HELP US PROVIDE THE
BEST POSSIBLE HEALTH CARE

DON’T HESITATE TO SPEAK UP

Avera
McKernan Hospital & University Health Center

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605-322-8000 • AveraMcKernan.org
We are dedicated to providing you with the best possible health care. As part of this commitment to quality, we want to make sure you are treated with dignity and respect, and that you are given all the information you need to understand your condition and make decisions about your treatment. These components of care are known as your **Patient Rights**.

In addition, you have **Patient Responsibilities** that can help us work together to ensure you receive quality care. Please take time to read about your Patient Rights and Responsibilities. Your health care professionals are available to answer any questions you may have.
YOUR RIGHTS AS A PATIENT

1. Respectful Care
   You have the right to be treated with dignity, concern and respect. You have the right to care that takes into account the social, spiritual and cultural matters that have an effect on your illness.

2. Complete Information
   You have the right to and are encouraged to obtain from your doctor complete and current information about your diagnosis, treatment and treatment outcomes in words you can understand. You have the right to know the names and roles of the professionals taking care of you. You have the right to know when something goes wrong with your care.

3. Care Decisions
   You have the right to participate in making decisions about the medical care you receive. Others may be included in care decisions, but you have the right to agree to or refuse treatment as permitted by law and hospital policy, and to know the risks and benefits of your actions. If you refuse a suggested treatment, you will receive other care and services as needed. The hospital will make every attempt to provide you with care based on the seriousness of your illness and the hospital’s ability to treat you. You can expect to be told about care alternatives when hospital care is no longer appropriate.

   When medically proper and legally permitted, or on your request, you may be transferred to another facility. Upon your request, you have the right to have a family member or representative and your own doctor notified promptly on your admission to the hospital.

4. Restraints
   You have the right to be treated in the least restricting way that preserves your safety and that of other patients and staff. This means that you will be free from physical restraints and excessive medications unless necessary for the protection of your health or safety.

5. Pain Management
   You have the right to receive information about pain and pain relief measures. You can expect staff commitment to pain management and health professionals who respond to your reports of pain. You can expect that your reports of pain will be believed and that pain management will be provided.
6. **Advance Directive**

You have the right to have an advance directive such as a living will, health care proxy or durable power of attorney for health care. You have the right to have hospital staff and other health care providers in the hospital act in accordance with these directives. These documents state your wishes about treatment or name someone to decide for you if you are unable to so do.

Avera McKennan Hospital & University Health Center will honor the intent of your advance directive to the extent permitted by law and hospital policy. Avera McKennan, a Catholic Health Care Institution, adopts and adheres to the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services. Advance directives will be honored in every way possible as long as they do not conflict with the religious directives. If the advance directive conflicts with the Ethical and Religious Directive for Catholic Health Care, the hospital will work with you and your family to discuss options of transferring to another facility that would meet the request.

If you want additional information or wish to create, review or revise an advance directive, you may make an appointment with Social Services.

In the absence of an advance directive and you are incapacitated or otherwise unable to communicate your wishes, health care decisions may be made by the following members of your family who are available to consent, in the order stated:

1. Spouse, (if not legally separated) as recognized by the State of South Dakota
2. Adult child
3. Parent
4. Adult sibling
5. Grandparent or adult grandchild
6. Adult aunt or uncle, adult cousin, adult niece or nephew
7. Close friend
7. Patient Needs
   • Privacy: You have the right to every consideration of privacy. All parts of your medical care, examination and treatment will be conducted so as to protect your privacy.

   • Confidentiality: You have the right to expect that all communications and records related to your care will be treated as confidential by the hospital, except when reporting is permitted or required by law.

   • Security: You have the right to have all care and treatments provided to you in a safe and secure area, free from neglect and abuse.

   • Communication: You have the right to expect unrestricted access to communication. When it is necessary to restrict visitors, mail, telephone calls or other forms of communication as a part of your care, you have the right to be included in any such decision. You have the right to expect any communication to be given in a language you can understand.

8. Review Records
   You have the right to review the records related to your medical care and to have the information explained or interpreted as necessary, except when restricted by law. You have the right to access this information within a reasonable time frame. You have the right to request amendments or corrections to your medical record.

