

Policy Applies to:

All staff employed by Mercy Hospital. Compliance by Credentialed Specialists/ Allied Health will be facilitated by Mercy Hospital Staff.

Related Standards:

- HDC Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights 1996, specifically Right 5 'Right to effective communication'
- Standards New Zealand, 2008. Health and Disability Services (Core) Standard. NZS 8134 2008: 3.6.1; 3.6.4
- EQuIP NZ guide: Standard 1.1.2. 'Care / service is planned and delivered in collaboration with the consumer / patient and when relevant, the carer, to achieve the best possible outcomes'
- EQuIP NZ guide: Standard 1.6.1. 'Consumers/ patients, whanau/ carers and the community participate in the planning, delivery and evaluation of the health service.'

Rationale:

Patients are the most critical stakeholders in their health care and Mercy Hospital is committed to working collaboratively with our patients as consumers of healthcare. By seeking, receiving, discussing and disseminating information in a manner which is understandable to consumers, Mercy Hospital believes more robust and considered decision making processes occur.

Definitions:

- **Consumer:**

Persons, including their whanau/family and care givers who have used or are potential users of health services provided by Mercy Hospital

- **Consumer experience:**

The sum of all interactions, shaped by an organisation's culture, that impacts on a consumer. Patient experience will also impact on whanau/family perceptions and occur across the continuum of care (adapted from the Beryl Institute as quoted by HQSC 2012)

- **Consumer Engagement:**

Enables health consumers to be involved in:

- their own healthcare and treatment
- in activities to generate consumer input in to or discussion about policy and service planning, implementation and evaluation.

- **Consumer representative:**

A health consumer, including family members and carers, who is nominated by, and accountable to, Mercy Hospital to represent the voices of health

consumers. It is important that people representing consumers have diverse backgrounds, contacts, knowledge and skills in supporting consumers to receive the best possible service from Mercy Hospital. Although invited to reflect the consumer voice in a particular area of interest, they will not be regarded as representatives of any specific organisation or community (Health Quality Safety Commission 2012) HQSC.

Objectives:

- To understand and highlight consumer experiences to improve patient care
- To ensure that patient care and patient information meet the needs of the patient and their whanau/family
- To ensure the delivery of quality health services which are effective and responsive to the needs of consumers
- To promote confidence in the transparency and integration of consumer views in relation to improvement at Mercy Hospital.

Implementation:

Mercy Hospital will

- Clearly identify the framework, responsibility and process by which consumer input is obtained (this could include Patient Feedback, Complaints and Patient Questionnaire) – refer Appendix I
- Provide specific opportunities for patients and their whanau/family to engage in feedback as identified
- **For staff.** Provide educational opportunities that support improved understanding of methods of consumer engagement
- Ensure staff understand and integrate health literacy principles into all consumer interactions.

Consumer representatives will be invited to:

- Advise on issues requiring consumer and community participation
- Participate, review and advise on initiatives relating to health services provided at Mercy Hospital.

Consumers will not be invited to:

- Comment on aspects of practice that are specifically evidence based
- Discuss or review issues that are processed as formal complaints for which a robust process exists which involves consumers
- Be involved in any Mercy hospital contracting services where conflict of interests could exist.

Evaluation:

Evaluation of this policy will occur through:

An audit (determined by the timing of the Patient Questionnaire) of

- the number of actions as a result of opportunities arising from consumer engagement including the Patient Questionnaire
- the analysis of trends in Patient Feedback and Complaints (monthly) and the Patient Questionnaire.

Associated Documents

Internal

- Cultural Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Mercy Tactical Plan 2016 - 2018
- Quality Plan - current
- Infection Control Plan - current
- Credentialing Policy
- Surveillance Policy
- Patient Rights Policy
- Research Policy

External

- Engaging with consumers: a guide for district health boards – additional reading and useful links ref: <http://www.hqsc.govt.nz/our-programmes/consumer-engagement> (June 2015)
- Website relating to consumer engagement Health Quality and Safety Commission <http://www.hqsc.govt.nz/our-programmes/consumer-engagement/>
- Raising the Bar on the National Patient Experience Survey (May 2017) https://www.hqsc.govt.nz/assets/Consumer-Engagement/Publications/Raising_the_bar_on_the_National_Patient_Experience_Survey_-_May_2017.pdf

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