



COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES
OF NORTHUMBERLAND



Client Rights & Responsibilities

Safety & You

The Community Health Centres of Northumberland (CHCN) is committed to providing a welcome, safe and healthy environment where clients can receive exceptional care and services. Our goal is to create a “safety first” environment where everyone plays a role in safety.



The first step in creating an environment that is safe, is letting you know about your right to safe surroundings. A setting where you feel safe to ask questions, to talk about your concerns, and feel relaxed enough to listen so you can understand information that is given to you. Laid out in this brochure you will find examples of your rights with regards to safety and how you can take responsibility for promoting safety for yourself and others.

We encourage you to ASK questions until you feel comfortable with the options, instructions, or health advice you are given.

We encourage you to TALK to us about your problems; about information that will help us provide better care; and about any worries you have regarding your health or health care.

We encourage you to LISTEN and take note of the information you are given so that you can be an active participant in your wellbeing.

Studies show that people, who are well informed and involved in their health care, stay safer and have better health outcomes.

Communication is the key!

These principles are to be respected by all staff, clients, and agents¹ of the Community Health Centres of Northumberland.

RIGHTS

Respect

“Every client has the right to be treated in a courteous and respectful manner.”

In other words

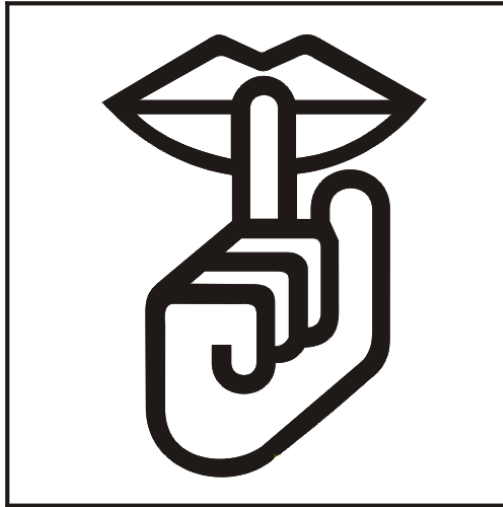
You have the right to be treated with respect. The staff at the CHC must be polite. No one is allowed to abuse you or treat you badly.

For example:

- You can choose what you want to be called, Mrs. Smith or Pat.
- Staff should smile and make it feel easy for you to ask them for help.

¹¹ An ‘agent’ refers to someone working on behalf of CHCN. This includes volunteers, members of the Board of Directors, students, contracted individuals/agencies, visitors, etc.

Personal Privacy



“Every client has the right to be dealt with in a manner that respects privacy and dignity, and supports independence.”

In other words

You have the right to privacy.

For example:

- If too many people are at the front desk, you can ask to speak to someone in a more private area.
- When you are with your health care provider you can ask for the door to be closed.

Cultural Issues

“Every client has the right to be dealt with in a culturally sensitive manner.”

In other words

You have the right to get health care that respects your culture, your beliefs, and the unique things about you.

For example:

- If you do not understand English, a translator can be arranged.
- If you do not agree with the doctor’s advice because it goes against your values you can talk to them about other options.



Services



“In order to make informed choices and decisions every client has the right to receive information about the services provided explained in words that are easy to understand”.

In other words

You have the right to get information in plain language.

For example:

- If you get a paper with words that are too long to read you can ask for help.
- If your doctor tells you something you do not understand you can ask them to explain it again.
- You can ask for someone to come to your appointment with you.

Knowing Your Health Providers

“Every client has the right to be informed about who will be providing services”.

In other words

You have the right to know the name and job of the person you will see.

For example:

- Sometimes a student might be here learning to become a nurse, a doctor, a social worker, or a dietitian. You have the right to be told that they are someone who is still in training.
- Your regular health care provider might be sick and someone else is taking their place. You have a right to know who that person is and what role they play at the Centre.



Participate



“Every client has the right to participate in the assessment of their care, as well as the development and evaluation of the care plan. Clients have the right to ask for their caregiver or a support person to be involved in this process.”

In other words

You have the right to help make the plan for your health care. You have the right to bring a helper with you.

For example:

- The staff should tell you about the pros and cons of different treatments and give you time to speak and explain your thoughts.
- The health care workers should listen when you have a concern about some part of your care plan.
- You can bring a family member or friend to your appointment to help you to understand and participate fully.

