all belongings. NGMC is not responsible for loss or damage of any personal belongings that patients may bring to our facilities, or that may be brought to patients by visitors. All patient valuables should be given to family members or left at home prior to admission. In the event valuables (e.g., money, jewelry, wallets/purses, items of monetary or sentimental value) need to be stored during your stay, please contact your clinical staff for assistance, and our security team will store them in a secured location until you are ready to be discharged.

Please note that belongings left in our custody for 30 days after discharge will be donated to a local charity.

## The following tips are provided to assist you with securing your personal belongings and valuables:

- **Clothing** – There is limited storage space in each patient's room. We suggest you send home clothing worn to the hospital with family/friends, and the appropriate clothing be brought to the hospital shortly before your discharge.
- **Denture Care** – Inform your nurse if you are wearing bridges or dentures. Staff members will provide a denture cup to store them in when not in use. The cup will be labeled with your name. Please avoid placing dentures on a meal tray, under a pillow, in a water cup, in the pocket of a hospital robe or gown, in the bed sheets or in any concealed place where they may be lost or accidentally thrown out.
- **Hearing Aids** – Hearing aids should be kept in the original case provided upon purchase. If the original case is not available, nursing staff will provide a container labeled with your name to store the hearing aids in when not in use. Do not leave hearing aids unprotected on the bedside table, on the bed, on the meal tray or in the pocket of a hospital gown or robe.
- **Eyeglasses and contacts** – To prevent loss or damage to eyewear during hospitalization, do not to leave eyeglasses or contacts unprotected on the bedside table, bed or in the pocket of a hospital robe or gown. Eyewear is best secured in the case provided on purchase, labeled with your name.
- **Wheelchairs, Walkers, Canes or Crutches, Home Monitors or Respiratory Machines** – Please put your name and date of birth on all necessary items that are brought to the hospital. Your nurse can provide a sticker label for you to write this information on and affix to your belongings.
- **Medications** – Always bring a list of all the medications that you are taking to the hospital. This list should also include herbals, over-the-counter medications and prescription medications. If you bring in your own medications, your nurse will send your medications to pharmacy for review, verification and labeling.
- **Lost Items** – While NGMC is not responsible for the personal belongings and valuables of patients or visitors, we will make every reasonable attempt to return lost or misplaced items to their owners. In the event that belongings or valuables are lost or cannot be located, please notify your nurse. For lost patient belongings or valuables found after patient discharge, we will attempt to reach you at your last known phone number.

# ROAD TO RECOVERY

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To help make sure that you and your caregiver have all of the information you need, here are some questions you might want to ask your care team:

- Do I have any follow-up appointment(s)?
- What medication do I need to start taking and what are the side effects?
- Do I need to stop taking any medications that I took before my hospital stay?
- What medical equipment do I need at home?
- What problems should I watch for?
- Who should I call if I have problems?
- Am I on a special diet? If so, for how long?
- How do I change my bandage or dressings at home?

You can access test results, refill medications and stay in touch with your providers through MyChart.



# HOSPITAL BILLING AND INSURANCE

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NGHS is committed to improving the health of the community in all we do – and that includes financial health, in addition to physical and mental health.

- ▶ Visit [nghs.com/price-estimates](https://nghs.com/price-estimates) or call **770-219-7678** to get a price estimate for your care.

## If You Have Health Insurance

Final costs for your care may vary due to insurance coverage and your unique course of care. Insurance plans may have special requirements, such as a second surgical opinion or pre-certification for certain tests or procedures. You should call the number on your insurance card to learn whether your plan may have these or similar requirements. If your plan's requirements are not followed, you may be financially responsible for all or part of the services provided in the hospital. Some physicians and specialists may not participate in your healthcare plan, and their services may not be covered.

- ▶ For a complete list of insurance plans accepted at NGHS, visit [nghs.com/insurance](https://nghs.com/insurance).

## If You are Covered by Medicaid

We will need a copy of your current Medicaid card. Medicaid also has payment limitations on a number of services and items.

## If You are Covered by Medicare

We will need a copy of your Medicare card to verify eligibility and process your Medicare claim.

Information on any supplemental insurance will also need to be provided. You should be aware that the Medicare program specifically excludes payment for certain items and services such as cosmetic surgery, some oral surgery procedures, personal comfort items, hearing evaluations and others. Deductibles and co-payments also are the responsibility of the patient.

