



Sweetwater Hospital Association

Patient Handbook

“Your Health..... Our Mission”

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Dear Patients and Guests,

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Staff we welcome you to Sweetwater Hospital. We appreciate the opportunity to serve you and hope to make your stay as pleasant as possible. Our every effort will be focused on your speedy recovery.

The material enclosed in this booklet is designed to answer some of the more common questions our patients have expressed concerning their hospitalization. It covers what to expect during your stay and what we will need from you to care for you better. If you have other concerns we urge you to ask either your nurse or your physician. Unasked or unanswered questions can add to the stress of being in the hospital.

Our dedicated doctors and staff serve the community in all its ethnic, religious and economic diversity. Our goal is for you and your family to have the same care and attention we would want for our families and ourselves.

We are grateful for your confidence in Sweetwater Hospital which has been providing quality health care to our patients for over sixty-five years.

Thank you for allowing us to serve you.

Sincerely,

Scott Bowman
Administrator

History

Sweetwater Hospital Association (SHA) is a 59-bed acute care not-for-profit corporation which was chartered by the state of Tennessee in 1936. It is a unique organization in that no stock has ever been issued, nor can be issued in the future. Since there are neither owners nor stockholders, any money generated in excess of operational funds is dedicated by law and resolution of the Board of Directors to perpetual use for improving health care delivery to the people served by Sweetwater Hospital Association.

Sweetwater Hospital Association is located in rural East Tennessee and proudly serves parts of Meigs County, McMinn County, Roane County, Loudon County, and Monroe County. It is the only hospital located in Monroe County which has a population of approximately 38,000.

Physician Specialties include:

- Anesthesiology
- Emergency Medicine
- Family Practice
- Gastroenterology
- General Surgery
- Geriatrics
- Internal Medicine
- Nephrology
- Obstetrics and Gynecology
- Oncology
- Orthopedic Surgery
- Otolaryngology
- Pediatrics
- Podiatry
- Pulmonology
- Urology
- Vascular Surgery

Patient Care Services include:

- Bone Densitometry
- CT
- Dietary and Nutritionist Consultations
- Home Care
- Infection Control
- Mammography
- Medical Laboratory
- MRI
- Nuclear Studies
- Nursing
- Pastoral Care
- Patient/Family Education
- Pharmacy
- Radiology
- Rapid Response Team
- Respiratory Therapy
- Social Services
- Therapies: Physical, Speech and Occupational
- Ultrasound

Non-Patient Care Departments include:

- Environmental Services
- Facility Maintenance/Construction
- Fiscal Services
- Health Information Management
- Medical Staff Services
- Patient Education
- Performance Improvement
- Purchasing
- Risk Management
- Utilization Review/Discharge Planning

Your Safety

Asking Questions

One of the most effective ways to ensure your hospital stay is safe is to ask questions if you have concerns regarding a treatment or medication and make sure you understand the answer. It is important that you choose providers with whom you are comfortable discussing your plan of care with and who are willing to openly address any question or concern you may present. It is often beneficial to have a relative or friend with you to help you ask questions and understand the answers.

Equipment Use

Most every patient admitted to the hospital has some type of medical equipment in use such as an IV pump, heart monitor, or ventilator. Your nurse will explain the general purpose of the equipment. Below is a list of some general equipment safety points:

- Do not attempt to silence an alarm that is sounding. Call for the nurse instead.
- Do not attempt to unplug equipment. Call for assistance if you need to reposition or go to the restroom.
- Do not remove or disconnect equipment from your body.
- If a piece of equipment alarms please ring the nurse call button to notify the staff.

Falls Prevention

If you are determined to be at high risk for a fall, a member of the Physical Therapy Department may come by to see if there are measures which can be taken to prevent a fall. All staff members will be alerted to your increased fall risk by a magnetic sign on the outside of the door to your room and a yellow dot applied to your identification band.