9. Business Relationships
   You have the right to ask about, and be informed of, the existence of business relationships among the hospital, educational institutions, other health care providers or payers that may influence your treatment and care.

10. Research Treatment
    You have the right to know about research or experimental treatment that your doctor may make available. You have the right to consent to or refuse to participate in proposed research studies or experimental care.

11. Hospital Policies
    You have the right to be informed of hospital policies and practices that relate to patient care treatment and responsibilities. You have the right to be informed of available resources for resolving problems or questions about quality of care, such as ethics committees or patient representatives. You have the right to expect a timely response to your problem or question. You have a right to be informed of the hospital’s charges for services and available payment methods.
12. Visitation

You (or support person) have the right, subject to your consent, to receive the visitors you designate, including but not limited to a spouse, a domestic partner (including a same-sex domestic partner), or another family member, or a friend; and you have the right to withdraw or deny such consent at any time. Visitation privileges will not be restricted, limited or otherwise denied on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability.

Some patient care units may have clinically necessary or reasonable restriction of visitation because of patient’s condition. You will be advised of specific visitation policies upon arrival to the patient care unit, if applicable.
YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A PATIENT

1. **Correct and Full Information**
   You are responsible for providing information to health care providers about symptoms, past illnesses, hospitalizations, medications or other pertinent information. You are responsible for informing your health care providers about any changes in your condition.

2. **Responsible for Your Actions**
   To participate effectively in decision making, you are encouraged to take responsibility for asking questions about your care. You are responsible for following the care, service or treatment plan developed for you. You should express any concerns you have about your ability to follow and comply with the proposed care plan or course of treatment. You are responsible for understanding the consequences of the treatment alternatives and not following the proposed plan. You are responsible for the outcomes if you do not follow the care, service or treatment plan.

3. **Pain Management**
   As a patient of this hospital, you are responsible for expressing your expectations regarding pain and pain management and discussing pain relief options with your doctors and nurses. Please work with them to appropriately assess your pain and develop a pain management plan. Ask for pain relief when your pain first begins and tell your doctor or nurse if your pain is not relieved.

4. **Advance Directive**
   You are responsible for making sure that the hospital has a copy of your living will and/or durable power of attorney for health care if you have one.

5. **Following Rules and Regulations**
   You are responsible for following the hospital’s rules and regulations concerning patient care and conduct. Please also consider the privacy and rights of others when you have visitors or are using the television, radio or telephone.

6. **Payment of Bills**
   You are responsible for providing necessary insurance information and for working with the hospital to make payment arrangements when necessary.
YOUR SAFETY IS IMPORTANT TO US

If you have questions or concerns, please let us know. Your caregiver is your advocate, so he or she should be the first person involved and we encourage you to ask him or her questions. However, please never hesitate to take your concerns to a higher level if you feel it is necessary, such as voicing them to the patient representative at 605-322-7978 or asking to speak to the department manager.

Another resource, Condition H, is an emergency helpline for patients and families who are concerned that the health care team has not recognized a change in the patient’s condition or they have a serious concern about how medical care is being provided. Dial 55 on any hospital phone to access Condition H, which alerts the patient care supervisor and the patient representative to your request.

Should you have a concern that is unresolved, you have the right to contact:

South Dakota Department of Health
600 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD 57501
605-773-3361

AND/OR

The Joint Commission
1-800-994-6610
or email: complaint@jointcommission.org
TO HELP PREVENT HEALTH CARE ERRORS, PATIENTS ARE URGED TO SPEAK UP.

Speak Up
Pay Attention
Educate Yourself
Ask
Know
Use
Participate

Speak Up: If you have questions or concerns, or don’t understand what is happening while you are at Avera, please ask your health care provider or one of our helpful staff to assist you. It’s your body and you have the right to know.

• Your health is important. Do not be embarrassed to ask questions if you do not understand, ask your doctor, nurse or other health care provider to explain.

• Do not be afraid to ask about safety. For example, if the floor looks shiny, ask if it is wet or slippery before walking on it.

