Ministry of Health and Wellness

PATIENT INFORMATION

Consent & Safety

PART I

PATIENT INFORMATION

What is consent?

Consent is the process by which you give permission to a health professional to provide you care and treatment. It may be implied (offering your arm for a blood pressure reading) or formal (signing a formal consent form for an operation).

In either case your consent must be given voluntarily and you must have all the information you need to make a decision. This includes what the treatment involves, the benefits and risks, the details of any alternative treatments and what would happen if the treatment does not go ahead.

How do I give consent?

Consent is a two-way process between you and the health professional. It is a chance for you to ask any questions, and for the health professional to explain what your treatment or procedure will involve.

You may give consent to the proposed course of action non-verbally, for example by offering your arm for a blood test. In more complex cases, consent will be recorded on a consent form. The form enables the health professional to record the different aspects involved in consent and allows you to sign to show you agree. The form alone does not prove consent but it does confirm your joint discussion.

Where a child or young person cannot give consent for himself or herself, someone with parental responsibility or legal guardianship must sign the form on his/her behalf. This also applies for an adult patient who lacks capacity to give consent.

Please ask your health professional for advice and for further information.

Explaining the consent form

The treatment or procedure: benefits, risks and alternatives.

Your health professional will explain the procedure or operation to you, in particular the intended benefits of the operation, the risks involved, any available alternatives and the alternative of not having the treatment or procedure.

Types of consent

Informed Consent means:

- You are informed: you have received information about your health condition and treatment options.
- You understand your health condition and treatment options.
- You are able to decide what health care treatment you want to receive and give your consent to actually receive it.

To obtain your informed consent, a health professional may talk with you about the treatment. Then you will read a description of it and sign a form. Not all medical treatments require written informed consent.

Or, the health professional may explain a treatment to you. He will ask if you agree to have the treatment without asking you to sign a form. Not all medical treatments require written informed consent.

What Treatments Need Informed Written Consent

These medical procedures require you to give written informed consent:

- Most surgeries (operations)
- Other advanced or complex medical tests and procedures. Examples are an endoscopy (placing a tube down your throat to look at the inside of your stomach) or a needle biopsy of the liver
- Radiation or Chemotherapy to treat cancer
- Most vaccines
- Some blood tests, such as HIV testing

The health professional will always ask you to sign a consent form whenever this is required.

Important things you need to know

Patient care is an important part of your care. You have the right to change your mind at any time, even after you have given consent, and even if the procedure has started (as long as it is safe and practical to do so).

If you have an anaesthetic, you will have the opportunity to discuss this with the anaesthetist unless the urgency of your treatment prevents this.

We will also carry out the procedure on your consent form, unless in the opinion of the responsible health professional, a further procedure is needed in order to save your life or prevent serious harm to your health. However, there may be procedures you do not wish us to carry out and these can be recorded on the consent form.

We are unable to guarantee that a particular person will perform the procedure. However, the person undertaking the procedure will have the relevant experience.

All information we hold about you is stored under the provisions of the Data Protection Act.

Your healthcare information may be used in an anonymised way for the purposes of planning of health services and conducting medical research.

Types of Consent Forms

The following consent forms are presently in use in public health institutions among others:

- Consent Form for Admission
- Consent Form for Surgical Operations and Procedures
- Consent Form for Disclosure of Health Information
- Consent Form for Acceptance of Blood Transfusion
- Consent Form for Refusal of Blood Transfusion
- Consent for Medical Termination of Pregnancy.

This Ministry may add new consent forms, modify existing ones or eliminate obsolete ones, as required from time to time.

Please visit our website at health.govmu.org to view some consent forms.

PART 2

PATIENT INFORMATION

In order that your visit or stay at any public health institution goes on smoothly, you should be aware of the following.

Creutzfeldt Jakob Disease ('CJD')

We must take special measures with hospital instruments if there is a possibility you have been at risk of CJD or variant CJD disease. We therefore ask all patients undergoing any surgical procedure if they have been told that they are at increased risk of either of these forms of CJD. This helps prevent the spread of CJD to the wider public. A positive answer will not stop your procedure taking place, but enables us to plan your operation to minimize any risk of transmission to other patients.

Photography, Audio or Visual Recordings

Images and recordings of your diagnosis and treatment are used in an anonymous way in publications or research.

Medical Training

Your treatment provides an important opportunity for medical training of doctors and other health professionals. Any action by these trainees is undertaken under the careful supervision of a registered professional.

Statistics

Statistics are derived in an anonymised way from your attendance at public health institutions for monitoring of service standards and planning of services. They may also be used for research.

Your personal data may be disclosed in accordance with ethical, legal and professional standards to conduct surveys and research. However, the Survey/Research Team should obligatorily require to seek your prior approval either to enlist you as a participant or to access your health data from any health authority. In spite of any previous consent,

you may at any time withdraw your consent as far as practicable.

Use of Tissue

Teaching hospitals may use tissue which is not needed for your treatment or diagnosis to carry out research, for quality control or to train medical staff for the future. Any such research, or storage or disposal of tissue, will be carried out in accordance with ethical, legal and professional standards.

Keeping of Consent Form

Signed consent forms are kept within your medical records.

Medical Certificate

A Medical Certificate is issued by a doctor to a patient on the request of the latter. It contains the medical condition because of which the patient requires leave or rest. A patient can request the doctor not to mention the medical condition if he so desires.

Privacy and Dignity

We are committed to treating all patients with privacy and dignity in a safe, clean and comfortable environment. This means, with a few exceptions, we will care for you in same sex bays in wards with separate sanitary facilities for men and women.

No Smoking and Drinking Policy

Smoking and consumption of alcoholic drinks are not permitted in health institutions.

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