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A Message from...

Arthur Wagner
Executive Director

WELCOME TO CONEY ISLAND HOSPITAL.
Our hospital has served southern Brooklyn for over 130 years. We are proud to offer you safe and effective care, in a warm, friendly setting.



We will provide you with some of the most advanced and comprehensive healthcare services in New York City during your stay with us. We are constantly working to improve our programs to better meet the needs of our community. Our entire healthcare team is committed to providing the very best care and service to you, your visitors and our community.

Please feel free to share your suggestions, compliments or concerns with any member of our staff. I want to thank you for choosing our hospital. It is our privilege to serve you.

Sincerely,

Arthur Wagner
*Senior Vice President/Executive Director
Southern Brooklyn Healthcare Network
Coney Island Hospital*



Welcome to Coney Island Hospital



SERVING THE SOUTHERN BROOKLYN COMMUNITY since 1875, Coney Island Hospital is the community's most modern community hospital and is affiliated with several of New York City's finest university medical programs. Our sole mission is to provide our patients with the highest quality care. We care for the "whole person" and seek to heal patients, their families and our diverse community in a way that respects both individuality and culture. Coney Island Hospital's three inseparable priorities are Quality Care, Patient Safety and Customer Service. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve you.

History of Coney Island Hospital

CONEY ISLAND HOSPITAL FIRST BEGAN IN 1875 as a First Aid Station located on the oceanfront beach near West Third Street where emergency treatment was given. The cases consisted chiefly of lacerations of the feet caused by broken bottles. On May 12, 1902, a small wooden building, one and one half stories high, located on Sea Breeze Avenue, was rented to serve as an emergency hospital during the summer months. Although referred to as the Sea Breeze Hospital, it was officially known as Reception Hospital, and was actually an annex of the Kings County Hospital. This unit had accommodations for 20 beds and facilities for emergency treatment. Patients requiring surgery or prolonged treatment and care were taken to Kings County Hospital, about seven miles away, in a horse-drawn ambulance.

With the rapid population growth in the southern part of Brooklyn, the need for a large and permanent hospital in this area became apparent. In 1908, construction of a 100 bed hospital was started on land purchased just north of Coney Island Creek and east of Ocean Parkway. On May 18, 1910, dedication ceremonies were held. Coney Island Hospital consisted of six buildings, namely: Main Hospital Building, Nurses Home, Employees Dormitory, Laboratory Building, Power Plant and Laundry Building. As veterans returned from World War II, the shorefront community experienced a population explosion, and so in 1954 the two white brick towers that make up the current hospital were opened. In Spring 2006, Coney Island Hospital opened a new inpatient bed tower to provide care to its ever-changing, ever-growing community.

Southern Brooklyn has long been a Mecca to new immigrants. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries it was ethnic Jews, Irish and Italians who settled here. In the '50s and '60s, African-Americans migrated from the South to live and work in New York City. Many settled in Coney Island where there was newly constructed affordable housing. From the late 1970s through the early 1990s, Brighton Beach became known as "Little Odessa" because it became the home of refugees fleeing religious and political persecution in the former Soviet Union. In the last 10 years, immigrants from many parts of the world have made southern Brooklyn their home as they sought a better life for themselves and their children. During its years of service, Coney Island Hospital has established its reputation for clinical excellence and culturally competent care.

Coney Island Hospital has been recognized for its clinical innovations in Primary Care, Adolescent Medicine, Nuclear Medicine and Emergency Services. The hospital's staff is



as diverse as the patients they serve. Interpreter services can be provided at any time of the day or night in over 130 languages.

At 371 beds, Coney Island Hospital is the major medical service provider in southern Brooklyn with over 18,000 discharges, over 300,000 outpatient visits at its three sites, and its busy Emergency Department. People from all over the world have not only found a home in southern Brooklyn but they have chosen to make their medical home at Coney Island Hospital.

Coney Island Hospital Mission Statement

TO SERVE THE COMMUNITIES OF SOUTHERN Brooklyn by providing high quality, safe and cost effective health care services in a courteous, compassionate and respectful way, regardless of ability to pay.

Mission and Vision Statement

WE WILL BE THE PROVIDER OF CHOICE FOR residents of southern Brooklyn, operating a network of community and hospital-based programs in attractive, safe and comfortable settings.

Dear Patient,

Coney Island Hospital would like to take this opportunity to say “Thank you” for allowing us to take care of you. Your healthcare and well-being are very important to us and we hope that we were able to exceed your expectations

Your opinion of our services is very important to us. We would appreciate hearing about any issues or concerns you or your family may have had during your stay with us. Please feel free to share any issues with our Patient Relations Department at (718) 616-4164.

You may receive a mail survey at home from our patient satisfaction surveyor-Press Ganey. They will ask you about your experience at our hospital. Your participation in this survey will help us to improve our delivery of care.

Once again, thank you for giving us the privilege of caring for you.

Sincerely yours,

Your healthcare team at Coney Island Hospital



Your Healthcare Team

Everyone here at CIH will work together to provide you with the best medical care possible. For your safety, all Hospital staff must wear identification badges with their name, position, and picture and must identify themselves upon your request. Here is a description of the many staff members with whom you may interact:

Attending Physician

A fully qualified licensed attending physician will be assigned to you. This physician is in charge of all aspects of your medical care.

Resident Physicians

Resident physicians are graduates of approved medical schools who are training to become specialists in one or more of the various fields of medicine.

Physician Assistants and Nurse Practitioners

Having completed specialized clinical training, they interview and examine patients and participate in all aspects of patient care, under the supervision of a responsible physician.

Nursing Staff

Your nursing care will be provided by the following categories of nursing personnel: Head Nurse, Staff Nurse, Licensed Practical Nurse, Nurse Aid, Nurse Technician, Patient Care Associate and Patient Care Technician. There is a Head Nurse responsible for managing each nursing unit, to whom you may express any concerns.

Midwives

Certified midwives work in consultation with an attending obstetrical physician to provide care for maternity patients.

Laboratory Technicians

Laboratory technicians are specially trained personnel who will obtain specimens from you as ordered by your doctor for analysis in the hospital's clinical laboratory.



Dietary Personnel

Dietitians are healthcare workers with specialized training in nutrition. They are available to counsel you on your nutritional needs and to explain any special diet your doctor may have ordered.

Technicians and Services

You may have contact with X-Ray, Nuclear Medicine, Respiratory Therapy, and Electrocardiogram Technicians, all of whom are trained to fulfill the orders of your doctor as they pertain to their specialty and your needs.

Social Workers

Social Workers are specially educated professionals who are available to you and your family to help with your care, and assist with social or personal problems. Social Workers oversee the discharge planning process and arrange for post-hospital services, home care services, and nursing home transfers. For example, if you need special equipment in order to go home safely, social workers make the necessary arrangements. If you wish to see a Social Worker, ask your doctor or nurse or call the Social Work Services at **(718) 616-4209**.