• If you are having surgery, remind caregivers to mark the spot of any surgical procedure. This helps your surgeon avoid mistakes. Marking usually happens when you are awake. Sometimes you cannot be awake for the marking; if this happens, a family member, friend or another health care worker can watch and make sure that your correct body part is marked.

Pay Attention: Pay attention to the care you get. Make sure you get the right treatments or medicines.

• Caregivers should introduce themselves. They should wear an identification badge.

• Make sure the caregiver checks your ID band. They should ask your name before giving you your medicine or a treatment.

• Know what time of day you normally get your medicine. If you do not receive it, tell your nurse.
• Do not be afraid to tell a caregiver if you think they have confused you with another patient or resident.

• Tell a caregiver if something does not seem right.

Educate Yourself: Learn about your diagnosis, the medical tests you will have and your treatment plan.

• Gather information about your condition. Good sources include your doctor, your library, respected websites and support groups. You can access health information at Avera.org.

• Write down information your doctor tells you. Ask your caregiver if he or she has written any information you can keep.

• Thoroughly read all medical forms and make sure you understand them before you sign anything. If you don't understand, please ask your doctor or nurse to explain them.

Ask: Ask a trusted family member or friend to be your advocate.

• Your advocate can ask questions that you may not think of while you are under stress.

• Your advocate can help remember answers to questions you have asked. They can speak up when you cannot speak up for yourself.

• Make sure your advocate understands the care you want. Make sure they know your choices for life support and other lifesaving efforts. Make sure your advocate knows who makes health care decisions for you when you are unable to.

Know: Be aware of what medication you take and why you take them. Medication errors are the most common health care mistakes.

• Know the name of your medications. Medications have two names — the brand and generic.

• Know the side effects your medications may cause.

• If you do not recognize a medication, ask your caregiver to check it before you take it.

• Do not be afraid to speak up if you think you are about to be given the wrong medication.
• When you get a new medication, tell your doctors and nurses about your allergies or reactions you have had.

• If you take a lot of medications, ask your doctor or pharmacist if it is safe to take them together. Tell them about any over-the-counter medications or herbal supplements.

• At discharge, make sure you get a complete list of medications you are to continue, stop or start taking.

**Use:** Use all of the resources made available to you at the time of your stay.

• Ask if you will need assistance when you go home such as by home care staff.

• Make sure you have the assistive equipment ready for you at home. Make sure the staff has ordered this equipment prior to you leaving the facility.

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

• Know who will be taking care of you, how long the treatment will last and how you should feel.

• You and your provider should agree upon the next steps of your care.

• Ask about how to access your medical records online.

• Ensure you know your follow-up care and understand all the instructions.

• Ask the provider to recommend a support group that can help with your condition.

• Talk to your doctor and family about your wishes regarding resuscitation and other lifesaving actions.

Adapted from Speak-up program from the Joint Commission for the Accreditation of Healthcare Facilities.
HELP FIGHT THE SPREAD OF INFECTION

Preventing the spread of infection is important to everyone. Here are some easy things you can do to help protect yourself, our employees and other patients during your stay in the hospital.

1. **Clean your hands**
   Use soap and warm water. Rub your hands really well for at least 15 seconds. Rub your palms, fingernails, in between your fingers and the backs of your hands.

   **OR**

   If your hands do not look dirty, clean them with alcohol-based hand sanitizers. Rub the sanitizers all over your hands, especially under your nails and between your fingers, until hands are dry.

   Clean your hands before touching or eating food. Clean them after you go to the bathroom, change a diaper, visit someone who is ill or play with a pet.

2. **Make sure health care providers clean their hands and wear gloves**
   Doctors, nurses and other providers come in contact with lots of bacteria and viruses. So before they treat you, ask them if they have cleaned their hands. Health care providers should wear clean gloves when they perform tasks such as taking throat cultures, drawing blood, touching wounds or body fluids and examining your mouth or private parts. Don’t be afraid to ask them to wear gloves.

