Welcome to St. Peter’s Hospital

Your voice matters, so please Speak Up!

• Guidelines for Involvement in Your Care
• Patient Rights and Responsibilities
• General Hospital Information

A Tradition of Compassionate Care Since 1883
In 1883 the St. Peter’s Episcopal Church parish vestry and the Montana Episcopal Diocese established St. Peter’s Hospital.

On December 15, 1887, a permanent hospital was built overlooking Last Chance Gulch near downtown Helena. It contained seven private rooms, a chapel, a reading room, a ten-patient ward, a room for contagious cases and an operating room. Numerous additions and improvements were made to the original hospital over the years.

In 1968 a new St. Peter’s Hospital was constructed on the current site at 2475 Broadway. In 1995 a Cancer Treatment Center was built, offering both radiation and medical oncology. In 1997 the Helena SurgiCenter was added and in 1998 the Maria Dean Medical Building was constructed.

In 2005 St. Peter’s Hospital began a Master Facility expansion to provide for our growing region. New and larger Emergency Department and Intensive Care were constructed. A four-story patient wing, with all private rooms and a consolidated diagnostic imaging center was built. New operating rooms, heart catheter laboratories, expanded same day services and expanded pathology and laboratory services were also constructed.

Today, St. Peter’s is an independent, non-profit community hospital. We are committed to providing excellent care, working in partnership with our medical staff and community.

Thank you for choosing St. Peter’s Hospital to provide your medical care! While you are here, we will do everything we can to keep you comfortable and hasten your return home.

Please review the information in this booklet so you and your family understand more about your stay at St. Peter’s. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions on how we can better care for you, please Speak Up and let our staff know.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery!
Key Phone Numbers for Your Care

For Local calls, dial 9, wait for dial tone and dial the number. Friends and family may reach you by calling the main hospital number, (406) 442-2480, and asking for you by name.

Long distance collect and credit card calls can be made by dialing 8 – 0 and the number you are trying to reach. Long distance calls cannot be charged to your room.

For hospital services, lift your phone and dial the four-number extension.

Food Service........................................1818
(Hours: 7A - 2P and 4P – 6:45P)

Environmental Services.................6491
(Housekeeping)

Rapid Response Team.....................5555
(Emergency consult, say “Rapid Response to Room #______”)

Chaplain.............................................2409

Quality of Care, Complaints..........2566

VP of Nursing.................................2148

Ethics Committee.........................2409, 2100

Hospital Administration...............2100

Calling your nurse: A button to call your nurse is located at your bedside and in your bathroom. When you press the button, your nurse and the nursing station are alerted by a flashing light and a call on a special phone that each nurse carries.

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... (Inside Back Cover of Booklet)
Patient Bill of Rights

St. Peter’s Hospital recognizes and respects the rights of the patients we serve. Therefore, we have adopted the following Patient Bill of Rights and are providing these in advance of receiving care. As a patient, you may appoint a representative to receive this information if desired.

The right to quality care

- Care, without regard to race, creed, religion, color, sex, physical or mental disability, age, national origin, gender, pregnancy or childbirth related conditions, sexual orientation, sex stereotyping, gender identity or expression, culture, language, educational or economic background, or the source of payment for care.
- Considerate and respectful care, provided in a safe environment, free from all forms of abuse/harassment.
- A reasonable response to a patient’s request for service.
- The appropriate assessment and management of pain.
- A reasonable continuity of care, and information from the patient’s physician of the continued healthcare requirements following discharge from the hospital.

The patient’s right to information about his/her care

- Information regarding the relationship of the patient’s hospital to other health and educational institutions insofar as his/her care is concerned.
- Information from the physician regarding diagnosis, course of treatment (including unanticipated outcomes), and prospects for recovery in terms that are understandable to the patient. Interpretation assistance for foreign language speakers will be provided.
- The name of the physician who has primary care responsibility for coordinating the patient’s care, and the names and professional relationships of other physicians and healthcare providers who will see the patient.
- Privacy concerning the patient’s own medical care program, and the right to be advised as to the reason for the presence of any individual involved in his/her healthcare.
- Information about the hospital’s rules and regulations that apply to the patient’s conduct.

