

**PATIENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
2020**

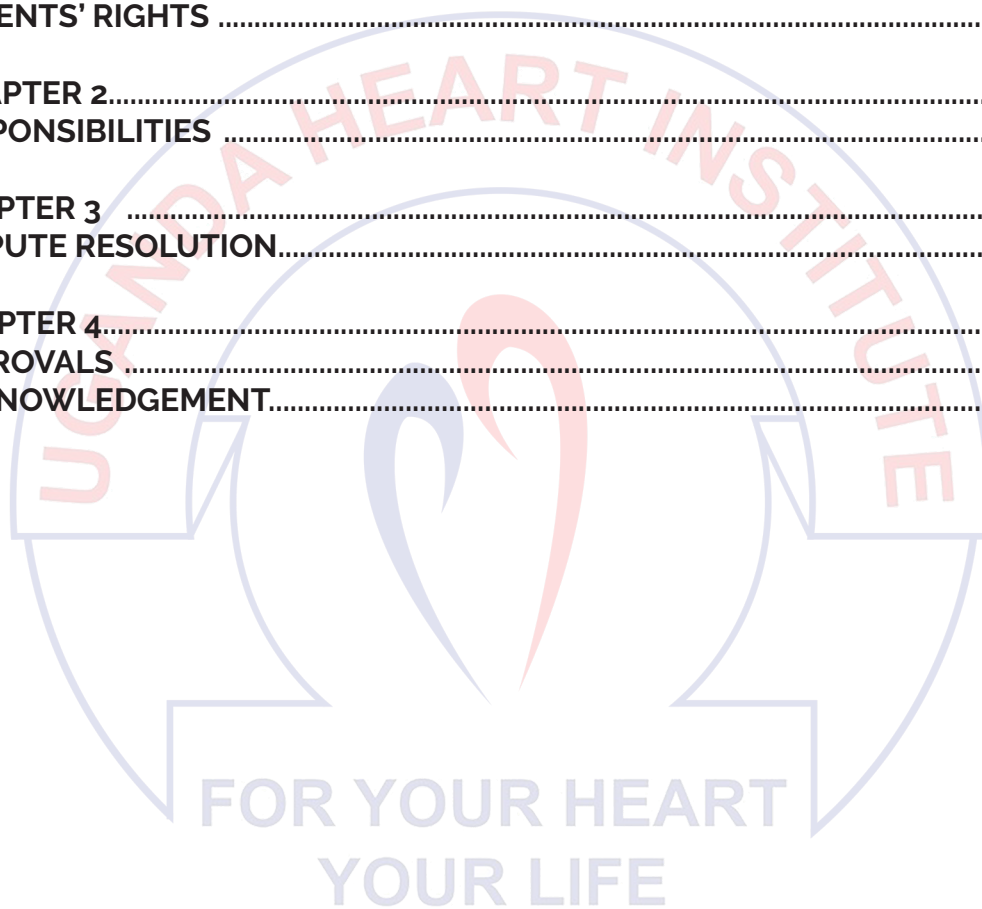


"Your heart status, our shared responsibility"

All Uganda Heart Institute Patients/ Clients are entitled to heart care services, but also equally bear the responsibility of ensuring that they have access to high quality heart care services"

Table of Contents

FOREWARD.....	2
INTRODUCTION.....	3
List of Abbreviations and Definitions.....	4
Vision, Mission and Mandate.....	5
Mission.....	5
CHAPTER 1.....	6
PATIENTS' RIGHTS	6
CHAPTER 2.....	10
RESPONSIBILITIES	10
CHAPTER 3	11
DISPUTE RESOLUTION.....	11
CHAPTER 4.....	12
APPROVALS	12
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	12



FOREWORD

The development of this Patients' Charter has been necessitated by the dynamics of the UHI Act 2016 and contemporary medical practice in Uganda.

For the first time in the history of Uganda, super specialist heart care was recognized as a constitutional right, thus creating new opportunities and challenges for health care providers to offer the highest attainable standard of heart health services to their Clients.