3. **Cover your cough or sneeze**
   Many germs are spread through the air when you cough or sneeze. When you cough or sneeze, it can travel 3 feet or more. Using a tissue to cover your cough or sneeze protects those around you. Clean your hands after coughing or sneezing. If a tissue is not available, your nurse will obtain some for you. Meanwhile when you can cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with the bend of your elbow.
4. **Intravenous (IV) line or urinary catheter**

If you have an IV line or urinary catheter, ask if you still need it. Let your doctor or nurse know if the area around these devices becomes tender or sore.

Make sure your IV insertion site stays covered with a dressing and that the lines do not become disconnected.

Make sure your urinary catheter stays connected to the bag and hangs below the level of your bladder. Make sure the urinary catheter is secured to your leg with a special device made for this purpose.

5. **Antibiotic resistance is a major concern**

Make sure you finish your antibiotics and take them as prescribed. Not doing so may lead your body to develop antibiotic resistant germs.

Not all infections require antibiotics. Misuse of antibiotics jeopardizes the usefulness of essential drugs.

Antibiotics can sometimes cause an infectious diarrhea. Please tell your health care provider if you experience this.

6. **Get vaccinated**

Make sure your vaccinations are current. This is important even for adults. You are never too old to be vaccinated!

Vaccinations are available to prevent the following diseases:

- Chickenpox
- Diphtheria
- German measles (rubella)
- Hepatitis
- Human papillomavirus (HPV)
- Influenza
- Measles (rubeola)
- Meningitis
- Mumps
- Pneumonia
- Shingles
- Tetanus
- Whooping cough (pertussis)
HELP US REDUCE YOUR RISK OF FALLING

Accidental falls may occur at any time. Please help us keep you safe.

Several factors may increase your risk of falling while you are in the hospital, including:

- Unfamiliar surroundings
- Medication
- Not eating or drinking for periods of time
- Tubes or other equipment attached to your body

There are some things you can do to prevent falls, including:

- Use your call light and wait for help to arrive. We are happy to assist you.
- Follow your doctor’s orders and/or nurse’s instructions regarding whether you must stay in bed or require help when getting up.
- Wear low-heeled shoes or non-skid slippers while walking. Ask the nurse for slippers.
- Sit on the edge of the bed for a short time before standing up. Getting up too quickly may make you feel faint or dizzy.
- Do not use the IV pole or bedside table to lean on. Both of these have wheels and are not sturdy enough to support you.
- Keep your phone and personal items within reach.
- Turn room lights on before getting up.

To keep you safe as possible, we have a fall prevention program. If you are considered at risk of falling, your caregivers will do a number of things to help prevent a fall. Examples include:

- Using a bed or chair alarm that alerts staff you are getting up unassisted.
- Staying with you while you use the bathroom, assisting you to the bathroom before bedtime and before administration of some medications such as narcotics or sedatives.
- Checking on you every hour even if you do not have your call light on.
Discharge Planning
Avera McKennan’s Social Services Department visits all patients age 17 and under; 80 and older and those from an outside facility to address discharge planning needs. The Case Management Department visits patients ages 18 to 79.

If at any time you or your representative sees a need for more in depth discharge planning or you wish to review your specific discharge plans, ask the nurse to contact the social worker or case manager assigned to you. There is no charge to you for these visits.

There may be things you can do to prevent returning to the hospital. Make sure you have an appointment with your primary care provider before being discharged. At discharge, make sure you understand and are able to get all medications.

Nondiscrimination Policy/Limited English Proficiency
Avera McKennan does not discriminate against any person on the basis of age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, language, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression in admission, treatment or participation in its programs, services and activities, or in employment.

Avera McKennan will take reasonable steps to ensure that persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access and an equal opportunity to participate in our services, activities, programs and other benefits. All interpreters, translators and other aids needed to comply with this policy shall be provided without cost to the person being served, and patients/clients and their families will be informed of the availability of such assistance free of charge.

For further information about this policy, contact the communications manager.

Condition HELP

In Emergency Situations:
If you are concerned that your health care team has not recognized a change in your condition
OR
if you have a serious concern about how your medical care is being provided.
DIAL 55 Emergency Line for non-emergency concerns, please call the patient representative at 27978.

For non-emergency concerns please call
Quality Services at 5185 or Administration at 5230