## If You Don't Have Insurance

Financial Navigators are available to assist you in applying for Medicaid or other government assistance programs, and can offer discounts, payment plans or free care to eligible uninsured or underinsured patients for medically necessary care.

- ▶ Visit [nghs.com/financial-assistance](https://nghs.com/financial-assistance) to learn more.

# PATIENT/FAMILY DECISIONS

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## DO NOT RESUSCITATE (DNR)

There are many decisions to be made during hospitalization regarding your care or that of your family member. Modern medicine can now achieve many things that were considered “impossible” or “a miracle” only 10 years ago. In the hospital, when a patient’s heart or breathing stops, the entire healthcare team intervenes to interrupt the process of death. These efforts are called “heroics” and may include:

- CPR (chest compressions and artificial breathing)
- Giving emergency medicines
- Putting a tube into the airway to breathe for the patient
- Other actions

Heroics can produce wonderful life-saving results, but sometimes they may be against your wishes. Sometimes heroics may increase or prolong suffering. You and your family members are in the best position to make good decisions about the extent of care provided. After all, you know yourself or your family member better than anyone and have legal rights to make decisions about care.

An emergency is not the time to make a decision about heroics. The decision should be made during a calm time after careful consideration of all available information.

Under a Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) order, the healthcare team will not intervene if your heartbeat or breathing stops. You will continue to receive all other forms of care, such as medication, nutrition, fluids and pain relief, as determined by you and your doctor. Respect for your dignity will be maintained, and you will be kept as comfortable as possible. A DNR request can be made verbally or in writing by the persons (or documents) listed below in order of priority:

1. Patient
2. Agent under a durable power of attorney for healthcare or health care agent under an advance directive for health care
3. Spouse
4. Legally appointed guardian
5. Son or daughter age 18 or older
6. Parent
7. Brother or sister age 18 or older

If you are making this decision for your family member, base your decision on certain knowledge that they would not want heroics to sustain life in this situation. If a DNR order is requested, it is important to notify other family members that this decision has been made to prevent any confusion in the event that the patient's heart or breathing stops. A DNR order may be withdrawn verbally or in writing at any time by anyone with the decision-making power listed on the previous page. A doctor or nurse should be notified immediately of any wishes to remove this order. If you have any questions or concerns, please discuss them with your doctor or nurse.

We know this is a very difficult decision to make, and we hope this information helps you may make the best decisions for yourself or your family member.

## **ADVANCE DIRECTIVE FOR HEALTHCARE (ADHC)**

An Advance Directive for Healthcare (ADHC) is a legal document that allows you to name:

**Part 1:** A healthcare agent (and back-up agents): the person who would speak for you if you are unable to speak for yourself, or if you choose not to, formerly The Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare.

**Part 2:** Treatment preferences you would request or refuse, formerly the Living Will.

Respecting Choices, NGHS' Advance Care Planning program, was developed to support patients in having these conversations, so our staff and your family can respect the choices you make about your care. It is a gift to share your wishes with your loved ones. You can revoke or update your ADHC at any time.

▶ To learn more, visit [nghs.com/respecting-choices](https://nghs.com/respecting-choices).

# DISCRIMINATION IS AGAINST THE LAW

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

NGHS:

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

If you need these services, contact:  
NGHS Medical Interpreter Department  
Telephone Number: 770-219-1689

If you believe that NGHS 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:

**NGHS Patient Nondiscrimination Coordinator**

743 Spring Street NE

Gainesville, GA 30501

Telephone Number: 770-219-1557, (TTY: 1-800-255-0135)

(VRS: 1-888-888-1116)

Fax: 770-219-1895, or Email: [civilrightscordinator@nghs.com](mailto:civilrightscordinator@nghs.com).

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

Washington, D.C. 20201

Phone: 1-800-368-1019

TDD: 1-800-537-7697

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

# INTERPRETERS AVAILABLE

You have access to interpretation services 24/7 at no personal cost to you. This chart includes languages commonly spoken in your community, additional languages are available.

Do you speak [language]? We will provide an interpreter at no personal cost to you.