You and your family can help to prevent a fall by adhering to the following fall prevention strategies:

- Always call for assistance before getting out of bed or chair especially those patients older than age 60 and those on multiple medications.
- Make trips to the bathroom frequently when staff members are already in the room.
- Don't wait too long to call for assistance to the bathroom since staff members may not always be able to respond immediately.
- Never attempt to crawl over side rails or out the end of the bed.
- Keep the bed in low position at all times.
- Notify family if they are needed to stay with the patient.
- Avoid wearing only socks, smooth soled shoes, or slippers.
- Call the nurse immediately if liquid is spilled in the floor.
- Try to maintain a clear path to the bathroom.
- Request a bedside commode if you feel you are too weak to make it to the bathroom.
- Keep a night light on if you make trips to the bathroom at night.

- Always use your walker or cane if instructed to do so - even for short distances.

Fire

You can help prevent fires!

- Most hospital fires are started by patients smoking in bed. Sweetwater Hospital is a smoke-free facility! - Please do not smoke inside the building! Smoking cessation materials and nicotine replacement products are available.
- Make sure any electrical appliances brought from home are U.L. approved.

If you hear an overhead announcement "Code Red" please remain in your room with the door closed unless instructed otherwise.

Infection Control

You and your family/visitors can help prevent the spread of infection while you are a patient in our facility. The most important step in preventing infection is hand washing. Soap and water as well as water-free hand sanitizer are available in your room. Please wash your hands after using the restroom and before eating. Visitors should be encouraged to wash their hands upon entering and leaving your room. The water-free hand sanitizer is effective in most situations unless your hands are visibly dirty.

Young children (under the age of 12) are discouraged from visiting the hospital. This is for their protection, since there is the possibility of exposure to infectious diseases.

Medication Use

Medication use has become very complicated in recent years because so many medications have similar spellings and pronunciations. Also, many patients are on multiple medications which increases the possibility of drug interactions. Patients and their families can help ensure the safe use of medications by:

- Maintaining a current list of all prescription medications, over-the-counter medications, and/or vitamins/herbal medications that are taken on either a regular or occasional basis. Note on the list the name of the medication, the strength, and how often it is taken. This list should be carried in your purse or wallet and given to the nurse as soon as you arrive at the hospital.
- Maintaining a list of all medications that you cannot take due to a previous allergic reaction. Note the reaction type (e.g. hives, wheezing).
- Do not bring your home medications with you to the hospital unless your doctor or nurse specifically asks you to do so.
- Never take any medication or illicit drug without the knowledge of your caregivers. This could result in a life threatening combination.
- Speak up any time you question a drug that is given to you, especially if it is not the normal time for the medication or if the medication does not look the same.
- Ask questions about your medications, especially new ones. What is the intended effect? What are the possible side effects? How much, how long, and how often do I take this medication?

- If you experience any of the following after taking a medication call nurse immediately:
 - Rash/Itching
 - Trouble Breathing
 - Swelling Tongue, Lips or Throat
 - Dizziness/Light Headedness
- If you are taking medication for pain, high blood pressure, diuretics “water pill”, sleep or anxiety, please call your nurse for assistance when getting out of bed.

Patient Identification

To help ensure the correct treatments and medications are administered to the correct patient staff members will ask you to state your name and will be checking your hospital identification arm band **many times** during your stay. You may find this to be irritating but it’s done for your safety.

Protective Services

If you feel you have a need for Protective Services (e.g. Adult Protective Services, Department of Human Services, Medicare Fraud, or Abuse Services) please contact your nurse, or the Nursing Supervisor, or call the Discharge Planner at extension 263 or 581.

Restraint Use

Sweetwater Hospital’s philosophy is to only use patient restraints in situations where the patient or staff is in danger and only by a physician’s orders.

When restraint is necessary it is used for the least amount of time possible and the least restrictive method is employed.

Patients and family members can help reduce the use of restraint by:

- Maintaining a calm and quiet environment.
- Preventing or eliminating sights, sounds, or smells that are annoying to the patient.
- Preventing visitation by individuals who may agitate the patient.
- Sitting with patients who are confused.
- Encouraging patients to call for assistance before getting out of bed.

If you observe any of the following while your family member is in restraint call the nurse immediately:

- Difficulty breathing with a vest restraint.
- Cold, blue or mottled extremities with wrist or ankle restraints.

Security

Sweetwater Hospital has taken many steps to maintain a secure patient environment including staff training, predefined security response procedures, limiting access to high security areas, increased lighting, door locking guidelines and video surveillance.