The right to options regarding care

- The right of the patient to give informed consent before the start of any procedure or treatment, and to participate in the development and implementation of his/her plan of care, as well as actively participate in decisions regarding his/her medical care.
- To refuse treatment to the extent permitted by law and to leave the hospital even against the advice of their physician.
- To refuse the involvement of students in a patient’s healthcare.
- To refuse to participate in research projects.
- The right to formulate advanced directives regarding his/her healthcare and have hospital staff and practitioners who provide care in the hospital comply with these directives (to the extent provided by law and regulations).

The patient’s right to involve others in his/her care

- The right to the prompt notification of a family member and personal physician of the patient’s admission to the hospital.
- Access to clergy and participation in spiritual/cultural affairs.
- To have all rights apply to the person who has legal responsibility to make decisions regarding medical care on behalf of the patient.

The right to remain free from seclusion or restraint

- Restraints of any form that are not medically necessary, or used as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience or retaliation by staff will not be used.

The right to access medical record information

- The patient has the right to confidential records and communications and the right to the access of information contained in his/her medical record within a reasonable time frame.

The right to question a bill

- The patient has the right to examine and question his/her bill, regardless of the source of payment.

The right to voice concerns

- The patient can voice concerns regarding care received without recrimination.
- The patient has the right to be advised of the hospital’s complaint/grievance process and access to the hospital’s Ethics Committee.
Your Responsibilities as a Patient

As the patient, you can play a vital role in making your care safe by becoming an active, involved and informed member of your health care team. As patient’s have a responsibility to report perceived risks in their care and unexpected changes in their condition to the responsible practitioner to help prevent health care errors, patients are urged to “Speak Up.”

The patient has the following responsibilities:

1. To provide accurate and complete information concerning their present complaints, past illnesses, hospitalizations, medications and other matters relating to their health.
2. Following the treatment plan established by their physician, including the instructions of nurses and other healthcare providers as they carry out the physician’s orders.
3. For their own actions should the patient refuse treatment or not follow their physician’s orders.
4. Following hospital policies and procedures and being considerate of the rights of other patients and hospital personnel.
5. For his or her personal property and to be respectful of the personal property of others.
6. Assuring that financial obligations of their hospital care are fulfilled as promptly as possible.
**Patient Care Starts with You**

While you are at St. Peter’s Hospital, you are the most important member of your health care team. We want to hear from you!

- Let us know how we are doing
- Tell us if we can provide better care for you
- Ask questions about anything you don’t understand

**Enlist Friends and Family**

- Encourage a trusted family member or friend to stay with you as your “health care partner,” especially if you feel the need for extra support or advice
- Ask your health care partner to be your “eyes and ears” – to know everything that is happening to you and why
- Ask your health care partner to speak up if something seems strange
- Make sure your health care partner knows how you feel about resuscitation and life support

**Check for ID Badges**

- Look for ID badges – every staff member and doctors must wear one
- Don’t let anyone care for you who is not wearing a badge
You Are Part of Our Safety Team

Here are some ways you can help:

**Know about Your Care**

- You and your doctor should agree on exactly what will happen to you in the hospital
- Know who will be taking care of you.
- Know how long a treatment or procedure will last
- Know how you should expect to feel after a treatment or procedure

**Pay Attention**

- Watch what is happening in the room around you
- Know what is happening to you
- If you don’t know, please ask
- If you still don’t understand, please ask again

**Make Sure You Are the Right Patient**

- Staff and doctors must identify you before they provide care to you
- They must use two methods of identification every time
- If your caregiver does not use two methods – please remind him or her to do so
Make Sure Staff and Doctors Wash Their Hands