The Patients' Charter is therefore meant to inform the clients and patients about their rights and responsibilities thus empowering them to demand quality services from health care providers. This charter also provides guidelines for resolution of conflicts that may arise between the patients and their health care providers.

The Charter was developed following wide consultation with Stakeholders. Its application therefore will promote the rights and responsibilities of patients. It is divided into three main sections. The first section describes the patients' rights, while the second stipulates the responsibilities of the patients. Section three, outlines the dispute -resolution - mechanism between the patients and the health care providers.

Uganda Heart Institute expects all health care providers to be familiar with the Patients' Rights Charter and to diligently apply it in the provision of healthcare services at Uganda Heart Institute



.....
Chairman, Board of Directors.

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INTRODUCTION

The Uganda Heart Institutes' Patient Charter is based on the Patients Charter of the Republic of Uganda. It also accrues from the need for patients in Uganda to be aware of their rights and responsibilities.

The Charter defines and explains the patients' rights, responsibilities and dispute resolution mechanisms. The rights outlined herein are also anchored in the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda.

The Ministry of Health (Uganda) launched the Republic of Uganda Patients' Charter in December 2009.

In line with the national Patient Charter, all other healthcare providers are, obliged to cascade the patients charter to their respective Institutional levels, hence the Uganda Heart Institute Patient's Charter.

The Uganda Heart Institute Patients Charter spells out a summary of the Uganda Heart Institute patients' rights and obligations, and also guides the patients on how cases of infringement on their rights should be addressed.

It is the hope and desire of Management of Uganda Heart Institute that this Charter shall change the modus operandi at Uganda Heart Institute, to the benefit of the Patients that we serve and the careers (health workers) that offer the services.



Dr. John O.O Omagino
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, UHI

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List of Abbreviations and Definitions

UHI - Uganda Heart Institute

CVD – Cardiovascular Disease

MoH – Ministry of Health

MoFPED – Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development

OPD- Out Patient Department

IPD – Inpatient Department

Interpretations of Key Words in this Charter

Client: Patients and Parents/ Guardians of minors.

Diagnosis: The Disease a patient is found to be ailing from.

Diagnostic Procedure: Laboratory, radiological or clinical process necessary to make a diagnosis

Health care provider: Personnel involved in the management of a patient and this also includes the healthcare Institution

Palliative care: Care given to terminally ill patient

Charter: Explains the rights and responsibilities of the patients and the health workers

Medical Care or Medical treatment: Includes but not limited to medical diagnostic procedures (preventive, promotive, curative, rehabilitative, psychological care and nursing).

Health facility: Hospital, health centre or clinic.

Health Worker: Means a health professional, administrative, scientific and support staff employed in the health service.

Patient: A sick person or any person requesting or receiving medical care and his/her attendants

Clinician: A physician, dentist, nurse, midwife or any other professional recognized by relevant registration councils and so published in the official gazette as a health care provider.

Medical emergency: A situation threatening immediate danger to life or severe, irreversible disability, if medical care is not given urgently.

Medical Information: Information that refers directly to patient's state of physical or mental health, or to the medical treatment of it.

Vision, Mission and Mandate

UHI Mandate (UHI Act 2016)

The Uganda Heart Institute (UHI) was established under the Uganda Heart Institute Act 2016 and charged with the responsibility of coordinating the prevention and treatment of cardiovascular disease in Uganda.

Vision

To be a global center of excellence in cardiovascular services

Mission
To promote health, provide preventive and clinical cardiovascular services and conduct research and training in cardiovascular science

Functions of the Institute

(a) To provide cardiac services and medical care to in-patients and out-patients affected with cardiovascular disease and other related diseases in accordance with standard medical practices and government policies on health.

(b) To provide exemplary patient care and to teach and train Residents, Fellows, Nurses, Technicians and other health workers within and outside the Institute.

(c) To provide consultancy cardiovascular care services.