Family Caregivers

It is important to identify your family caregiver to our staff as early as possible so that this individual can be included in your care and receive the necessary information and training they need. We need to place the name and telephone number of your caregiver and/or your private doctor. Your family caregiver is the person who is involved in your health care and helps manage your care needs as you move from one health care setting to another. Your doctor will assist us with your medical history and your follow up once you are discharged. It is important that your family caregiver and doctor be as prepared as possible to assume this role and we are here to work with you and this person and provide the necessary training and support that is needed. You, your caregiver and/or private doctor have the right to request a *Discharge Plan Evaluation* from your healthcare team. This will assist you and your caregiver and/or doctor to obtain the discharge plan evaluation. If you need assistance with obtaining your *Discharge Plan Evaluation*, please speak with your healthcare team to obtain the *Discharge Plan Summary*.

Your Room

Please be careful getting in and out of your bed. Your hospital bed is probably higher than your bed at home. Also, you may feel sore or weak. Please call your nurse if you need help. Our nurse call system provides quick access to the nursing station from your bed, and allows you to talk directly to your nurse. The signal stays lit at the station until the nurse answers.

Sometimes it is necessary to transfer patients from one room to another, due to your needs or those of another patient in the hospital. If your room assignment is changed, your visitors will be given the new location when they stop in the lobby for a Visitor's Pass.

Food and Nutrition Services

The Food and Nutrition Department serves meals consistent with an individual patient's dietary needs and religious and personal requirements. Although CIH does not have a Kosher or Halal kitchen, prepackaged Kosher or Halal meals are available upon request. Vegetarian meals are also available upon request.

Every new patient will be visited by an employee of the Food and Nutrition Department in order to record his/her food preferences. In addition to the main entree for the day's meal there is **always** an alternate item of either chicken or fish. Patient's diet is determined by a treating physician. Registered Dietitians are available to counsel patients on a physician prescribed diet. Dietitians will also answer any questions that patients may have concerning their nutrition. They can also evaluate patient's nutritional status. Occasionally, patients may not receive the meal or food item that they requested due to a special test or dietary restriction. The Food and Nutrition Department also provides nutrition counseling from licensed Dietitians in its Outpatient program. Please note that tests or procedures for which patients are scheduled may make it necessary to delay a patient's meal.

Meals are served on the following schedule.

Breakfast	7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.
Lunch	11:30 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.
Dinner	4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.



Food Services For Visitors

- **The Gift Shop** is located in the lobby of the Tower Lobby and it has snacks, nuts and drinks available. It is open daily from 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
- **Vending machines** are available in various locations throughout the facility.
- **Au Bon Pain** is available on the first floor of the Main Building. It is open 24 hours daily.

Valuables

Cash, jewelry, and other valuables should not be kept in patient rooms. Please note that you have a private safe in your room which is free for you to use during your admission. CIH is not responsible for any property kept. If your admission was through the Emergency Department and your property was collected by hospital staff, we can offer to have it will be vouchered and returned following your discharge. Your money will not collect interest. Arrangements to collect money or other vouchered items should be made well in advance of your time of discharge. We recommend that you have a change of clothing in your room for when you are discharged. If you have any questions regarding the safe, please call your Patient Representative at **Ext 4164**.

Patient Information

Information regarding a patient's medical condition is considered confidential. However, friends and family may contact the Admitting Office at **(718) 616-4326/7** to obtain admission status as well as a patient's telephone number.

Interpreting Services

For non-English speaking patients, the hospital will provide you with an interpreter at no cost, to ensure proper communication between you, your doctor and the hospital staff. If an Interpreter is needed, staff will contact an interpreter services vendor to provide interpretations via telephone. A sign language interpreter can also be arranged by calling the Patient Relations Department at **(718) 616-4164**. Please ask the nurse or a Patient Representative for assistance.

Volunteer Services

At Coney Island Hospital there are a multitude of volunteer opportunities. Join the team as one of our loyal volunteers. Both men and women can find great satisfaction in many interesting and important assignments. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please call Volunteer Services at **(718) 616-3161**.

Patients' Bill of Rights

As a patient in a hospital in New York State, you have the right, consistent with law, to:

1. Understand and use these rights. If for any reason you do not understand or you need help, the hospital **MUST** provide assistance, including an Interpreter.
2. Receive treatment without discrimination as to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or source of payment.
3. Receive considerate and respectful care in a clean and safe environment free of unnecessary restraints.
4. Receive emergency care if you need it.
5. Be informed of the name and position of the doctor who will be in charge of your care in the hospital.
6. Know the names, positions and functions of any hospital staff involved in your care and refuse their treatment, examination or observation.
7. A non-smoking room.



- 8.** Receive complete information about your diagnosis, treatment and prognosis.
- 9.** Receive all the information that you need to give informed consent for any proposed procedure or treatment. This information shall include the possible risks and benefits of the procedure or treatment.
- 10.** Receive all the information you need to give informed consent for an order not to resuscitate. You also have the right to designate an individual to give this consent for you if you are too ill to do so. If you would like additional information, please ask for a copy of the pamphlet “Do Not Resuscitate Orders – A Guide for Patients and Families.”
- 11.** Refuse treatment and be told what effect this may have on your health.
- 12.** Refuse to take part in research. In deciding whether or not to participate, you have the right to a full explanation.
- 13.** Privacy while in the hospital and confidentiality of all information and records regarding your care.
- 14.** Participate in all decisions about your treatment and discharge from the hospital. The hospital must provide you with a written discharge plan and written description of how you can appeal your discharge.
- 15.** Review your medical record without charge. Obtain a copy of your medical record for which the hospital can charge a reasonable fee. You cannot be denied a copy solely because you cannot afford to pay.
- 16.** Receive an itemized bill and explanation of all charges.
- 17.** Complain without fear of reprisals about the care and services you are receiving and to have the hospital respond to you and if you request it, a written response. If you are not satisfied with the hospital’s response, you can complain to the New York State Health Department. The hospital must provide you with the Health Department’s telephone number.
- 18.** Authorize those family members and other adults who will be given priority to visit consistent with your ability to receive visitors.
- 19.** Make known your wishes in regard to anatomical gifts. You may document your wishes in your Health Care Proxy or on a Donor Card, available from the hospital.

Advance Directives

In accordance with the Patient Self-Determination Act and New York State Public Health Law, Coney Island Hospital fully supports your right to make decisions concerning your medical care, including the right to accept or refuse medical/surgical treatment and the right to execute an Advance Directive. Advance Directives are legal written or verbal instructions made by you before an incapacitating illness or injury. One type of Advance Directive is a Health Care Proxy. A Health Care Proxy is a document that enables you to appoint another adult (18 years old or over) to make medical decisions for you in the event that you are unable to do so. If you would like to execute an Advance Directive please ask your nurse to contact a Patient Representative or call **(718) 616-4164**.

Palliative Care

Palliative Care is medical care focused on individuals with serious, advanced disease. It is the active total care of patients whose disease may or may not be responsive to curative treatment. Concentrating on pain, symptom management and the stress of serious illness, the goal is to help people live comfortably and to provide the best quality of life for patients and their families. The team can be reached at **(718) 616-4567**.

Palliative Care:

- Provides comfort and support to individuals and their families who are facing a life-threatening illness or debilitating illness;
- Emphasizes relief from pain and other distressing symptoms;
- Integrates the psychological and spiritual aspects of health care;
- Helps individuals live as fully and as comfortably as possible until death;
- Regards dying as a natural process.

Who provides Palliative Care?