• All staff and doctors are required to wash their hands
• They must wash their hands before and after everything they do
• If they don’t, please ask them to do so

Know Your Medications

• Have a list of your current medications and allergies
• Ask about the reason for all of your medications
• If a pill looks unfamiliar to you – don’t take it unless you know what it is
• Get written information about your prescriptions and read it
• Make sure you can read your doctor’s writing on your prescriptions

Discomfort and Pain Management

• Don’t be tough! Pain interferes with healing
• We take reports of pain and symptoms seriously and want to help you
• Please talk to us about your symptoms of pain as soon as they begin, or your concerns of pain
Discomfort and Pain Management - Continued

• Ask us what the plan is to treat your pain

• Please let us know how we are doing in treating your pain

• It is much easier to control pain from the beginning, than it is to make it better if it gets too extreme

• Tell us about symptoms such as nausea, itching, constipation and dizziness

• Medicines (narcotics) given to manage pain rarely cause addiction when taken appropriately

St. Peter’s Rapid Response Team

• Sometimes patients or family members see or sense things that staff may miss

• If your gut is telling you that something is wrong, if a loved one is showing a sudden change in physical condition or mental function and, if your nursing staff is unable to address your concerns or questions, you may call the Rapid Response Team

• Dial 5555 on your room phone, ask the operator to please “Page the Rapid Response Team to room #___."

• St. Peter’s Rapid Response Team consists of an Intensive Care Nurse and a Respiratory Therapist

• The Rapid Response Team provides another set of trained eyes and hands to work with you, your nurse and physician in preventing a crisis
Your Health Care Team

Your health care is important to every one at St. Peter’s Hospital; physicians, nurses, therapists, technicians, volunteers, and a host of others who you may never see.

Your physician has admitted you because you require specialized care and observation. Your treatment plan is coordinated with a team of health care professionals, you, and your family.

Medical Staff

Your physician or a Hospitalist is responsible for directing your care while you are in the hospital. The physician should be consulted if you have questions about your illness. Hospitalists are physicians who specialize in internal medicine and whose entire attention is directed toward patients while they are in the hospital. Your primary care provider may communicate with a Hospitalist about your medical history, medications, and any special needs.

Nursing Staff

A team of professional registered nurses and licensed practical nurses provides 24-hour nursing care. A director is responsible for leading and coordinating nursing care on each unit. Please feel free to contact your nurse or the department director if you have questions or concerns.

Care Management

Care Managers are a team of registered nurses and social workers who are assigned to each patient care area. They work closely with physicians to assist patients and families in dealing with problems brought on by illness. Care Managers assist with post-hospital care referrals and coordinate services such as rehabilitation, home health care, Hospice, nursing home placement and obtaining medical equipment. Care Managers can also help you with any questions you have regarding finances such as insurance coverage, Medicaid application, Social Security/disability information or Medicare.

CaringBridge

During your stay and beyond, you might find it convenient to communicate to your family and friends on CaringBridge. CaringBridge provides free, private websites that connect family and friends during a serious health event, care and recovery. Creating and updating a CaringBridge website is easy – you can add health updates and photos to share your story. You can also receive messages of support in the guestbook. For more information, visit www.stpetes.org and click on the CaringBridge logo.
Your Accommodations

Your room assignment at St. Peter’s Hospital is based upon your admitting diagnosis and the bed availability on the day of your admission.

Calling Your Nurse

A button to call your nurse is located at your bedside and in your bathroom. When you press the button, your nurse and the nursing station are alerted that you need assistance by a light that flashes above your door and a call on a special phone that he/she carries. This phone is designed specifically so that your nurse can be in direct contact with you immediately. These are not cell phones but special wireless phones that are integrated with the hospital’s call light system. St. Peter’s Hospital believes that caregivers should be at the bedside and this system helps to bring assistance quickly and efficiently to the patient.

Your Bed

Hospital beds are electrically operated, and your nurse will show you how to work your bed properly. Your hospital bed is probably higher and narrower than your bed at home. Bedside rails are for your protection. A siderail may be raised at night or during the day if you are resting, recovering from surgery or taking certain medications.