(d) To procure super specialized cardiac medicines, reagents, sundries and equipment.

(e) To develop and promote educational programs on the management and prevention of cardiovascular disease and related diseases.

(f) To carry out basic and clinical research in cardiovascular disease and its management on their own or in collaboration with persons or institutions inside and outside Uganda.

(g) To apply research and develop new techniques for heart patient care.

(h) To provide palliative care and rehabilitation services to heart patients.

(i) To assume responsibility for the management of any public hospital or health facility involved in the performance of functions which are similar, allied or auxiliary to those of the Institute as may be vested in the Institute by the Minister by order published in the Gazette.

(j) To establish and manage regional heart centers for the provision of cardiac services and medical care to heart patients.

(k) To do any other act for the purpose of achieving the objects and functions of the Institute.

CHAPTER 1 PATIENTS' RIGHTS

Every Uganda Heart Institute Patient or Client has a:

1.Right to access health care

Health care shall include promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative cardiac care.

2.Right to receive emergency treatment

At any Uganda Heart Institute facility in emergency situations. Therefore, irrespective of the patient's ability to pay, treatment to stabilize the patient's condition shall be provided.

3.Right to be informed about all the available provisions for medical care

Any patient who is enjoying the provisions of medical cover (insurance) is entitled to know all the privileges accorded and is also entitled to challenge, where and if necessary, the contents and decisions of all available provisions of medical care services including schemes and health insurance policy.

4.Right to choose a cardiac care provider

A patient has a right to access a health care provider of his/ her choice and he/she shall not be unduly restricted by third partners so long as the provider of choice is qualified, registered and in current good standing with Uganda Heart Institute to provide treatment for cardiac ailment or illness, and as long as that choice is acceptable within medical ethical standards.

5. Right to the highest attainable quality of health care products and services

Every patient has the right to the highest attainable quality of cardiac health care products and services.

6.Right to refuse treatment

Any patient or client may refuse, withdraw or withhold treatment and such refusal shall be documented in writing by the medical service provider and in the presence of an independent witness, provided that such refusal, withdrawal or withholding does not create an immediate danger to the patient or the health of others and provided further that the consciousness and competency of the person has been taken into account.

7.Right to non –discriminate care

No patient at UHI shall be discriminated on grounds of disease, religion, political, disability, race, age, social status, nationality, country of birth or other such grounds.

8. Right to a healthy and safe environment

Every patient has the right to a healthy and safe environment that will ensure physical, mental and social well-being, including adequate water supply, sanitation and waste disposal as well as protection from all forms of environmental dangers such as pollution, ecological degradation and infection. The patient has the right to safety and security to the extent that the practices and installations of Uganda Heart Institute do no harm.

9. Right to be treated by a Named Health Care Provider

- a) Everyone has the right to know the identity and professional position of the person providing health care and therefore shall be attended to by clearly identifiable health care provider.
- b) UHI shall issue guidelines as to the way clinicians and every health worker in medical facility shall be identified.

10. Right to consent for participations in UHI programs

The participation of a patient in clinical training programs or for the purpose of obtaining information shall be voluntary and informed with written or verbal consent and consent shall be witnessed.

11. Right to Receiving Visitors

A patient hospitalized in a health facility is entitled to receive visitors at the gazetted times and/or according to the guidelines provided by the Uganda Heart Institute Management.

12. Right to Informed Consent

Every patient has the right to be given adequate and accurate information about the nature of one's illness, diagnostic procedures, and the proposed treatment for one to make a decision that affects any one of these elements. The information shall be communicated to the patient at the earliest possible stage in a manner that he/she is expected to understand in order to make a free, informed and independent choice. However, the Clinician may withhold the medical information from the patient concerning his/her condition if he/she strongly feels that by giving this information, it is likely to cause severe harm to the patient's mental or physical health.

The way in which informed consent may be given

- a) Informed consent may be given verbally or in writing or demonstrated according to patient's condition. Consent should be witnessed.
- b) In a medical emergency, informed consent shall be given as soon as possible after being stabilized.