The Palliative Care Consultation Team consists of a doctor who specializes in Palliative Care, dedicated nurses trained in Palliative Care, Social Workers, Chaplains and Volunteers.



How does Palliative Care fit in with other services?

The Palliative Care team maintains close communication with the attending physician, and the family ensuring agreement on treatment methods and goals of care.

How are Palliative Care services arranged?

Palliative Care services are arranged by the patient's physician. The patient, family or staff may ask the attending physician to consult with the Palliative Care Department. To contact the Palliative Care team call **(718) 616-4567**.

Ethical Issues

A patient, family member or your significant other may address their questions regarding ethical issues to the attending doctor, the nursing supervisor, or the Patient Representative. Ethical issues may include dilemmas such as Advance Directives, withdrawal of life support, dispute resolution regarding DNR, assessment and management of pain and/or any issues that affect patient care. To access the Ethics Committee please call **(718) 616-4164**.

Spiritual Considerations

The Pastoral Care Department at Coney Island Hospital is dedicated to providing for the spiritual needs of our patients during their stay. The Chaplains recognize the patient as a whole person with spiritual, social, physical and psychological needs. They identify the spiritual needs of the patients and provide access to spiritual support. To access the Chaplains, please speak with your nurse or a Patient Representative at **(718) 616-4164**.

Important Telephone Numbers

Admitting	(718) 616-4327
Patient Information	(718) 616-4326
Chaplaincy:	
Catholic	(718) 616-3908
Jewish	(718) 616-3906
Muslim	(718) 616-3281
Protestant	(718) 616-3907
Emergency Department:	
Adult	(718) 616-4400
Pediatric	(718) 616-4345
Psychiatric	(718) 616-4375
General Information	(718) 616-3000
H.I.S. (Hospital Intervention Services)	(718) 616-5664
Lost and Found	(718) 616-4326
Medical Records	(718) 616-4196
Nursing Services	(718) 616-3991
Palliative Care	(718) 616-4567
Patient Accounts-Admitted	(718) 616-4288
Patient Accounts-Discharged	(718) 616-4092
Patient Property	(718) 616-4327
Patient Relations	(718) 616-4164
Smoking Cessation Program	(718) 616-5039
Social Work Services	(718) 616-4209
Telephone and Television Rental	(718) 616-7113
Volunteer Services	(718) 616-3161



Your Responsibilities as a Patient

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for providing, to the best of your knowledge, accurate and complete information about present complaints, past illnesses, hospitalizations, medications, and other matters relating to your health.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for reporting unexpected changes in your condition to the responsible doctor.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for asking your doctor or nurse what you should expect regarding pain and pain management.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for discussing pain relief options with your doctor or nurse.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for working with your doctor and nurse to develop a pain management plan.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for asking for pain relief when pain first begins.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for helping the doctor and the nurse measure your pain.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for telling the doctor or nurse if your pain is relieved.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for following the treatment plan recommended by the doctor primarily responsible for your care. This may include following the instructions of nurses and other medical personnel as they carry out the coordinated plan of care and implement the responsible doctor's orders, and as they enforce the applicable hospital rules and regulations.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for your actions if you refuse treatment or do not follow the doctor's instructions.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for following hospital rules and regulations affecting patient care and conduct.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for being considerate of the rights of other patients and hospital personnel, and for assisting in the control of noise, smoking and number of visitors.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for being respectful of the property of others and the hospital.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for the safekeeping of all personal articles. We urge you to send home all valuables and clothing you will not need as a patient.

Patient Safety

Your safety is one of our primary concerns at Coney Island Hospital. Many of our routine practices are geared toward assuring Patient Safety. Checking identification bands, calling a patient by name before any procedure, asking questions about the patient's medical history and encouraging patients to ask for assistance are a few examples of how we are constantly improving the safety and well-being of our patients. Your doctor, nurse and healthcare team are working with you to help you have the best possible health and to provide safe, quality care. Your role is important, too. What you say, think, do and learn is important for your health and safety in the hospital and at home!

- **DO NOT REMOVE** your ID bracelet; if it comes off, ask for a new one. Please help us help you to prevent accidents by following the listed guidelines:
- If you do not speak English, ask for an Interpreter, or someone who speaks your language.
- Never get out of bed without assistance unless you have been advised by the doctor or nurse to do so. Please ask your nurse for help if you need it.
- Keep the side rails on your bed raised. They are useful for shifting positions and will protect you from falls.
- If you are unable to get out of bed, make sure that your bedside table, telephone, call button and anything else you may need, are all in easy reach. If not, please ask for assistance.
- Do not attempt to get in or out of a wheelchair without assistance. Please ask the nurse to assist you.
- Please do not be troubled if you hear the alarm bells. For your safety, we periodically check our fire alarm system and staff preparedness.
- Make sure you tell the doctors and nurse *ALL* of your past and present health problems.
- Tell your doctor or nurse if you have had any allergies or bad reactions to any medicine or food in the past. This can help you avoid getting medicine or food that can harm you.
- Tell your doctor or nurse about *ALL* the medicines you take, even over the counter medicines, vitamins, minerals, and other herbal supplements. Don't forget to mention medicines you use only when needed, like laxatives, antacids, and pain killers; the best way is to bring your medications to the hospital to show the doctor or the nurse. Another way is to keep an updated list of your medications handy to take to the hospital.



- If you are taking herbal medicines or alternative therapies make sure your doctor or nurse knows, also.
- Don't just answer questions that your doctor or nurse asks, speak up! It is okay to ask your own questions and tell them your concerns.
- If you don't understand what your doctor is saying, say so! Don't be afraid. There is no such thing as a dumb question. Medical words can be difficult to understand. Your doctor may not know that you are confused, especially if you are quiet. It is okay to ask the doctor to explain something again. Ask again and again until you understand.
- Ask a trusted friend or relative to be with you to hear explanations, speak up for you.
- Be sure you understand what will happen if you have surgery. Find out what the doctor will do and what will happen after surgery. What are the risks? What are the benefits? What are the alternatives? Tell the doctor if you ever had a bad reaction to anesthesia.
- Ask about your medications: What are their names, when do I take them? What are they for? How are they supposed to be taken, and for how long? What are the possible side effects and what should you do if you have an adverse reaction? Do you have to avoid certain foods, drugs, drinks, herbal medicines, or activities when taking this medication? If you know what might happen, you will be prepared and you can report the problem to your doctor.
- If anyone in the hospital ever calls you, always get their name and phone number. Follow the instructions you are given.
- Make sure you know who is taking care of you and who is in charge of your care. This is one of your rights as a patient at Coney Island Hospital.

REMEMBER

The single most important way that you can help to be safe, is to be an active member of your healthcare team.

Patient Relations/Customer Services

The Patient Relations/Customer Services Department is located in 1N21 in the Main Building and is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. every day. Patient Representatives are available to assist you when you have any concerns about your care. Our Patient Representatives are part of our hospital's administration and they ensure that your issues regarding patient safety and quality of care will be addressed by the appropriate clinical management staff. We encourage you to contact a Patient Representative at **(718) 616-4164** or through the hospital Operator whenever you experience a problem. Very often in responding to your concern, we can fix a systemic problem and provide better care to all our patients. If your concerns are still not resolved, you are encouraged to contact the Joint Commission's Office of Quality Monitoring at **1-800-994-6610** or e-mail the Joint Commission at complaint@jointcommission.org.

