

## Texas A&M College of Dentistry Patient Rights and Responsibilities

Texas A&M College of Dentistry Clinical Programs are committed to following a model of providing patient care with an emphasis on evidence-based dentistry and the patient as the central focus of the oral healthcare team. This will be equally true if you are a parent, legal responsible party, or conservator of a patient for whom you must provide treatment consent. Therefore, we encourage a partnership between you and our dental team members, faculty, staff, and students. Patient-centered care ensures the patient actively participates in their dental treatment decisions. Treatment decisions will respect the patient's values, finances, and expectations for treatment. By exercising your patient rights and responsibilities, you fulfill your role as a care team member and help assure that your treatment results will meet your expectations. Texas A&M Dentistry is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment. Registration certificates for licensed healthcare providers are available in the Office of Clinical Affairs.

### YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- **Considerate, respectful, and confidential treatment.**
- **Continuous and timely completion of your treatment.** As a patient in a health care teaching institution, you are a partner in our commitment to the education of future health care providers and have the right to receive comprehensive care within the constraints of an academic schedule. Care will follow a comprehensive treatment plan that is appropriately sequenced.
- **Access to complete and current information about your oral condition in language that you can understand.** Whatever the scope of your treatment, information regarding your treatment plan is available. You have the right to discuss treatment with any member of your care team, including faculty. You have the right to reasonable foreign language interpretation services and sign language interpretation. While we make every attempt to keep you informed, you should never be reluctant to ask questions if you are uncertain about your oral health status or treatment.
- **Explanation of recommended treatment and costs.** You have the right to receive a comprehensive oral health evaluation, including a diagnosis and treatment recommendations. You should be provided with information about all reasonable alternatives, including the risks, benefits, and expected outcomes of each option. This includes the option of choosing no treatment. Furthermore, you have the right to be informed of the estimated costs associated with each alternative. Parents of minors or legal responsible parties have the same rights regarding patient treatment and options.
- **Make an informed consent to be treated.** After being informed of your treatment options and their costs, you have the right to accept, defer or decline any of the options, providing professional standards of care are not compromised. Once you have reached an agreement on the treatment to be performed, you will be asked to provide written consent prior to beginning treatment. You will be asked to sign documents and you should have complete information about their content. Payment is expected at the time of treatment.
- **Treatment that meets the standard of care.** As an educational institution, it is our mission to provide you with patient-centered, evidence-based oral health services. As a part of your care, consults with dental specialists, on your behalf, may be requested when indicated. In oral health care delivery, we utilize accepted techniques, materials, and equipment. You can be assured that all clinical personnel understand and adhere to current standards for infection control.
- **Emergency treatment.** If problems arise related to your oral health care at the College clinics, you have a right to receive emergency care to alleviate your pain and/or infection. This service is always available to active patients. There may be a fee for this care. For emergency dental needs, please contact your appointment coordinator. After-hours emergency contact information is available on the coordinator's voicemail.
- **Confidentiality of your protected health information (PHI).** The privacy of your healthcare records is assured by both federal and Texas law. Your records will not be released to persons or agencies outside the school unless you provide written consent. Exceptions may apply with respect to complaint investigations where allowed by law. You have the right to request, in writing, a copy of your healthcare information and information about the release of your healthcare information. You have the right to request in writing any corrections to your healthcare information and to request additional restrictions on disclosure of your healthcare information. You also have the right to review a copy of the Texas A&M College of Dentistry's "Notice of Privacy Practices."
- **Timely access to a patient advocate.** If you believe your rights or requests are not being honored, and you cannot resolve the situation with your treatment team, you have access to a Patient Advocate who will assist. All complaints and concerns are treated confidentially. Patients who express a concern or complaint will not have their future treatment compromised.

**Patient Advocate:  
Office of Clinical Affairs  
214-828-8331  
patientadvocate@tamu.edu**

- **Special Assistance.** Handicapped parking is available in the clinical building parking garage. Please inform your care team if any special assistance or accommodation is needed.

**YOU HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO:**

- **Be considerate and respectful of other patients**, members of the oral healthcare team and Texas A&M College of Dentistry personnel. You also have the responsibility to be respectful of the property of other patients and of Texas A&M College of Dentistry. The school enforces a "Zero-Tolerance" policy to any type of harassment or discrimination. Inappropriate behavior or comments of a discriminatory or offensive nature, such as those based on cultural or ethnic characteristics or those of a sexual nature, will not be tolerated and will result in discontinuation of care.
- **Provide adequate photo identification** to establish identity.
- **Keep scheduled appointments and be available for treatment.** If you cannot be available for treatment and/or we are unable to provide your care in a timely manner, your care may be discontinued. Children or adults that require supervision are not allowed into treatment areas and may not be left alone unsupervised in waiting areas. Texas A&M Dentistry employees are not authorized to supervise children or adults.
- **Ask for explanations about your treatment or treatment plan** if you do not understand or if you have additional questions.
- **Make payment at the time of treatment.**
- **Adhere to all home oral healthcare recommendations** as failure to comply with home care may compromise results.
- **Provide honest and complete information** about your medical history and current health status and regularly update this information.
- **Agree to x-rays as necessary and appropriate** for examination, diagnosis, and treatment.
- **Comply with all Texas A&M University College of Dentistry rules and policies.** This includes the appropriate utilization of service animals, prohibition of any type of photos or videos in treatment and prohibition of any firearms or weapons inside the healthcare facility.

To obtain a printed copy of this document, please ask a member of your care team.