Say “Yes” or “No”

“Every client has the right to give or refuse consent to the plan of care.”

In other words

When the doctor or nurse practitioner suggests a way to help, you can decide what you want to do.

For example, you can decide to:

- do what they recommend
- take more time to think about it
- ask for more information
- ask for a second opinion
- bring a trusted friend or family member with you to help with your health care decisions

A substitute decision-maker is a person who has the legal right to make decisions for you during times when you are not mentally capable of making them yourself. They have the right to consent or refuse consent on your behalf if you are not able to decide for yourself.

Voice an Opinion or Concern

“Every client has the right to raise concerns or contribute ideas to any aspect of how care is provided without fear of interference, coercion, discrimination or reprisal”.

In other words

You can have an opinion, change your mind, or talk about a concern without the worry that someone will be angry with you or not give you proper care.

For example:

- If you have an idea about how your provider could be more helpful or do something different we would like to hear about it. If your idea is different they will still listen to it and consider it. In the interest of your health, your health care provider might stick to their first advice but they will not hold your different ideas against you.



Make a Complaint & Get Answers

“Every client has the right to be informed of the procedure for initiating complaints. Every client has the right to make a formal complaint and to be provided with responses to concerns.”

In other words

When you have a complaint someone will take the time to talk with you and listen. You will be told how you can put a complaint in writing, who to send it to, and when to expect a reply.

For example:

- If a staff member does not treat you properly or makes a mistake you can call and ask to speak to their boss. The supervisor will call you back to listen to your concerns.
- You might decide to put it in writing. Someone will take time to talk with you and try to resolve the issue. They will explain how to take the next step if the problem is still not sorted out.



Protected Information



“Every client has the right to have their personal records and health information kept confidential in accordance with the law. Every client also has the right to access their own personal health records and health information and know what is in it.”

In other words

Your information must be kept very private and secure, but you also have the right to see it or to give other people the right to see it so that they can help with your care.

For example:

- You can ask to see your health record.
- You can ask to have your health record transferred to another health provider.
- You can ask us how we keep your record safe.
- You can ask to speak to the CHCN Privacy Officer if you have a concern about privacy.

Be informed

“Every client has the right to honesty if an error occurs that could affect their health, privacy or safety”.

In other words

If any event occurs that could affect your health or well-being in a negative way, you will be told about it.

For example:

- If a nurse gave you the wrong pills, they must let you know as soon as they realize the mistake and help to keep you safe.
- If your personal health information was lost (or shared with someone without your permission) you must be informed. The privacy officer must look into the situation and take steps to protect your privacy.



Accessibility



“Every client has the right to be accommodated regardless of any disabilities”.

In other words

If you have a disability you have the right to the same health care as everyone else.

For example:

If you have a problem hearing you can ask us to:

- Get an ASL translator for you and arrange your appointment at a time when they can come with you.
- Give you information in written form.
- Provide you with a ‘pocket talker’ that amplifies voices.
- Have a family member or friend come with you to your appointment.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Politeness

“Every client is expected to treat other clients, staff and volunteers with dignity, respect and courtesy”.

In other words

You need to be polite to others when you are in our building or talking on the phone.

For example:

- Please do not yell or be rude.
- If you have a difference of opinion with someone, please remain calm and polite.
- Differences of opinion sometimes happen but if you are upset you have a responsibility to take a time out and calm down. Ask someone to help you if you need support to resolve a conflict.



Respect Privacy of Others



“Every client is expected to respect the right to privacy of other clients and staff”.

In other words

Don't gossip.

For example:

- You might hear something private about another person in a group you attend. You should keep it to yourself. Others should keep your information private as well.
- You might see someone you know in the waiting room and suspect they are seeing a counsellor at the CHCN. You should not share any information about their visit with others.

Provide Information



Every client is expected to, **a)** provide all required information **b)** inform the receptionist if any contact information changes such as telephone numbers, address, etc. **c)** provide complete and honest information on health history and status **d)** report any significant changes in symptoms or failure to improve.

In other words

You need to keep us up to date about how we can reach you, who else helps you, and how you are doing so that we can give good care.

For example:

- Tell us when you move
- Tell us who else helps you with problems. It is best if you let us contact them so we can work together.
- Don't pretend things are getting better or ignore things if they are getting worse.



Follow Advice



“Every client is expected to follow health advice and medical instructions once a plan of action is in place”.