Hand Hygiene

In our ongoing effort to eliminate Hospital infections, patients and members of their families are encouraged to ask Coney Island Hospital staff members whether they washed their hands before performing any procedures. Visitors should also wash their hands before entering and exiting the patient's room.

No Smoking Policy

Coney Island Hospital is a smoke-free institution and smoking is not permitted anywhere on the hospital's grounds. We appreciate your help in maintaining the hospital's smoke-free environment. If you are a smoker and would like help quitting, ask your nurse or doctor about our low or no cost Smoking Cessation Program or call **(718) 616-5039**. The Smoking Cessation Program is available for both outpatients and inpatients. Patients are not allowed to go out to smoke while they are admitted to the facility.



Social Work Services

As part of your healthcare experience at Coney Island Hospital, you will be seen by a Social Worker in the early part of your hospitalization, who will assess, evaluate and coordinate your post-hospital needs, so that when your medical or surgical needs are completed, there will be a safe, appropriate individualized plan just for you.

The Social Worker will be in communication with the Multi-disciplinary Team on your unit on a daily basis, so that all members of the team understand your Discharge Planning issues and concerns.

The Social Worker will discuss with both you, your family members or significant others, what internal and a community resources are available, so that an established plan of care is ready for your discharge.

The Social Worker is available to handle safe “Discharge Planning” as well as crisis situations that often occur and if not handled in a timely manner can prevent the smooth transition needed to have a successful discharge outcome.

The unit Social Worker can be reached for consultation by calling **(718) 616-4209**. Additionally, as part of New York State Department of Health Initiative, Social Work services can provide Rapid HIV counseling/testing while you are here as an in-patient HIV counselors are trained and certified and can be reached by calling Social Work services at **(718) 616-4209**.

Cessation Program is available for both outpatients and inpatients.

Going Home/Discharge

In most instances, you will be told the day and time of your discharge 24 hours before you are scheduled to leave. On the morning of your discharge you will receive a written Discharge Summary, which will include information on your post-hospital care (such as your diet, medicine, activities, or possible referral to another facility).

If you do not have a private physician who regularly takes care of you at home, we will assign you to the appropriate practice area in our hospital. Before you leave we will schedule an appointment for you to visit this practice for follow-up medical care.

If you do have a private doctor who would like information from your medical record, you can give him/her a copy of your Discharge Summary. If more information is needed, please call the Medical Correspondence Unit at **(718) 616-4222**, for instructions about how to obtain it.

Before you are discharged, a nurse will discuss with you and/or your family member the discharge instruction sheet which includes any medications that have been prescribed for your aftercare. You will also be given your next appointment slip. If you are not sure about what to do, please ask questions. If you know you cannot do what the doctor has instructed, or you are not sure you can follow the treatment plan you are given, speak up and tell the nurse.

When you are discharged, please make sure that a friend or family member can pick you up on time.

Signing Out

You have the right to sign out at any time. However, if you sign out of the hospital against medical advice, all services provided to you by the hospital will cease. These forfeited services include transportation arrangements, home care, and placement assistance for any other health facility. Before you make a decision to sign out against medical advice, please contact your Patient Representative at Extension 4164, to assist with any concerns that you may have.



Review Rights

You have a right to receive all of the hospital care that is necessary for the proper diagnosis and treatment of your illness or injury. While the provisions of your health insurance plan are one consideration in determining your discharge date, the date is nevertheless determined solely by your medical needs.

You have the right to be fully informed about decisions affecting your inpatient healthcare coverage or payment for your hospital stay. You will receive a Discharge Summary which ensures that you have a planned program of continuing care which meets your post-discharge medical needs. You may not be discharged until the services required in your written discharge plan are secured or determined by the hospital to be reasonably available.

You have a right to appeal any written notices you receive from the hospital that state inpatient services are no longer necessary.

If you think you are being asked to leave the hospital too soon:

First, speak to your doctor, who may be able to answer your questions or concerns about going home.

Second, contact your Patient Representative at **(718) 616-4164** for additional assistance.

Third, and if you still have questions, you may request to see a Professional Review Agent, who will review the medical necessity of continued inpatient services. In this case, be sure you have received the written Notice of Discharge which the Hospital is required to give you. It is necessary if you decide to appeal to the Professional Review Agent. The written notice explains how you can appeal.

If you do decide to appeal, do so immediately. You must call the Professional Review Agent before 12 noon of the day after you receive the written notice. If you are delayed in appealing, you may be responsible for the costs of your continued stay in the Hospital.

The Professional Review Agent for your case depends on your method of payment:

If you have MEDICARE

your agent is NYCHSRO

(New York County Health Services Review Organization)

(212) 691-4300

**If you have MEDICAID, BLUE CROSS,
COMMERCIAL/SELF PAY, or HMO,**

your agent is IPRO (Island Peer Review Organization)

1-(800) 446-2447

Your Hospital Bill

Your hospital bill is dependent on what illness or injury you are treated for as an inpatient.

A patient's level of care can also lead to a different per day charge. Besides billing for inpatient services, bills are rendered for Emergency Department visits and ambulatory visits. New York City Emergency Medical Services (EMS) ambulances and private ambulances will also bill you separately.

Each patient is responsible for his or her bill. Married individuals are responsible for their spouses; parents are responsible for the bills of their children under the age of 21 years old.

It is a patient's responsibility to settle all bills promptly by providing the necessary information and asking for assistance concerning manner of payment. At CIH, a Hospital Care Investigator (HCI) will help you find out which insurance may cover your hospital stay. An HCI can help you apply for Medicaid or other insurance programs for which you may be eligible. This process is very important, and you may need help from family or friends to collect the necessary information and documents.

Patients should carry their insurance cards with them at all times. Not every insurance plan pays for all charges, diagnoses or conditions, and there may be deductibles or co-pays. Also, for some plans, it is the responsibility of the patient or policy holder to inform their insurer in a timely manner regarding most hospitalizations, particularly elective hospital admissions. If it is determined a patient has no insurance coverage, the hospital staff will discuss with you the various alternatives available to resolve the outstanding bill. This could include reduced charges and payment over an extended period of time. The hospital Patient Accounts staff will help to answer questions related to any patient's bill.

- For questions about Inpatient bills call **(718) 616-4092**.
- For questions about Emergency Department or Outpatient bills call **(718) 616-4328**.



Financial Assistance for Those in Need

As a member facility of the NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation, CIH has long set an example of how all people — regardless of their ability to pay or their immigration status — should be served.

Our financial assistance program far exceeds NYS requirements for providing charity care, reduces disparities to access by assisting eligible patients to obtain public health insurance, and provides discounted services to uninsured patients.