The patient should be kept informed if the institution is proposing to carry out or undertake human experimentation or some other educational or research project. The patient has the right to decline to participate in such activities.

13. Right to Medical Care without consent

A health provider may give medical treatment without informed consent of the patient if:

- a) The patient's physical or medical state does not permit obtaining his/her informed consent. (Emergency)
- b) It is impossible to obtain the consent of the patient's representative or of the patient's guardian, where the patient is a minor or an incapacitated person.
- c) If the health work in consultation with another believes that the disclosed information is beneficial to the patient/next of kin.

14. Right to Be referred for an alternative opinion

Every person has the right to be referred for an alternative opinion with or without request or when indicated.

15. Right to Continuity of care

No client shall be abandoned by a health care professional /worker or a health facility which initially took responsibility for one's health.

16. Right to Confidentiality and privacy

Patients have the right to privacy in the course of consideration and treatment. Information concerning one's health, including information regarding treatment may only be disclosed with informed consent, except when required by law or on court order.

Uganda Heart Institute management shall make arrangements to ensure that health workers under their direction shall not disclose any matters brought to their knowledge in the course of their duties or their work.

Uganda Heart Institute or health workers may however pass on medical information to a third person in any of the following cases.

- i) That the disclosure is for the purpose of the patient's treatment by another health worker.
- ii) That disclosure of the information is vital for the protection of the health of others or the Public, and that the need for disclosure overrides the interest in the information's non-disclosure.
- iii) That the disclosure is for the purpose of publication in a medical journal or for research or teaching purposes and that all details identifying the patient have been suppressed.

17. Right to medical information

The patient shall be entitled to information from the Clinician or Uganda Heart Institute, medical information concerning himself/ herself, including a copy of his/her medical records.

18. Right to Custody of medical records

UHI shall be the legal owner and custodian of the medical records and shall ensure that the confidentiality is the responsibility of all UHI health workers.

19. Right to Medical records retention (Medical archives)

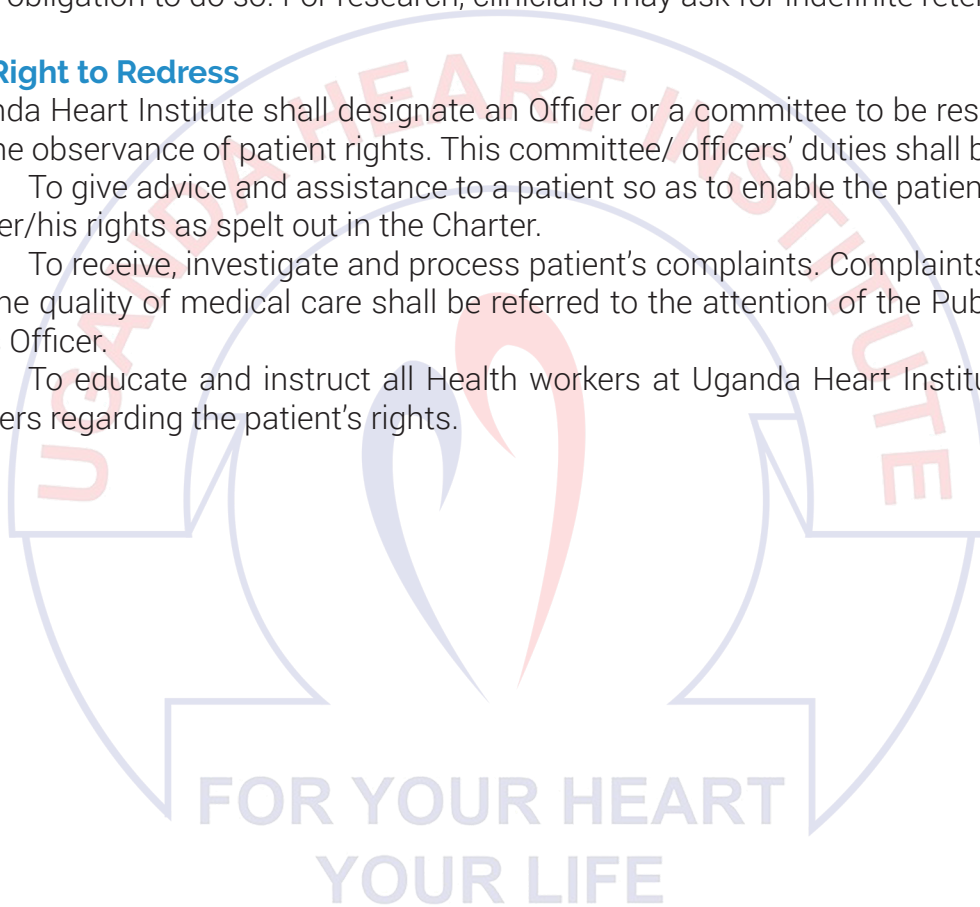
Cardiac care records should be kept for 25 years or 3 years after death.