Your Menu

St. Peter’s Hospital is pleased to offer patients our complimentary Continental Cuisine Room Service. Continental Cuisine allows you to choose the time you will eat as well as healthy menu choices by following these easy steps:

- Select the menu items you would like
- Call our room service, ext. 1818, between the 7 a.m. and 2 p.m. or 4 to 6:45 p.m. to place your order
- Meals will be delivered within 45 minutes of your order
- If you have questions or need assistance, call ext. 1818 and ask the person to contact your Nutrition Representative
For a fee, guests may order from our room service menu. A guest will pay for the meal in advance in the Cafeteria. Please see your Nutrition Representative for more information.

For each patient’s safety, we will accept your menu selections only after your physician has entered your diet order. Not all menu items are appropriate for all diets and you will be informed of this when you order. Your physician may have requested additional modifications to these selections. We will guide you in making another choice.

The Cafeteria welcomes visitors and guests during meal times.

**Hours Monday through Friday are:**

**Coffee Shop & Café:** 7 am – 6:00pm

**Hours Weekends & Holidays**

**Coffee Shop & Café:** 8:30am – 5:00pm

Vending machines, offering a variety of snacks and beverages, are located in the Family Kitchens on the 2nd and 3rd Floor and next to the coffee shop on the main level. There are also microwaves and refrigerators for patient and family use on each of the inpatient units. Ask your nurse for assistance locating these.

**Using the Telephones**

Telephones are provided in each room. Local and toll-free calls can be made at any time from the room by dialing 9 and the number. Long distance, collect and credit card calls can be made by dialing 8-0 and the number you are trying to reach. Long distance calls cannot be charged to your room. Your friends and family can call you in your room by dialing (406) 442-2480 and asking for you by name. Pay telephones are located throughout the Hospital.

**Room Temperature**

All rooms in the hospital are centrally heated and air conditioned, and all patient rooms have individual thermostats. You may adjust this thermostat yourself. It will take approximately 30 minutes for the temperature to adjust to changes.
Television

Color television sets are provided free of charge in each room. Please be considerate of other patients by playing your TV set softly and by turning off your set at bedtime. Television earphones are available for the hard of hearing. The nurse will show you how to operate your television.

Privacy

We understand that medical information about you and your health is personal and we are committed to protecting medical information about you. St. Peter’s “Notice of Privacy Practices” explains how we may use and disclose information and is posted in the hospital’s admitting areas. For a copy of the notice, please ask your nurse or contact the Medical Records Department.

Fire Drills

For your protection, St. Peter’s Hospital conducts fire and disaster drills regularly. If a drill occurs while you are here, please remain in your room and do not become alarmed. The hospital is a fire-resistant building and the staff is trained in fire protection.

Medications

All medications you take while in the hospital are prepared and dispensed by St. Peter’s Hospital Pharmacy and administered by a nurse to ensure your safety. Patients are not permitted to use their own drugs or self administer medications with only limited exceptions.

St. Peter’s has two retail pharmacies, one in the hospital and one in the St. Peter’s Medical Group office building on Broadway, that may be used for your discharge or other take home medications. Take home prescriptions are competitively priced with other retail pharmacies. If you wish to use St. Peter’s retail pharmacy, ask your nurse or doctor to send your prescriptions to the pharmacy prior to discharge so that they will be ready for pick-up when you leave the hospital.

Oxygen

Special regulations are in effect in areas where patients are receiving oxygen. Electrically operated equipment, open flames, and aerosol products are not permitted in these areas.
Wheelchairs

Wheelchairs are available throughout the hospital, but getting in and out of them without assistance may be hazardous. Please ask for assistance from hospital staff.