**Amharic** አማርኛ ይናገሩሉ? እርስዎ በግልጽ ምንም አማርኛ ወጪ ሳያወጡ እስተርጓሚ እናቀርባለን።

**Arabic** هل تتحدث اللغة العربية؟ سوف نوفر لك مترجم فوراً من دون أي تكلفة عليك. اللغة العربية

**Cantonese** 您讲粤语吗? 我们将免费为您提供 粵語 翻译。

**French** Parlez-vous français ? Nous vous  
**Français** fournirons gratuitement un interprète.

**French Creole** Èske ou pale Kreyòl ayisyen? N ap ba ou  
**Franse Kreyòl** yon entèprèt gratis.

**German** Sprechen Sie Deutsch? Wir stellen Ihnen  
**Deutsch** unentgeltlich einen Dolmetscher zur Verfügung.

**Gujarati** શું તમે ગુજરાતી બોલો છો? અમે  
**ગુજરાતી** ઊંચપણ વ્યક્તિગત મર્યા વિના તમને અનુવાદક પ્રદાન કરીશું.

**Hindi** क्या आप हिंदी बोलते हैं? हम आपके  
**हिन्दी** लिए बिना किसी लागत के एक दूरभाषिया उपलब्ध कराएंगे।

**Japanese** 日本語を話せますか?必要であれば  
**日本語** 無料で通訳をご用意いたします。

**Korean** 한국어를 사용하십니까?  
**한국어** 무료로 통역 서비스를 제공해 드리겠습니다.

**Mandarin** 您讲普通话吗? 我们将免费为您提供  
**中文** 翻译。

**Persian** فارسی صحبت می کنید؟ یک مترجم شفاهی  
**فارسی** رایگان در اختیار شما قرار خواهیم داد.

**Portuguese** Fala português? Vamos facultar-lhe um  
**Português** intérprete, sem custos para si.

**Russian** Вы говорите по-русски? Мы абсолютно  
**Русский** бесплатно предоставим вам переводчика.

**Spanish** ¿Habla español? Le proporcionaremos un  
**Español** intérprete sin costo alguno para usted.

**Vietnamese** Quý vị nói được tiếng Việt không? Chúng tôi  
**Tiếng Việt** sẽ cung cấp một thông dịch viên miễn phí cho quý vị.

**American Sign Language (ASL)**





# PATIENT RIGHTS

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**As a patient, guardian or other designated legal representative, you have the right:**

## **Access to Care**

- To receive considerate and respectful care without discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, culture, language, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity or expression; and with recognition of all state-sanctioned marriages and spouses for purposes of compliance with the Conditions of Participation, regardless of any laws to the contrary of the state or locality where the organization is located.
- To expect competent care.
- To consult with a specialist at your own request and expense.

## **Personal Privacy/Visitation**

- To have your personal dignity and privacy respected.
- To personal and informational privacy within the law.
- To appoint a designated legal representative who will participate in your care and make decisions on your behalf should you be unable or unwilling to do so.
- To have a support person present during your care, provided it does not infringe on the rights and safety of others or interfere with care processes if you have a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- To receive visitors of your choosing and withdraw or deny your consent to receive such visitors at any time.
- To communicate by phone and/or in writing with those who cannot visit.
- To be informed of your visitation rights, including any clinical restrictions or limitations on such rights.
- To identify someone who may allow visitors on your behalf if you become incapacitated.

## **Security**

- To receive care in a safe setting and to be free from all forms of abuse or harassment.
- Be free from restraints of any form that are not medically necessary.

## **Communication**

- To receive information, you can understand.
- To access an interpreter and/or translation service at no charge.
- To be informed about and in agreement with the need to transfer to another facility and to be accepted at the receiving facility prior to that transfer.

**Access to Information**

- To know the organization's rules regulating your care and conduct.
- To have your physician and/or family member(s) and/or a representative of your choice notified of your hospital admission.
- To know the names and professional titles of your caregivers and to know which physician or other provider is primarily responsible for your care.
- To know that Northeast Georgia Health System facilities are teaching facilities and that some of your caregivers may be in training.
- To ask your caregivers if they are in training.
- To obtain complete and current information about your diagnosis (to the degree known).
- To understand your treatment and prognosis, as well as any continuing health care requirements following discharge.
- To request a referral to a specialist when applicable.
- To be involved in the development, implementation and revision of your treatment and discharge plans, when applicable.
- To make informed decisions regarding your care, including the right to request or refuse treatment.
- To make advance directives for end of life care and have medical providers who will follow them.
- To access information contained in your medical records within a reasonable time frame and without unnecessary barriers.
- To receive an itemized and detailed explanation of your total bill for services rendered, regardless of the source of payment.
- To say yes or no to experimental treatments, to be advised when a physician is considering you to be part of a medical research program or donor program, and to refuse or withdraw at any time without consequence to your care.
- To access a financial navigator for assistance with financial questions and/or financial aid.