At the conclusion of periods set out above, the records may be destroyed but there is no obligation to do so. For research, clinicians may ask for indefinite retention.

21. Right to Redress

Uganda Heart Institute shall designate an Officer or a committee to be responsible for the observance of patient rights. This committee/ officers' duties shall be:

- a) To give advice and assistance to a patient so as to enable the patient to realize her/his rights as spelt out in the Charter.
- b) To receive, investigate and process patient's complaints. Complaints regarding the quality of medical care shall be referred to the attention of the Public Relations Officer.
- c) To educate and instruct all Health workers at Uganda Heart Institute in all matters regarding the patient's rights.



CHAPTER 2 RESPONSIBILITIES

Every UHI Patient has the following responsibilities

1. To take care of his/ her health by adopting a healthy lifestyle.
2. If the patient is a minor, protection, care and healthy lifestyle of the minor shall be the responsibility of the parent or guardian of the minor.
3. To adopt a positive attitude towards their health and life.
4. To protect the environment
5. To respect the rights of others and not to endanger lives and health of others
6. To give health care providers at Uganda Heart Institute relevant, and accurate information to facilitate diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and/ or counseling while being truthful and honest on past health care.
7. To take care of the health records in his or her possession and avail them if and when required by the health care provider.
8. To keep scheduled appointments, observe time and if unable to make it, to communicate to the health care provider.
9. To follow instructions, adhere to and not abuse or misuse prescribed medication or treatment and/ or rehabilitation requirements.
10. To enquire about costs of treatment and rehabilitation and to make appropriate arrangements for payments.
11. To be aware of the available health care services at UHI and to make informed choices while utilizing such services responsibly.
12. To inform the health care providers, where necessary, when one wishes to donate his/ or her organs and/ or any other arrangements/ wishes upon ones demise.
13. Where an adult patient is not competent to make decisions on health care services the spouse, where applicable, next of kin and/ or the guardian shall accord protection and care to the patient.
14. To seek treatment at the earliest opportunity.
15. To express any concerns through the right channels in a confidential manner.