Coney Island Hospital Suicide Prevention Program

You may at some point encounter someone in desperate need of your help. By learning the risks and warning signs of suicide, you may literally become a lifesaver. Seek help as soon as possible by contacting a mental health professional or by calling the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **1-800- LIFENET (1-800-543-3638)** if you or someone you know exhibits any of the following signs:

- Threatening to hurt or kill oneself or talking about wanting to hurt or kill oneself
- Looking for ways to kill oneself by seeking access to firearms, available pills, or other means
- Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide when these actions are out of the ordinary for the person
- Feeling hopeless
- Feeling rage or uncontrolled anger or seeking revenge
- Acting reckless or engaging in risky activities — seemingly without thinking
- Feeling trapped — like there's no way out
- Increasing alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawing from friends, family, and society
- Feeling anxious, agitated, or unable to sleep or sleeping all the time
- Experiencing dramatic mood changes
- Seeing no reason for living or having no sense of purpose in life

Visitor Information

Unless restricted by your physician, visitors are welcome during specified Visiting Hours. Coney Island Hospital offers expanded Visiting Hours for the benefit of both patients and visitors.

Coney Island Hospital allows a family member, friend, or other individual to be present with the patient for emotional support during the course of stay. A patient is also allowed to restrict visitor(s) by advising the Patient Representative who will notify the necessary departments about the patient's request. Please contact your Patient Representative at **Ext. 4164** to facilitate this request.

Visiting Hours

Please Be Considerate... Only 2 Visitors at Each Bed (except for Birthing Center where private rooms can accommodate more visitors).

Children under 12 years of age may not visit without special permission.

Medical Floors & Surgical Floors

11:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Pediatrics Tower 2 West

11:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Rehabilitation - 3 West

11:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Maternity Tower 8

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Medical Intensive Care Unit (T-7 East)

Coronary Care Unit (T-6 East)

Coronary Recovery Unit (T-6 East)

Surgical Intensive Care Unit (T-7 West)

1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

SDU (7-East)

7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Behavioral Health (Inpatient)

Hammett Pavilion (3rd & 5th Floors)

2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.



Television and Telephone Rental Service

Rental of the patient bedside telephone and television includes full access to the TV channel lineup listed here. The Health Educational Channels (English and Spanish) are available at no charge. Rental of Telephone includes unlimited local usage.

Rental Rates

TV	\$6.00 per day
Phone	\$6.00 per day

All services can be stopped or restarted at any time by dialing **Ext. 8853**. Service is automatically stopped at the time of discharge from the Hospital.

Payment Options

TV and/or Telephone service can be purchased by use of a major credit card or cash. If you are paying with a credit card you can activate and receive service at any time. Please be advised that a preauthorization hold in the amount of \$50.00 will be placed on your card. The hold will be released following the patient discharge, at which point the actual charge for the services will be billed. **If your method of payment is cash, a representative is in the Hospital between the hours of 12 noon – 6:00 p.m. to collect your cash payment and activate your service. Please be aware that if you do not have payment on the day service is requested, your service will be discontinued until payment is received.**

Activating Service

To activate TV or Telephone service:

1. **Dial Ext. 8853 from the telephone in your room** (if activating TV service, please turn your TV set on). If you are paying by major credit card, please be sure to have it at the time of your call.
2. Follow the voice prompts to complete the activation. If at any point you experience difficulties and need assistance, dial “0” at the end of the voice prompts and a customer service agent will assist you.
3. Once the call is complete, allow 2–5 minutes for activation (if activating TV, please change to your desired channel).

Making Telephone Calls

After activating your telephone, use the following guide to place a call:

Local and Toll Free Calls:

Dial 9 + 1 + Area Code + Number

Long Distance Calls:

Not available from patient phone/room.

Need Help?

Experiencing problems with your TV or Telephone service?

Please contact us:

- **Assistance with rentals:** Please dial **Ext. 8853**, and at the end of the voice prompts press “0” for a customer service agent
- **TV repair service:** Please dial **Ext. 5070**
- **Billing questions:** Please dial **(866) 234-9009**



Channel Lineup

Local Stations:

Coney Island CHANNEL LISTING			
CBS (2)	3	Cartoon Network	34
NBC (4)	6	CNN	35
FOX (5)	8	Comedy Central	36
ABC (7)	10	C-SPAN	37
UPN (9)	12	Discovery Channel	38
WB (11)	14	Family	39
PBS (13)	15	FOX News	40
PBS (WLIW-21)	16	HLN (Headline News)	41
PBS (25)	17	TBS	42
PAX (31)	18	Learning Channel	43
Rental Information	22	Weather Channel	44
Aztec America (WYNY-39)	23	TNT	45
Univision	24	TBN (Trinity Broadcasting)	46
Telemundo (Spanish-47)	25	USA Network	47
PBS (50)	26	Dom Kino (Russian)	48
TV 10/55	27	Channel 1 (Russian)	49
Independent WRNN (62)	28	FREE	
Independent WMBC (63)	29	Patient Education (English)	52
Noticias (Spanish-41)	30	Patient Education (English)	53
AMC	31	Patient Education (English)	54
Animal Planet	32	Care Channel	55
Bloomberg	33		

Rights to Decide About Treatment

Adults in New York State have the right to accept or refuse medical treatment, including life-sustaining treatment. Our Constitution and state laws protect this right. This means that you have the right to request or consent to treatment, to refuse treatment before it has started, and to have treatment stopped once it has begun.

Sometimes, because of illness or injury, people are unable to talk to a doctor and decide about treatment for themselves. You may wish to plan in advance to make sure that your wishes about treatment will be followed if you become unable to decide for yourself for a short- or long-term time period. If you don't plan ahead, family members or other people close to you may not be allowed to make decisions for you and to follow your wishes.

In New York State, appointing someone you can trust to decide about treatment if you become unable to decide for yourself is the best way to protect your treatment wishes and concerns. You may have the right to appoint someone by filling out a form called a Health Care Proxy.

If you have no one you can appoint to decide for you, or if you do not want to appoint someone, you can also give specific instructions about treatment in advance. Those instructions can be written, and are often referred to as a Living Will.

You should understand that general instructions about refusing treatment, even if written down, may not be effective. Your instructions must clearly cover the treatment decisions that must be made. For example, if you just write down that you do not want heroic measures, the instructions may not be specific enough. You should say the kind of treatment that you do not want, such as a respirator or chemotherapy, and describe the medical condition when you would refuse the treatment, such as when you are terminally ill or permanently unconscious with no hope of recovering.

You can also give instructions orally by discussing your treatment wishes with your doctor, family members or others close to you. Putting things in writing is better than simply speaking to people, but neither method is as effective as appointing someone to decide for you. It is often hard for people to know in advance what will happen to them or what their medical needs will be in the future. If you choose someone to make decisions for you, that person can talk to your doctor and make decisions that they believe you would have wanted or that are best for you, when needed. If you appoint someone and also leave instructions about treatment in a Living Will, in the space provided on the Health Care Proxy form itself, or in some other manner, the person you select can use these instructions as guidance to make the right decision for you.

If you have further questions, please contact your Patient Representative at **(718) 616-4164**.



Rapid Response Team

What is a Rapid Response Team?

A Rapid Response Team (RRT) is a team of health care providers who are trained to handle emergency situations. The team is made up of specially trained staff members including doctors, nurses, respiratory therapists. RRTs respond quickly to changes in a patient's condition before a life threatening event happens. If a patient's condition changes suddenly or appears to be getting worse, the team is called to take immediate action. They will assess the patient's condition and quickly provide additional care and treatment.

How can a family member help?

