

In our practice, we treat patients politely and with respect, recognising their dignity and rights as individuals. We also encourage patients to be involved in decisions about their care and, before embarking on any aspect of patient care, we seek their consent to do so – recognising the rights of patients to decide what happens to their bodies. We recognise that patients have the right to refuse advice or treatment.

Informed consent

We aim to provide each patient with sufficient information in a way that they can understand to allow them to make a decision about their care. We will use various communication tools to ensure that the patient understands what is being suggested.

In our discussions with patients, we explore what they want to know to help them make their decisions and explain:

- why we feel the treatment is necessary
- the risks and benefits of the proposed treatment
- what might happen if the treatment is not carried out
- the alternative treatment options and their risks and benefits

We encourage patients to ask questions and aim to provide honest and full answers. We always allow patients time to make their decisions.

We always make sure that the patient understands whether they are being treated under the NHS or privately and what the costs will be. Where a patient embarks on a course of treatment, we provide a written treatment plan and cost estimate.

Where changes to the treatment plan are needed, we obtain the patient's agreement and consent, including to any changes in the costs. The patient is given an amended treatment plan and estimate.

Voluntary decision making

Decisions about their care must be made by the patient, and without pressure. We respect the patient's right to:

- refuse to give consent to treatment
- change their minds after they have given consent.

When this occurs we will not put pressure on the patient to reconsider but where we feel it is important, we will inform the patient of the consequence of not accepting treatment.

Ability to give consent

Every person aged 16 or over has the right to make their own decisions and is assumed to be able to do so, unless they show otherwise. We recognise that, in some circumstances, children under 16 years may be able to give informed consent to examination and treatment.

Where we have doubts about a patient's ability to give informed consent, we will seek advice from our defence organisation.

Reference: GDC Standards Guidance – Principles of Patient Consent