Valuable Items

Patients are asked to not bring items of value to the hospital. If you do bring a valuable item, it should be deposited in the safe upon admission. You will be given a written receipt for all items, which must be presented when you withdraw them. St. Peter’s Hospital does not accept responsibility for items of value unless they are deposited in the safe. It is your responsibility to keep track of personal items, such as hearing aids and dentures that cannot be deposited in the safe. If you’ve lost something, please notify your nurse immediately and we will make every effort to help you find it. Unclaimed articles are sent to lost and found. To inquire about lost articles, call the main switchboard at (406) 442-2480.

Visitors

At St. Peter’s, visitors are welcome 24 hours a day. Restrictions will be posted on the patient door, or in case of a hospital-wide restriction, at the main entrances. Visitation may be restricted for the following reasons:

- At patient request or legal guardian if patient is under age or becomes incapacitated.
- Patient is observed to be sleeping.
- Patient is undergoing a medical procedure.
- Restrictions initiated by St. Peter’s senior leadership or safety officer due to a crisis or special situation.

St. Peter’s visitation policy is designed to protect patients’ privacy and support healing. The policy provides patients with the opportunity to rest and recover while enabling family and friends to participate in the healing process; to enhance the patient’s support systems; and to protect the rights of our patients, visitors, and employees, to a safe, secure, and orderly environment. Children may not be left unattended at any time while at St. Peter’s Hospital. Failure to cooperate with these guidelines or hospital staff requests may result in a visitor’s removal from hospital property.
Pastoral Care

A chaplain is available to help you and your family in the areas of prayer ministry, sacraments, counseling, ethical questions, and emotional support. To request a chaplain, ask your nurse or call the hospital operator by dialing “0.” Your priest, rabbi, or minister is always welcome to visit you. St. Peter’s Chapel provides a quiet place for meditation and prayer and is open to everyone. Ask your nurse for directions. Visitors of all faiths are welcome in the chapel at any time.

Smoking or other Tobacco Products

Recognizing the proven health hazards associated with using tobacco products as well as second-hand smoke, St. Peter’s Hospital provides a “tobacco-free” environment for employees, visitors and patients. No one, under any circumstances, is permitted to use tobacco on Hospital Properties. Patients, visitors and employees are prohibited from using tobacco products near any entrance to the hospital, covered or uncovered, or any place outside where “tobacco-free” signs are posted.

Gift Shop

The Gift Shop, a service supported by St. Peter’s Hospital Association and staffed by volunteers, is open Monday through Friday and limited hours on weekends. Located inside the main entrance, gift items, jewelry, magazines, paperback books, greeting cards, candy, toiletries, and flowers are available.

Flowers & Balloons

Flowers and latex-free balloons are delivered daily by florists and shops directly to the nursing units. Flowers are also available in the Gift Shop, however, they are not allowed in the Intensive Care Unit.

Mail

Volunteers deliver letters and packages to patients daily. Letters and parcels that arrive after you have been discharged are forwarded to your home. Stamps and stationery may be purchased in the St. Peter’s Hospital Gift Shop. Outgoing mail may be left at the nurses’ station or given to a volunteer.
Hospitality Cart

The Hospitality Cart, operated by the Hospital Association, offers coffee and tea at no charge and sells a variety of items including candy, toiletries, books, and magazines. Volunteers round with the cart in the afternoon and early evening hours.

Newspapers

Daily newspapers are available on each nursing unit upon request. Additional newspapers can be purchased from the vending machines near the main hospital entrance.

Going Home

After your physician has determined you can go home, a staff member will arrange and provide assistance for your departure. Please be patient while staff arrange for equipment, oxygen and medications. They will need to complete your discharge paperwork and go over it with you. This process can take 1-2 hours, but rest assured we are working quickly behind the scenes to ensure you have everything you need when you go home. Remember to retrieve your valuables from the safe and collect all of your personal belongings and double check closets and drawers. The hospital is not responsible for items left in your room.

After Hospital Care

When you leave the hospital, your doctor and nurse will give you instructions about how to best care for yourself at home. If you or a family member has questions about diet, activities, or other matters, please ask your nurse.