Family members are an important part of a patient's plan of care. We encourage you to be involved. Do not hesitate to ask the nursing staff for help at anytime that you feel concern or worry about a change in the patient's condition. Immediately ask for help from the nursing staff or call RRT if your family member:

- Doesn't "look right"
- Has sudden loss of consciousness or a collapse
- Has changes in breathing – too fast or too slow
- Has changes in color of skin – pale or gray looking
- Complaints of chest pain, chest discomfort or fast heart beats
- Is suddenly sweating a lot
- Has weakness in face, arms or legs
- Has difficulty speaking
- Has change in mental status
- Has bleeding

How to call the RRT

Dial 7888 (Operator) and state your name and relationship to the patient and say, "Please call Rapid Response Team to Unit _____ Room# _____." The operator makes an overhead announcement when the RRT is needed. Please tell the nurse that the RRT was called.

SpeakUP! Help Prevent Errors in Your Care.

By Joint Commission

The Joint Commission is the largest health care accrediting body in the United States that promotes quality and safety.

Everyone has a role in making health care safe. That includes doctors, health care executives, nurses and many health care technicians. Health care organizations all across the country are working to make health care safe. As a patient, you can make your care safer by being an active, involved and informed member of your health care team.

An Institute of Medicine report says that medical mistakes are a serious problem in the health care system. The IOM says that public awareness of the problem is an important step in making things better.

The “Speak Up™” program is sponsored by The Joint Commission. They agree that patients should be involved in their own health care. These efforts to increase patient awareness and involvement are also supported by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. This program gives simple advice on how you can help make health care a good experience. Research shows that patients who take part in decisions about their own health care are more likely to get better faster. To help prevent health care mistakes, patients are urged to “Speak Up.”

Speak up if you have questions or concerns. If you still don’t understand, ask again. It’s your body and you have a right to know.

- Your health is very important. Do not worry about being embarrassed if you don’t understand something that your doctor, nurse or other health care professional tells you. If you don’t understand because you speak another language, ask for someone who speaks your language. You have the right to get free help from someone who speaks your language.
- Don’t be afraid to ask about safety. If you’re having surgery, ask the doctor to mark the area that is to be operated on.
- Don’t be afraid to tell the nurse or the doctor if you think you are about to get the wrong medicine.
- Don’t be afraid to tell a health care professional if you think he or she has confused you with another patient.

Pay attention to the care you get. Always make sure you’re getting the right treatments and medicines by the right health care professionals. Don’t assume anything.

- Tell your nurse or doctor if something doesn’t seem right.



- Expect health care workers to introduce themselves. Look for their identification (ID) badges. A new mother should know the person who she hands her baby to. If you don't know who the person is, ask for their ID.
- Notice whether your caregivers have washed their hands. Hand washing is the most important way to prevent infections. Don't be afraid to remind a doctor or nurse to do this.
- Know what time of the day you normally get medicine. If you don't get it, tell your nurse or doctor.
- Make sure your nurse or doctor checks your ID. Make sure he or she checks your wristband and asks your name before he or she gives you your medicine or treatment.

Educate yourself about your illness. Learn about the medical tests you get, and your treatment plan.

- Ask your doctor about the special training and experience that qualifies him or her to treat your illness.
- Look for information about your condition. Good places to get that information are from your doctor, your library, respected Web sites and support groups.
- Write down important facts your doctor tells you. Ask your doctor if he or she has any written information you can keep.
- Read all medical forms and make sure you understand them before you sign anything. If you don't understand, ask your doctor or nurse to explain them.
- Make sure you know how to work any equipment that is being used in your care. If you use oxygen at home, do not smoke or let anyone smoke near you.

Ask a trusted family member or friend to be your advocate (advisor or supporter).

- Your advocate can ask questions that you may not think about when you are stressed.
- Ask this person to stay with you, even overnight, when you are hospitalized. You will be able to rest better. Your advocate can help make sure you get the right medicines and treatments.
- Your advocate can also help remember answers to questions you have asked. He or she can speak up for you when you cannot speak up for yourself.
- Make sure this person understands the kind of care you want. Make sure he or she knows what you want done about life support and other life-saving efforts if you are unconscious and not likely to get better.
- Go over the consents for treatment with your advocate before you sign them. Make sure you both understand exactly what you are about to agree to.

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- Make sure your advocate understands the type of care you will need when you get home. Your advocate should know what to look for if your condition is getting worse. He or she should also know who to call for help.

Know what medicines you take and why you take them. Medicine errors are the most common health care mistakes.

- Ask about why you should take the medication. Ask for written information about it, including its brand and generic names. Also ask about the side effects of all medicines.
- If you do not recognize a medicine, double-check that it is for you. Ask about medicines that you are to take by mouth before you swallow them. Read the contents of the bags of intravenous (IV) fluids. If you're not well enough to do this, ask your advocate to do it.
- If you are given an IV, ask the nurse how long it should take for the liquid to run out. Tell the nurse if it doesn't seem to be dripping right (too fast or too slow).
- Whenever you get a new medicine, tell your doctors and nurses about allergies you have, or negative reactions you have had to other medicines.
- If you are taking a lot of medicines, be sure to ask your doctor or pharmacist if it is safe to take those medicines together. Do the same thing with vitamins, herbs and over-the-counter drugs.
- Make sure you can read the handwriting on prescriptions written by your doctor. If you can't read it, the pharmacist may not be able to either. Ask somebody at the doctor's office to print the prescription, if necessary.
- Carry an up-to-date list of the medicines you are taking in your purse or wallet. Write down how much you take and when you take it. Go over the list with your doctor and other caregivers.
- If you think you have taken an overdose, or a child has taken medicine by accident, call your local poison control center or your doctor immediately.

Use a hospital, clinic, surgery center, or other type of health care organization that has been carefully checked out. For example, The Joint Commission visits hospitals to see if they are meeting The Joint Commission's quality standards.

- Ask about the health care organization's experience in taking care of people with your type of illness. How often do they perform the procedure you need? What special care do they provide to help patients get well?
- If you have more than one hospital to choose from, ask your doctor which one has the best care for your condition.



- Before you leave the hospital or other facility, ask about follow-up care and make sure that you understand all of the instructions.
- Go to Quality Check at www.qualitycheck.org to find out whether your hospital or other health care organization is “accredited.” Accredited means that the hospital or health care organization works by rules that make sure that patient safety and quality standards are followed.

Participate in all decisions about your treatment. You are the center of the health care team.

- You and your doctor should agree on exactly what will be done during each step of your care.
- Know who will be taking care of you. Know how long the treatment will last. Know how you should feel.
- Understand that more tests or medications may not always be better for you. Ask your doctor how a new test or medication will help.
- Keep copies of your medical records from previous hospital stays and share them with your health care team. This will give them better information about your health history.
- Don’t be afraid to ask for a second opinion. If you are unsure about the best treatment for your illness, talk with one or two additional doctors. The more information you have about all the kinds of treatment available to you, the better you will feel about the decisions made.
- Ask to speak with others who have had the same treatment or operation you may have to have. They may help you prepare for the days and weeks ahead. They may be able to tell you what to expect and what worked best for them.
- Talk to your doctor and your family about your wishes regarding resuscitation and other life-saving actions. Speak up.

The goal of the Speak Up™ program is to help patients become more informed and involved in their health care.