**Pain Management**

- To have pain assessed and managed appropriately.
- To participate in the development and implementation of the plan for pain management.

## **Concerns, Complaints and Grievances**

- To receive information about the organization's mechanism for the initiation, review and resolution of patient complaints/grievances, through the Patient Services Guide information booklet or other similar written material or public postings.
- To voice complaints and recommend changes without being subject to coercion, discrimination, reprisal, or unreasonable interruption of care.
- To report a grievance relating to patient care and be informed as to the organization's resolution of such, including a written notification by the organization's representative listing the steps taken to investigate, the results of the process, and the date the process was completed.

# PATIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

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**As a patient, guardian or other legal designated representative, it is your responsibility:**

- To provide accurate and complete information about your health, including present complaints, past illnesses, hospitalizations and medications.
- To inform us of changes in your condition or symptoms, including pain.
- To ask questions about any part of your care or treatment you do not understand.
- To speak up about your concerns to any employee as soon as possible.
- To follow treatment plans recommended by the physician and/or advanced practice professional primarily responsible for your care.
- To understand that if you refuse treatment or do not follow the physician's instructions, you must accept the consequences
- To pay your bills or make arrangements to meet the financial obligations arising from your health care as promptly as possible.
- To follow our rules regulating your care and conduct.
- To keep your scheduled appointments or let us know if you are unable to keep them.
- To respect the rights and property of others.
- To treat organizational personnel with respect and consideration, providing a safe environment in which care is given and avoiding abusive behavior which could result in dismissal from a physician practice.
- To respect our request that all NGHS facilities remain smoke and vape free.
- To provide a current copy of your advance directive if you have one.
- To follow ADA regulations if a service animal accompanies you in our facility.

# PATIENT EXPERIENCE IS OUR PRIORITY

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Escalation of concerns is an important way for patients and families to be actively involved in their care. You can escalate any concerns you have to your Nurse, Charge Nurse or Nurse manager – and you can call Patient Relations from any hospital phone by dialing **92998** or **770-219-2998**. Our representatives will work with management staff to address your concerns involving Northeast Georgia Medical Center.

Escalation should occur anytime a patient or family member:

- Has unresolved concerns related to coordination of care.
- Feels uncertainty about what needs to be done.
- Would like to raise a concern not addressed/resolved.

As a health care consumer, you have the right to file a grievance if you are not satisfied with the care you received.

**To file a complaint or grievance involving Northeast Georgia Medical Center:**

- **Call the Patient Relations Department at 770-219-2998 or visit <https://www.nghs.com/contact> to send us a message.**

Contact the Georgia Department of Community Health by calling toll-free at 800-878-6442 or submit online at <https://dch.georgia.gov/divisionsoffices/hfrd/facility-licensure/hfrd-file-complaint>

**Contact our accrediting agency, DNV Healthcare, by:**

- Calling toll-free at **866-496-9647**
- Emailing: **[hospitalcomplaint@dnv.com](mailto:hospitalcomplaint@dnv.com)**
- Mailing to **DNV Healthcare USA Inc.**  
Attn: Hospital Complaints  
1400 Ravello Dr., Katy, TX 77449
- Submitting online at  
**<https://www.dnvhealthcareportal.com/patient-complaint-report>**
- Fax to **281-870-4818**.

**To file a grievance involving Northeast Georgia Physicians Group:**

- **Call the Patient Relations at 770-219-8400 or send us a message using the NGPG Patient Experience form.**



# MyChart

Stay **connected** to your **health**



Manage your appointments



Access your family's records



Get your test and lab results



Manage your medications and request refills



Stay in touch with your provider



Pay your bills

[www.nghs.com/MyChart](http://www.nghs.com/MyChart)

Download the  app to access important health information 24/7

Ask about  
**MyChart**  
today!