Before leaving St. Peter’s, you should understand your condition, how long recovery may take, what you can and cannot do, and what you will need at home. Discuss your needs carefully with your physician, nurses, and family members.

Care Managers are available to help you arrange for community services such as counseling, durable home medical equipment, Medicare, and Medicaid coverage. Care Managers can also help you make arrangements for referral to a nursing home or specialized outpatient treatment. If you have any questions, please let your nurse know and a Care Manager will be contacted.
Advance Directives

In compliance with state and federal law, St. Peter’s Hospital provides the following information to all patients and residents. An advance medical directive is a document which allows you to give directions about your future medical care. Under state law, you have the right to accept or refuse medical or surgical treatment.

If you are ever unable to express your wishes about your medical care, an advance medical directive will inform your family, friends, and health care providers of your wishes. There are two types of advance medical directives.

Living Will

This is a signed and dated document allowing you to state your wishes regarding health care. It will take effect if you have a terminal condition and can no longer communicate clearly.

Durable Power of Attorney

This is a notarized document in which you name a person (called a proxy) to make your decisions for you if you are unable to do so. It is the policy of St. Peter’s Hospital to follow the guidelines set forth in the patient’s Living Will or Durable Power of Attorney provided that document is filed in the patient’s medical record.

Information packets about advance medical directives are available on each nursing unit. Counseling regarding an advance medical directive is available from your physician or from Care Managers (444-2285) and Pastoral Care (444-2409).
St. Peter’s Hospital will admit and render services to all patients, regardless of ability to pay.

We can help you collect any insurance benefits due and help you obtain charitable or public assistance programs. Patient Business Services is happy to answer your billing or financial questions or concerns. Please call 444-2185.

Many different services can be associated with a hospital visit. St. Peter’s will record only hospital, ambulance, emergency services, and rehabilitation charges.

All other chargeable services will be billed to you by the service provider-admitting physician, radiologists, pathologist, anesthesiologist, and other consulting physicians. Therefore, you may receive several different bills depending on the services you utilized in the hospital. One bill will be from St. Peter’s and the other providers will send separate bills.

If you furnish all the necessary health insurance information and sign the medical release and insurance assignment authorizations, we will submit complete insurance claims on the appropriate forms for the charges that we record. Keep in mind that insurance is a contract between you and your insurance company and that we are acting only as your billing agent. We cannot pursue payment from your insurance carrier(s) in the event of non-payment or benefit denials. If your insurance carrier(s) has not submitted payment within 30 days of billing, we expect you to pay the balance in full.

You will receive a monthly statement showing any activity on your account and the remaining balance due. All patients are expected to pay any balance not paid by insurance within 30 days of billing unless specific payment arrangements have been made with a patient business services representative. Patients covered by Medicare will be asked to pay only the deductible due within 30 days of billing.

St. Peter’s Hospital has a Patient Assistance Program available with eligibility based on the Federal Poverty Guidelines.
Complaints and Events

Patients, their representatives and others who use any St. Peter’s Hospital service have a right to have their complaints and grievances addressed by knowledgeable people in a timely, reasonable and consistent manner, without concern that making a complaint or grievance will negatively affect their treatment in any manner. St. Peter’s hospital will review and respond to all complaints.

As a Patient you have the following rights in the event of a complaint.

1. The right to lodge a grievance with the Quality Department of St. Peter’s:

   St. Peter’s Hospital
   Quality Department
   2475 Broadway
   Helena, Montana 59601
   Phone: (406) 447-2566

2. The right to lodge a grievance with The Joint Commission directly, regardless of whether the customer, staff member, or physician has first used St. Peter’s Hospital grievance process:

   Office of Quality Monitoring
   The Joint Commission
   One Renaissance Boulevard
   Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181
   Phone: (800) 994-6610
   E-Mail: complaint@jointcommission.org