Health Care Proxy

Appointing Your Health Care Agent in New York State

The New York Health Care Proxy Law allows you to appoint someone you trust — for example, a family member or close friend — to make health care decisions for you if you lose the ability to make decisions yourself. By appointing a health care agent, you can make sure that health care providers follow your wishes. Your agent can also decide how your wishes apply as your medical condition changes. Hospitals, doctors and other health care providers must follow your agent's decisions as if they were your own. You may give the person you select as your health care agent as little or as much authority as you want. You may allow your agent to make all health care decisions or only certain ones. You may also give your agent instructions that he or she has to follow. This form can also be used to document your wishes or instructions with regard to organ and/or tissue donation.

About the Health Care Proxy Form

This is an important legal document. Before signing, you should understand the following facts:

1. This form gives the person you choose as your agent the authority to make all health care decisions for you, including the decision to remove or provide life-sustaining treatment, unless you say otherwise in this form. “Health care” means any treatment, service or procedure to diagnose or treat your physical or mental condition.
2. Unless your agent reasonably knows your wishes about artificial nutrition and hydration (nourishment and water provided by a feeding tube or intravenous line), he or she will not be allowed to refuse or consent to those measures for you.
3. Your agent will start making decisions for you when your doctor determines that you are not able to make health care decisions for yourself.
4. You may write on this form examples of the types of treatments that you would not desire and/or those treatments that you want to make sure you receive. The instructions may be used to limit the decision-making power of the agent. Your agent must follow your instructions when making decisions for you.
5. You do not need a lawyer to fill out this form.
6. You may choose any adult (18 years of age or older), including a family member or close friend, to be your agent. If you select a doctor as your agent, he or she will have to choose between acting as your agent or as your attending doctor because a doctor cannot do both at the same time. Also, if you are a patient or resident of a hospital, nursing home or mental hygiene facility, there are special restrictions about naming someone who works for that facility as your agent. Ask staff at the facility to explain those restrictions.
7. Before appointing someone as your health care agent, discuss it with him or her to make sure that he or she is willing to act as your agent. Tell the person you choose that he or she will be your health care agent. Discuss your health care wishes and this form with your agent. Be sure to give him or her a signed copy. Your agent cannot be sued for health care decisions made in good faith.
8. If you have named your spouse as your health care agent and you later become divorced or legally separated, your former spouse can no longer be your agent by law, unless you state otherwise. If you would like your former spouse to remain your agent, you may note this on your current form and date it or complete a new form naming your former spouse.
9. Even though you have signed this form, you have the right to make health care decisions for yourself as long as you are able to do so, and treatment cannot be given to you or stopped if you object, nor will your agent have any power to object.
10. You may cancel the authority given to your agent by telling him or her or your health care provider orally or in writing.
11. Appointing a health care agent is voluntary. No one can require you to appoint one.
12. You may express your wishes or instructions regarding organ and/or tissue donation on this form.



Frequently Asked Questions

Why should I choose a health care agent?

If you become unable, even temporarily, to make health care decisions, someone else must decide for you. Health care providers often look to family members for guidance. Family members may express what they think your wishes are related to a particular treatment. Appointing an agent lets you control your medical treatment by:

- allowing your agent to make health care decisions on your behalf as you would want them decided;
- choosing one person to make health care decisions because you think that person would make the best decisions;
- choosing one person to avoid conflict or confusion among family members and/or significant others.

You may also appoint an alternate agent to take over if your first choice cannot make decisions for you.

Who can be a health care agent?

Anyone 18 years of age or older can be a health care agent. The person you are appointing as your agent or your alternate agent cannot sign as a witness on your Health Care Proxy form.

How do I appoint a health care agent?

All competent adults, 18 years of age or older, can appoint a health care agent by signing a form called a Health Care Proxy. You don't need a lawyer or a notary, just two adult witnesses. Your agent cannot sign as a witness. You can use the form printed here, but you don't have to use this form.

When would my health care agent begin to make health care decisions for me?

Your health care agent would begin to make health care decisions after your doctor decides that you are not able to make your own health care decisions. As long as you are able to make health care decisions for yourself, you will have the right to do so.

What decisions can my health care agent make?

Unless you limit your health care agent's authority, your agent will be able to make any health care decision that you could have made if you were able to decide for yourself. Your agent can agree that you should receive treatment, choose among different treatments and decide that treatments should not be provided, in accordance with your wishes and interests. However, your agent can only make decisions about artificial nutrition and hydration (nourishment and water provided by feeding tube or intravenous line) if he or she knows your wishes from what you have said or what you have written. The Health Care Proxy form does not give your agent the power to make non-health care decisions for you, such as financial decisions.

Why do I need to appoint a health care agent if I'm young and healthy?

Appointing a health care agent is a good idea even though you are not elderly or terminally ill. A health care agent can act on your behalf if you become even temporarily unable to make your own health care decisions (such as might occur if you are under general anesthesia or have become comatose because of an accident). When you again become able to make your own health care decisions, your health care agent will no longer be authorized to act.

How will my health care agent make decisions?

Your agent must follow your wishes, as well as your moral and religious beliefs. You may write instructions on your Health Care Proxy form or simply discuss them with your agent.

How will my health care agent know my wishes?

Having an open and frank discussion about your wishes with your health care agent will put him or her in a better position to serve your interests. If your agent does not know your wishes or beliefs, your agent is legally required to act in your best interest. Because this is a major responsibility for the person you appoint as your health care

Frequently Asked Questions, *continued*

agent, you should have a discussion with the person about what types of treatments you would or would not want under different types of circumstances, such as:

- whether you would want life support initiated/continued/removed if you are in a permanent coma;
- whether you would want treatments initiated/continued/removed if you have a terminal illness;
- whether you would want artificial nutrition and hydration initiated/withheld or continued or withdrawn and under what types of circumstances.

Can my health care agent overrule my wishes or prior treatment instructions?

No. Your agent is obligated to make decisions based on your wishes. If you clearly expressed particular wishes, or gave particular treatment instructions, your agent has a duty to follow those wishes or instructions unless he or she has a good faith basis for believing that your wishes changed or do not apply to the circumstances.

Who will pay attention to my agent?

All hospitals, nursing homes, doctors and other health care providers are legally required to provide your health care agent with the same information that would be provided to you and to honor the decisions by your agent as if they were made by you. If a hospital or nursing home objects to some treatment options (such as removing certain treatment) they must tell you or your agent BEFORE or upon admission, if reasonably possible.

What if my health care agent is not available when decisions must be made?

You may appoint an alternate agent to decide for you if your health care agent is unavailable, unable or unwilling to act when decisions must be made. Otherwise, health care providers will make health care decisions for you that follow instructions you gave while you were still able to do so. Any instructions that you write on your Health Care Proxy form will guide health care providers under these circumstances.

What if I change my mind?

It is easy to cancel your Health Care Proxy, to change the person you have chosen as your health care agent or to change any instructions or limitations you have included on the form. Simply fill out a new form. In addition, you may indicate that your Health Care Proxy expires on a specified date or if certain events occur. Otherwise, the Health Care Proxy will be valid indefinitely. If you choose your spouse as your health care agent or as your alternate, and you get divorced or legally separated, the appointment is automatically cancelled. However, if you would like your former spouse to remain your agent, you may note this on your current form and date it or complete a new form naming your former spouse.

