The NMHS Mental Health Public Patient Charter is based on the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights, which describes the rights of patients and other people using the Australian health system, and the Western Australian Public Patients’ Charter, which explains the rights of patients and other people using public hospitals and health centres in Western Australia.

NMHS Mental Health aligns with and is committed to the principles and values of the Western Australian Public Patients’ Charter and the Charter of Mental Health Care Principles within the Western Australia Mental Health Bill 2013, which ensure the rights of every patient are maintained without prejudice or discrimination.

Guiding Principles

The three principles below describe how this Charter applies in the Australian health system.

1. Everyone has the right to be able to access mental health care and this right is essential for the Charter to be meaningful.

2. The Australian Government commits to international agreements about human rights which recognise everyone’s right to have the highest possible standard of physical and mental health care.

3. Australia is a society made up of people with different cultures and ways of life, and the Charter acknowledges and respects these differences.

For more information about the Australian Charter of Health Care Rights and the WA Mental Health Bill 2013 visit www.safetyandquality.gov.au www.mentalhealth.wa.gov.au

Your rights as a Patient of NMHS Mental Health

**RESPECT – You have the right to:**
- be treated with respect and dignity
- privacy and confidentiality
- have your individual needs respected in relation to your age, culture, language, disability and gender.

**ACCESS – You have the right to:**
- timely access to quality mental health care that promotes recovery
- appropriate person centred mental health care regardless of the setting (i.e. the community, or as a voluntary or involuntary hospital inpatient or an inpatient subject to the judicial system) in which it is provided
- be given information regarding your legal status, health care, rights and responsibilities
- be seen by a psychiatrist
- access your medical records under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 1992 or section 160 of the Mental Health Act 1996 (WA)
- seek legal advice (Mental Health Law Centre can provide free advice regarding the Mental Health Act 1996)
- request the Mental Health Review Board review your case if you are an involuntary patient
- request an Official Visitor from the Council of Official Visitors
- contact people or agencies by letter or telephone
- access an interpreter
- access your personal possessions, however some restrictions may apply in some circumstances.

**SAFETY – You have the right to:**
- receive safe and high quality health care provided with professional care, respect, skill and competence
- be treated in the least restrictive manner in the least restrictive environment for the least restrictive amount of time appropriate to your individual needs
- seek a second opinion regarding your treatment and care.

**INCLUSION – You have the right to:**
- participate in decisions and choices regarding your care including discharge planning
- have your patient safety plan or advanced statement inform your care
- participate within a consumer advisory forum
- involve carers or families to contribute to your care.

**COMMUNICATION – You have the right to:**
- be heard
- receive clear and concise explanation of any treatments including risks and alternatives
- comment on your care and have your concerns addressed
- provide feedback through the complaints and compliments process.

If applicable, ask a member of your treating team for further information on how the Council of Official Visitors, Mental Health Review Board and the Mental Health Law Centre may be of help to you and/or ask for pamphlets provided by these services.