3. The right to lodge a grievance with the State of Montana directly, regardless of whether the customer has first used St. Peter’s Hospital grievance process:

   Certification Bureau - Montana DPHHS
   Quality Assurance Division
   2401 Colonial Drive, Second Floor
   PO Box 202953
   Helena, Montana 59620-2953
   Phone: (406) 444-2099
4. The right to request referral of concerns regarding quality of care or premature discharge:

*Mountain Pacific Quality Health Foundation*
3403 Cooney Dr.
Helena, Montana 59602
Phone: (800)-497-8232

5. The right to file a complaint alleging a violation of the Privacy Rule or Security Rule; in accordance with St. Peter’s Breach Notification Policy (#140.007). The complaint must name the entity that is the subject of the complaint and describe the acts or omissions believed to be in violation of the applicable requirements of the rule. Any alleged violation must have occurred on or after April 14, 2003 for the OCR to have authority to investigate. Complaints must be filed within 180 days of when the complainant knew or should have known that the alleged act or omission occurred, unless the Office of Civil Rights waives this time limit for good cause. Complaints must be submitted in writing, either on paper or electronically:

*Region VIII*
*Office of Civil Rights*
*US Department of Health and Human Services*
1961 Stout Street, Room 1426
Denver, Colorado 80294-3538
Phone: (303) 844-2024
Fax: (303) 844-2025
TDD: (303) 844-3439

6. If a patient has a serious concern about her mammography exam, she can contact the U.S. Food and Drug Administration or the FDA-approved Certifying Body.

*FDA Contact Information*
Phone: (240) 276-3332

*Center for Devices and Radiological Health*
*Office of Communication, Education, and Radiation Programs*
*Division of Mammography Quality and Radiation Programs (HFZ-240)*
1350 Piccard Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850

7. The right to file a complaint alleging discrimination of any kind with the Human Rights Bureau:

*Human Rights Bureau of Montana*
PO Box 1728
Helena, MT 59624-1728
Phone: (800) 542-0807
Fax: (406) 443-3234
Accreditation

Because St. Peter’s is confident in the high quality of its staff, facilities, and equipment, it voluntarily seeks and receives accreditation from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations. A board of commissioners appointed by the American College of Surgeons, The American Medical Association, and the American Hospital Association governs the commission. The accreditation represents our commitment to provide outstanding health care for the people in our community.

St. Peter’s Hospital is certified by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services and is licensed by the Montana State Department of Health and Human Services.

Ethics Committee

St. Peter’s Ethics Committee helps you look at “hard choices” you may have to make. Health care decisions are very complex today. Advances in medical technology have given us so many choices, and sometimes the decisions we face are difficult to make. The people involved in our care may also disagree over what steps to take.

Every person has the right to control the health care he or she receives. You exercise this right by making your own decisions. And if you aren’t able to act for yourself, you can still be in charge through your advance directives, where you give directions or name another person you trust to act on your behalf.

But if your wishes are not clearly understood, or if those involved in your care disagree over what should be done, you or your family may need help. That’s where the Ethics Committee comes in. It offers special expertise and experience in medical ethics. Whenever it gets involved, it does so with respect to patient’s rights, family privacy, and the personal nature of health care decisions.

Who Serves on the Ethics Committee

St. Peter’s Ethics Committee includes persons from many different backgrounds. Members may include:

- the administrator, or someone who represents administration of the governing body;
- health care professionals such as: a physician from the medical staff, a registered nurse, and a clinical social worker;
• a chaplain or other person who assists in pastoral care;
• others with special training or experience, such as an ethicist;
• persons acting as a patient advocate or as a community representative.

**Help for Decision Makers**

“Hard choices” can and do come up. That means that there are two or more paths to choose from . . . and it isn’t clear which is “more appropriate.” The issues vary. The question might be: What type of treatment to accept or refuse; whether or not a do-not-resuscitate (“no CPR”) order should be entered, or who should be the one to make decisions like these.