In other words

You have to do your part once a plan has been decided on.

For example:

- If the nurse practitioner (NP) prescribed medicine that you agreed to take, you should not stop taking it without getting medical advice first. You could make things worse if you stop following directions in the middle of a treatment.
- You and your dietitian might decide that it is a good plan to stop eating a certain food for the next month to see if things get better. Sticking to the plan is your part of the bargain so they can help you get to the root of the problem.

Be a Partner in Health

“Every client is encouraged to learn about their health and seek clarification of any information that is not understood”.

In other words

You are a partner in your health care. It is important for you to pay attention to advice or read info about your illness and to ask about what you can do to help.

For example:

- Sometimes you might have homework to do, like keep a food log, or keep track of your symptoms.
- Sometimes you might be asked to read a booklet about your illness.
- Sometimes the doctor might ask you to call another professional and make an appointment.



Keep Appointments



“Every client is expected to keep appointments, be on time for appointments, or to inform the receptionist or group leader when unable to attend appointments/programs.”

In other words

Phone us when you cannot come to your appointment or group.

For example

- Other people who are sick might have to wait longer because the nurse practitioner is booked up. If you call and let us know when you cannot come then we can give your spot to someone else who needs it.
- Sometimes things happen that are outside your control and you are late. Please let us know what happened as soon as possible and understand that we might have to rebook your appointment so that all the people after you do not have to wait.

Communication



“Every client is expected to communicate concerns to their health provider or the Executive Director or their designate.”

In other words

If you are unhappy with the service you are getting, let us know so we can try and do better.

For example:

- If you see something that is unsafe like a broken chair, we can only fix it if we know about it.
- If there is a mess left in a washroom we need to know so we can clean it up.
- If you feel that a staff member has treated you in a way that is disrespectful, inappropriate, or rude we want to know about it.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

We are serious about the **COMMUNITY** part of the Community Health Centres of Northumberland and believe that when people feel like they belong and that they are part of a community they also feel healthier and are better able to cope with health concerns. Participating in your own wellbeing and contributing to the wellbeing of a community leads to positive feelings and promotes good health.

You have the right to belong, participate and contribute in a variety of ways. You can:

- Be an active partner in your own health care plan
- Join a group to learn skills and make friends
- Volunteer
- Become a member of the CHCN and have a vote at the Annual General Meeting
- Provide feedback and suggestions
- Join a committee or focus group
- Fill out client surveys when they are sent out
- Ask about our Client & Family Advisory Roundtable CFAR
- Help us promote special events
- Recommend us to your friends and family
- Join us on social media and 'Like us' on Facebook
- Donate to our Centre (*see back page for details*)
- Help us with our fundraising activities or champion special causes like our Dental Services or Food Security Programs

Ask us how to get involved!



We want to hear your suggestions, concerns, complaints and compliments. You can communicate with us by:

- Phone – 905-885-2626
- Fax – 905-885-2646
- In Writing: 99 Toronto Rd. Suite 101, Port Hope, ON L1A 3S4
- By putting a suggestion in our Comment Box located to the left of the reception desk.
- By emailing info@porthopechc.ca
- In-Person at your appointment with your health provider or when you attend a group/event.
- The Client and Family Advisory Roundtable (CFAR) is made up of a group of clients of CHCN. This group meets regularly and helps us to gain insight from the client and family member perspective for quality improvement. You are welcome to share your suggestions or experiences with CFAR by addressing your written communication submissions to 'CFAR'.



You Can Donate By:

- Visiting our website and clicking on the **DONATE NOW** button
- Dropping off your donation at the front desk
 - ✓ We accept items for our food cupboard
 - ✓ Gently used winter coats during our coat campaign
 - ✓ New mitts, scarves, & hats for our Christmas tree in December
 - ✓ Cash contributions for programs such as food security, dental services, or special projects
- Calling the Director of Corporate Services to get more information 905-885-2626 ext. 213
- Sending your donation in the mail to the attention of The Director of Corporate Services, 99 Toronto Road, Port Hope, Ontario L1A 3S4
- Giving of your time to Volunteer

**Our Community Health Centre is a registered charity. Any donations over the amount of \$10.00 will receive a charitable tax receipt.*

Our Registered Charity number is: 852859198RR0001

*Your donations are greatly appreciated.
Thank you!*