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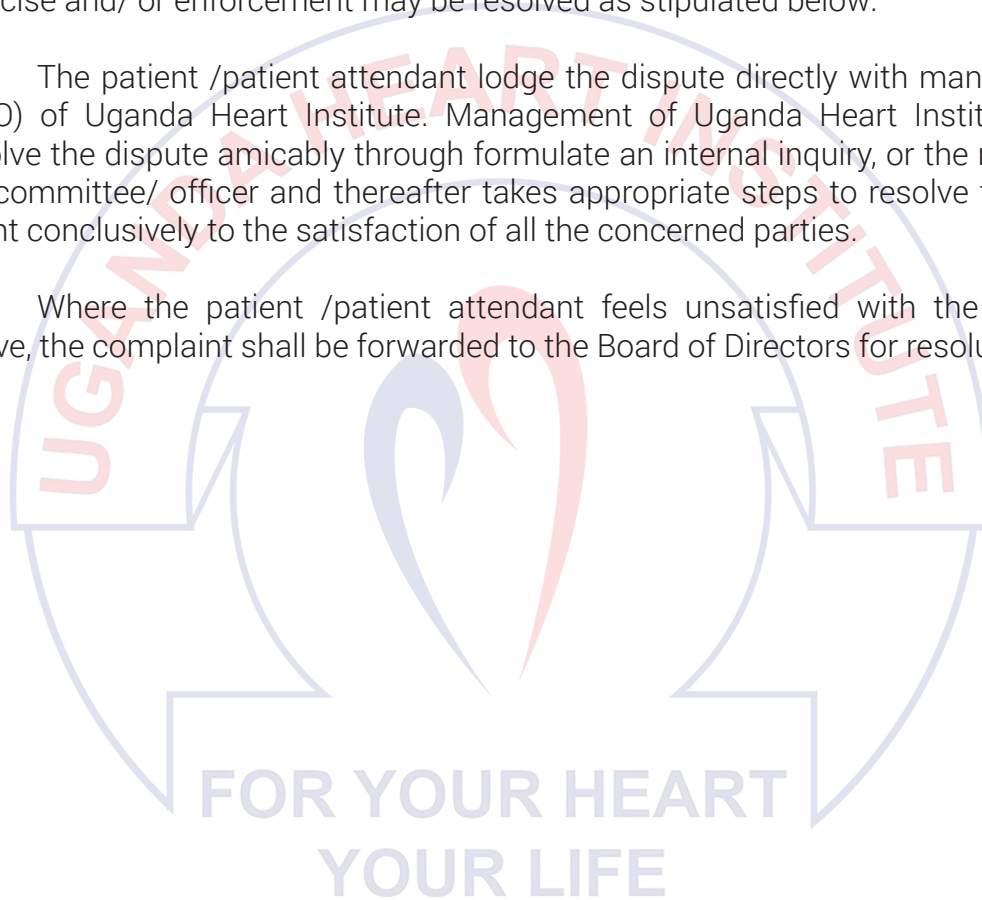
CHAPTER 3 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Disputes may arise from the following interactions:

1. Patient and health care provider
2. Patient and financier/ insurer
3. Patient and the employer
4. Patient and regulatory body
5. Patient and next of kin
6. Patient to Patient

Any dispute arising from the rights and responsibilities set out herein above, their exercise and/ or enforcement may be resolved as stipulated below:

1. The patient /patient attendant lodge the dispute directly with management (PRO) of Uganda Heart Institute. Management of Uganda Heart Institute may resolve the dispute amicably through formulate an internal inquiry, or the responsible committee/ officer and thereafter takes appropriate steps to resolve the complaint conclusively to the satisfaction of all the concerned parties.
2. Where the patient /patient attendant feels unsatisfied with the process above, the complaint shall be forwarded to the Board of Directors for resolution.



CHAPTER 4 APPROVALS & ROLL-OUT

The Board of Directors signed and approved the Charter for dissemination on Wednesday 16th September, 2020

ROLL-OUT

This Charter shall be available on the UHI website for public consumption and also circulated to Staff, patients and other UHI Stakeholders via email, social media and print.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Uganda Heart Institute wishes to acknowledge the following, among others for their invaluable contribution towards the development of the First UHI Patients' Charter in Uganda:

1. The Board of Directors, Uganda Heart Institute
2. The Director General of Ministry of Health Uganda.
3. The Managing Director, Uganda Health Consumers Organization.
4. The Managing Director Gift of Life, Uganda
5. The Patients' rights steering Charter Committee Ministry of Health.
6. The Solicitor Generals' Office.
7. Uganda Heart Institute also acknowledges all its Stakeholders and their contributions.
8. The Commissioner, Non-Communicable Diseases, Ministry of Health.
9. Management and Staff of Uganda Heart Institute.
10. The Medical and Dental Practitioners, Lab and Nursing Council

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