The circumstances vary. Family members may disagree about what to do; members of the care team may have different opinions; the ability of the patient to decide for himself or herself may be unclear. The Ethics Committee is available to help, whatever the situation. Here is an example:

A patient has suffered a severe stroke. She’s being kept alive by “artificial means,” by a respirator. But her doctors say she has no real chance of coming out of her coma. Unfortunately, she has no advance directive. And to make matters worse, her son and daughter can’t agree on what to do.

With their consent, a referral may be made to the Ethics Committee to have some of its members sit down with the family. The meeting or “consultation” takes place in a personal, private way. The goal is to help the family understand the situation better so they can make an informed and wise decision based on such factors as: what the patient would want if she could say; the patient’s medical outlook; and how other families have dealt with the same issue.

In this example, two points are especially important:

• the Ethics Committee member acts as a “consultant” and “facilitator” but the actual decision is still left up to the patient or the patient’s representative or family;

• situations like these are both personal and confidential. The Ethics Committee and its representatives will always respect the patient’s and family’s privacy.
Support for Care Providers

The Ethics Committee helps in other ways too. It assists the hospital, home care and hospice when they have questions or ethical dilemmas. The Ethics Committee does not make policies and procedures. It does assist with:

- reviewing and commenting on proposed new guidelines;
- keeping existing policies current;
- identifying issues or situations that may need to be addressed in the future.

The Ethics Committee plays an important role. It is available to you and your family as needed. The rest of us can also help by replacing confusion with direction if you:

1. Take charge of your health care. Make sure you understand your options. Be clear in telling your doctor what your decisions are.

2. Learn how to use advance directives. Advance Directives let you say ahead of time what kind of care you do or do not want. They let you appoint someone else to act for you in case you lose the ability to act for yourself. If you complete an advance directive, the chances are good an Ethics Committee consultation will not be needed.

3. Be willing to talk candidly about what you want. Let your health care representative . . . that’s the person you appoint in a durable power of attorney or health care proxy . . . know your views and how you would like decisions made. If you haven’t appointed anyone, have the same kind of discussion with a close family member or friend. Someday there may be a need for someone to step in and act for you.

Transitions and Life Choices (TLC) - Another Resource

Hospitalization often is caused by, or leads to, significant changes in one’s life. Our TLC staff can help you and your family members discuss the impacts of your hospitalization and what this may mean for your future health and functioning. For a free consultation call 447-2533.
Providing care that wouldn’t otherwise be there

About St. Peter’s Hospital Foundation
The Foundation solicits and manages annual contributions and planned gifts made by businesses and individuals. These gifts help St. Peter’s provide the best available healthcare for residents of Helena and our surrounding area.

Contributions received by the Foundation are primarily used in three ways:
- providing financial assistance to patients and families in medical crisis
- subsidizing specific services such as Hospice, Lifeline, and Cardio-Pulmonary Rehabilitation
- purchasing new medical equipment and improving the facilities of St. Peter’s Hospital

Recent Accomplishments
- $3.17 million for the new Emergency and Intensive Care Departments
- $200,000 to help equip the new Women and Children’s Center
- $1.9 million for the new Cancer Treatment Center
- $200,000 for the new Pediatric Monitoring System

Endowments For Special Needs
- Mandy Bell Travel Fund assists families and patients with travel needs during periods of medical treatment.
- Ludlow Charity Care Fund assists with costs of durable medical equipment, home modifications, medications, etc.

For more information about the Foundation or how you can help, please call 444-2370.

We are grateful for the support we receive from our friends in the community. If you wish to no longer receive our requests for charitable support, please let us know by calling 444-2370 or emailing foundation@stpetes.org. Please allow 4-6 weeks for us to honor this request.
Mission
St. Peter’s Hospital is an independent, community-based organization. We partner with our patients, community, and medical staff to provide exceptional and compassionate healthcare.

Vision
To be the best place in the region to receive patient care, to practice medicine and to work.

Values
Service - Respect - Safety - Accountability