Can my health care agent be legally liable for decisions made on my behalf?

No. Your health care agent will not be liable for health care decisions made in good faith on your behalf. Also, he or she cannot be held liable for costs of your care, just because he or she is your agent.

Is a Health Care Proxy the same as a living will?

No. A living will is a document that provides specific instructions about health care decisions. You may put such instructions on your Health Care Proxy form. The Health Care Proxy allows you to choose someone you trust to make health care decisions on your behalf. Unlike a living will, a Health Care Proxy does not require that you know in advance all the decisions that may arise. Instead, your health care agent can interpret your wishes as medical circumstances change and can make decisions you could not have known would have to be made.

Where should I keep my Health Care Proxy form after it is signed?

Give a copy to your agent, your doctor, your attorney and any other family members or close friends you want. Keep a copy in your wallet or purse or with other important papers, but not in a location where no one can access it, like a safe



Frequently Asked Questions, *continued*

deposit box. Bring a copy if you are admitted to the hospital, even for minor surgery, or if you undergo outpatient surgery.

May I use the Health Care Proxy form to express my wishes about organ and/or tissue donation?

Yes. Use the optional organ and tissue donation section on the Health Care Proxy form and be sure to have the section witnessed by two people. You may specify that your organs and/or tissues be used for transplantation, research or educational purposes. Any limitation(s) associated with your wishes should be noted in this section of the proxy. **Failure to include your wishes and instructions on your Health Care Proxy form will not be taken to mean that you do not want to be an organ and/or tissue donor.**

Can my health care agent make decisions for me about organ and/or tissue donation?

Yes. As of August 26, 2009, your health care agent is authorized to make decisions after your death, but only those regarding organ and/or tissue donation. Your health care agent must make such decisions as noted on your Health Care Proxy form.

Who can consent to a donation if I choose not to state my wishes at this time?

It is important to note your wishes about organ and/or tissue donation to your health care agent, the person designated as your decedent's agent, if one has been appointed, and your family members. New York Law provides a list of individuals who are authorized to consent to organ and/or tissue donation on your behalf. They are listed in order of priority: your health care agent; your decedent's agent; your spouse, if you are not legally separated, or your domestic partner; a son or daughter 18 years of age or older; either of your parents; a brother or sister 18 years of age or older; or a guardian appointed by a court prior to the donor's death.

Health Care Proxy Form Instructions

Item (1)

Write the name, home address and telephone number of the person you are selecting as your agent.

Item (2)

If you want to appoint an alternate agent, write the name, home address and telephone number of the person you are selecting as your alternate agent.

Item (3)

Your Health Care Proxy will remain valid indefinitely unless you set an expiration date or condition for its expiration. This section is optional and should be filled in only if you want your Health Care Proxy to expire.

Item (4)

If you have special instructions for your agent, write them here. Also, if you wish to limit your agent's authority in any way, you may say so here or discuss them with your health care agent. If you do not state any limitations, your agent will be allowed to make all health care decisions that you could have made, including the decision to consent to or refuse life-sustaining treatment.

If you want to give your agent broad authority, you may do so right on the form. Simply write: *I have discussed my wishes with my health care agent and alternate and they know my wishes including those about artificial nutrition and hydration.*

If you wish to make more specific instructions, you could say:

If I become terminally ill, I do/don't want to receive the following types of treatments....

If I am in a coma or have little conscious understanding, with no hope of recovery, then I do/don't want the following types of treatments:....

If I have brain damage or a brain disease that makes me unable to recognize people or speak and there is no hope that my condition will improve, I do/don't want the following types of treatments:....

I have discussed with my agent my wishes about _____ and I want my agent to make all decisions about these measures.

Examples of medical treatments about which you may wish to give your agent special instructions are listed below. This is not a complete list:

- artificial respiration
- artificial nutrition and hydration (nourishment and water provided by feeding tube)
- cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- antipsychotic medication
- electric shock therapy
- antibiotics
- surgical procedures
- dialysis
- transplantation
- blood transfusions
- abortion
- sterilization

Item (5)

You must date and sign this Health Care Proxy form. If you are unable to sign yourself, you may direct someone else to sign in your presence. Be sure to include your address.

Item (6)

You may state wishes or instructions about organ and /or tissue donation on this form. New York law does provide for certain individuals in order of priority to consent to an organ and/or tissue donation on your behalf: your health care agent, your decedent's agent, your spouse, if you are not legally separated, or your domestic partner, a son or daughter 18 years of age or older, either of your parents, a brother or sister 18 years of age or older, a guardian appointed by a court prior to the donor's death.

Item (7)

Two witnesses 18 years of age or older must sign this Health Care Proxy form. The person who is appointed your agent or alternate agent cannot sign as a witness.

Health Care Proxy

(1) I, _____
hereby appoint _____
(name, home address and telephone number)

as my health care agent to make any and all health care decisions for me, except to the extent that I state otherwise. This proxy shall take effect only when and if I become unable to make my own health care decisions.

(2) Optional: Alternate Agent

If the person I appoint is unable, unwilling or unavailable to act as my health care agent, I hereby appoint _____
(name, home address and telephone number)

as my health care agent to make any and all health care decisions for me, except to the extent that I state otherwise.

(3) Unless I revoke it or state an expiration date or circumstances under which it will expire, this proxy shall remain in effect indefinitely. *(Optional: If you want this proxy to expire, state the date or conditions here.)* This proxy shall expire *(specify date or conditions)*: _____

(4) Optional: I direct my health care agent to make health care decisions according to my wishes and limitations, as he or she knows or as stated below. *(If you want to limit your agent's authority to make health care decisions for you or to give specific instructions, you may state your wishes or limitations here.)* I direct my health care agent to make health care decisions in accordance with the following limitations and/or instructions *(attach additional pages as necessary)*: _____

In order for your agent to make health care decisions for you about artificial nutrition and hydration *(nourishment and water provided by feeding tube and intravenous line)*, your agent must reasonably know your wishes. You can either tell your agent what your wishes are or include them in this section. See instructions for sample language that you could use if you choose to include your wishes on this form, including your wishes about artificial nutrition and hydration.

(5) Your Identification *(please print)*

Your Name _____

Your Signature _____ Date _____

Your Address _____

(6) Optional: Organ and/or Tissue Donation

I hereby make an anatomical gift, to be effective upon my death, of:
(check any that apply)

Any needed organs and/or tissues

The following organs and/or tissues _____

Limitations _____

If you do not state your wishes or instructions about organ and/or tissue donation on this form, it will not be taken to mean that you do not wish to make a donation or prevent a person, who is otherwise authorized by law, to consent to a donation on your behalf.

Your Signature _____ Date _____

(7) Statement by Witnesses *(Witnesses must be 18 years of age or older and cannot be the health care agent or alternate.)*

I declare that the person who signed this document is personally known to me and appears to be of sound mind and acting of his or her own free will. He or she signed (or asked another to sign for him or her) this document in my presence.

Date _____ Date _____

Name of Witness 1 _____ Name of Witness 2 _____
(print) *(print)*

Signature _____ Signature _____

Address _____ Address _____





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