

Seattle Home Maternity Service & Childbirth Center Client's Bill of Rights

These rights can be exercised on the client's behalf by a designated surrogate or proxy decision maker if the client lacks decision-making capacity, is legally incompetent, or is a minor. (reference numbers allude to "Client Bill of Rights" required by RCW 18.46, Chapter 246-329-085 WAC, effective April 2007)

1. The client has the right to be treated with courtesy, dignity, privacy, respect, and freedom from abuse and discrimination; (#17)
2. The client has the right to and is encouraged to obtain from midwives and other SHMS staff, current and understandable information concerning services, including diagnosis, treatment and prognosis when applicable, and related services available in the community; (#1)
3. Every client has the right to information pertaining to admission and discharge from the birth center facility for the purpose of labor and birth; ((#2)
4. Every client has the right to know the identities and qualifications of midwives, students, and any others involved in their care and be assured that they are properly trained as providers operating within the scope of their licenses as midwives, their appropriate status as students, as staff, or as volunteers, (#20)
5. The client has the right to information about liability coverage for both the midwives and the facility;(#25)
6. The client has the right to make decisions about the plan of care prior to and during the course of treatment and to refuse a recommended treatment or plan of care to the extent permitted by law and birth center policy and to be informed of the medical consequences of this action.(#18) In case of such refusal, the client is entitled to other appropriate care and services that the birth center and/or staff provide, or transfer to another facility. She is encouraged to participate in decision-making regarding her care, and any changes in the original plan of care, which might include consultation, referral, and/or transport;(#6)
7. The client has the right to be informed about both the definition of "low risk" and those criteria which constitute being ineligible for care by midwives in a birth center. As well, she has the right to know and understand the policies and procedures taken when emergency situations present and transport is indicated for management of complications for either herself or the baby; (#3,4,7)
8. The client has the right to a full explanation of the risks and benefits of birth outside the hospital, including limitations pertaining to operative delivery, delivery of blood products, and levels of resuscitation beyond the initial steps of bag-and-mask ventilation;(#3,5)
9. Except in emergencies when the client lacks decision-making capacity and the need for treatment is urgent, the client is entitled to the opportunity to discuss and request information related to the specific procedures and/or treatments, the risks involved, the possible length of recuperation and the medically reasonable alternatives and their accompanying risks and benefits;

10. The client has the right to be informed of the birth center's charges for services and available payment methods. In addition, the client also has the right to know the immediate and long-term financial implications of treatment choices, insofar as they are known. Any client may obtain a fully itemized billing statement on request, complete with dates, services, and charges; (#22)
11. The client has the right to certain information related to pregnancy and birth as dictated by Wa. state rules and community standard, including the following:
 - a. Information about prenatal screening (RCW 70.54, chap 246-680 WAC)(#8)
 - b. Information about newborn screening (RCW70.83, chap 246-650 WAC) (#9)
 - c. Information about HIV testing and rapid HIV testing (#10)
 - d. Information about newborn eye prophylaxis (WAC 246-100-206 6-b; additional information at DOH (360) 236-3582) (#11)
 - e. Information about vitamin K administration, recommended by the American Academy of Pediatricians (#12);
 - f. Information about newborn hearing testing, which is available in most hospitals and about which parents are advised to discuss with their pediatricians; (#13)
 - g. Information about child passenger restraint systems (ie car seats) (info available at 1—800-282-5587, or www.safekids.org) (#26)
12. The client has the right to have an advance directive (such as a living will, health care proxy, or durable power of attorney for health care) concerning treatment or designating a surrogate decision maker with the expectation that the birth center will honor the intent of that directive to the extent permitted by law and birth center policy; (#23)
13. The client has the right to expect that all communications and records pertaining to her care will be treated as confidential by the birth center, except in cases such as suspected abuse and public health hazards when reporting is permitted or required by law. The client has the right to expect that the birth center will emphasize the confidentiality of this information when it releases it to any other parties entitled to review information in these records. (#19) She has the right to review any records pertaining to her medical care and to have the information explained or interpreted as needed or desired, except if restricted by law;
14. The client has the right to every consideration of privacy. Case discussion, consultation, examination, and treatment should be conducted so as to protect every client's privacy. (#19) **If the client does NOT elect to have the birth of her baby printed on the front office board including the mother's name, her spouse's or partner's name when applicable, her baby's name, birth weight, and date, she should indicate this here in her own writing:**
15. The client has the right to expect that, within its capacity and policies, the birth center will make a reasonable response to the request of a client for appropriate and medically indicated care and services. She has a right to an explanation of

- any diagnostic procedures, reports, recommendations, and treatments. The birth center must provide evaluation, service and/or referral as indicated, (#21) When medically appropriate and legally permissible or when a client has so requested, a client may be transferred to another facility. The client has the right to a full explanation concerning the need for, risks, benefits and alternatives to such a transfer, for either herself or her baby; (#4)
16. The client has the right to ask and be informed of the existence of business relationships among the birth center, educational institutions, other health care providers, or payers that may influence the patient's treatment and care;
 17. The client has the right to consent to or decline to participate in proposed research studies or human experimentation affecting care and treatment or requiring direct patient involvement, and to have those studies fully explained prior to consent. A patient who declines to participate in research or experimentation is entitled to the most effective care that the birth center can otherwise provide; (#24).
 18. The client has the right to expect reasonable continuity of care whenever possible and to be informed by caregivers of available and realistic patient care options when birth center/midwifery care at SHMS is no longer appropriate;
 19. The client has the right to be informed of birth center policies and practices that relate to patient care, treatment, responsibilities, indications and procedures for consultation, referral, and transport;
 20. The client has the right to be informed of available resources for having complaints addressed and resolving disputes, grievances or conflicts. These may include mediation, consultation with ethics committees, or the process developed by the Midwives Association of Washington State. (please see www.washingtonmidwives.org.) For your information, the Wa State Dept of Health has a state complaint hotline as well: 1-800-633-6828; (#14,15,16) She has the right to submit a complaint without retaliation.

The collaborative nature of health care requires that clients and/or their families/surrogates participate in their care. The effectiveness of care and patient satisfaction with the course of treatment depend in part, on the patient fulfilling certain responsibilities. Patients are responsible for providing information about past illnesses, hospitalization, medication and other matters related to health status. To participate effectively in decision making, clients must be encouraged to take responsibility for requesting additional information or clarification about their health status or treatment when they do not fully understand information and instructions. Patients are also responsible for ensuring that the health care institution has a copy of their written advance directive if they have one. Patients are responsible for informing their midwives and other caregivers if they anticipate problems in following prescribed treatment(s).

Clients should also be aware of the birth center's obligation to be reasonably efficient and equitable in providing care to other clients and the community. The birth center's rules and regulations are designed to help the birth center meet this obligation. Clients and their families are responsible for making reasonable accommodations to the needs of the birth center, other clients, medical staff and birth center employees.

Patients are responsible for providing necessary information for insurance claims and for working with the birth center to make appropriate payment arrangements. Clients are responsible for recognizing the impact of their life-style on their personal health.

I have read and fully understand my rights as a patient at Seattle Home Maternity Service and Childbirth Center.

Name of Client (Please Print)_____

Signature of client(s)_____

Signature of SHMS staff_____ Date _____