Additional security measures can be taken on a patient to patient basis. Please notify staff members if you have a particular concern regarding your personal security.

Special Procedures

Many higher risk special procedures (e.g. surgery, blood transfusion, or lumbar puncture) will require that you, a member of your family, or legal guardian sign an Informed Consent form. Make sure you discuss the planned procedure with your doctor and that you understand what he/she plans to do.

These high-risk procedures also require additional safety measures such as marking of surgical/procedural site.

Surgery/Invasive Procedures

Special care is taken to make sure the correct patient has the correct procedure:

- Nurses will verify your identity several times from the time you arrive until your procedure is done.
- In most cases surgical/procedural sites will be marked by the person who will be doing the procedure.

Staff members will take a final "time out" before beginning your procedure to verify one last time your identify and the planned procedure.

Worsening Conditions

If at any time a patient or a patient's family member or other visitor believes a patient's condition is worsening, for example if they are experiencing shortness of breath, chest pain, or a change in their level of consciousness, please notify a hospital staff member immediately.

During Your Stay

Accommodations

The hospital has private and semi-private rooms, which are assigned according to patient's medical needs. Preference is considered to the extent possible.

Advance Directives

An advance directive is a document telling caregivers what kinds of medical care you want or do not want in the event you are unable to communicate.

There are two main types of advanced directive - the Living Will and the Durable Power of Attorney.

- A Living Will addresses the treatment options a patient chooses to have or not have in the event of a terminal illness.
- A Durable Power of Attorney identifies a selected person to make healthcare decisions for you if you can not.

A Living Will or Durable Power of Attorney are not effective unless you are unable to communicate your wishes and either may be revoked at any time.

Please tell your nurse if you currently have a Living Will and provide a copy for your medical record.

If you would like information on or assistance completing Advance Directive forms please notify your nurse.

If you choose not to have emergency care, in the event your heart stops or you are not breathing, a purple band will be applied to your wrist to alert all staff members of your wishes.

Amenities

- Color television with cable channels, remote control and a pillow speaker is provided for each patient. You are asked to keep the noise at a minimum level in consideration of other patients. Patients in semi-private rooms must also respect the other patient's bedtime hour.
- Electrical equipment (personal) brought from home (e.g. hair dryer, shaver, or radio) must be UL approved for electrical safety. Look for this label on a tag or the casing. Please do not bring electric heaters, heating pads or electric blankets.
- Food service is provided at the bedside for all patients. Each tray is specially prepared according to particular diet your doctor has ordered. In many cases special diets ordered by your doctor are not as tasty as you may be accustomed to because of limitations on calorie, salt, fluid, fat, and carbohydrate intake. It may take some time for you to adjust to this new diet.

Diagnostic tests or procedures may change, delay or cancel your meals. When your testing is completed, your meal will be served unless otherwise ordered by your physician.

If your meal is not delivered in a timely manner, do not hesitate to ask your nurse when you can expect to be served.

If you have any questions about your diet, the Dietician will be glad to discuss them with you. Ask your nurse to tell the Dietician that you would like to have a visit in your room.

A cafeteria is located on the 1st floor of the hospital. It is open to visitors for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

- Breakfast 6:30am - 8:30am
- Lunch 11:15am - 1:30pm
- Dinner 5:00pm - 7:00pm (Dinner 5:30pm weekends)

Vending and change machines are also available outside the cafeteria and in the main hospital lobby.

Visitors should not bring food or drink to the patient without checking with nursing staff first.

- A gift shop which is operated by a group of dedicated volunteers is located in the main lobby and available to patients and visitors during daytime hours. Items offered include flowers, snacks, toiletries, soft drinks, greeting cards, and gifts for mothers and newborns.
- Phone service is provided for each patient. Dial “9” for all local calls; wait for a dial tone, then dial the desired number. Because the home area code for the hospital is 865 ten digit dialing is required for all (423) numbers. Long distance calls may be placed by dialing “0” for the hospital operator and ask the operator to place your call. You must charge your call to your personal phone, use a calling card, or call your party collect.

If you are in a semi-private room and wish to make a confidential call please notify your nurse for assistance.

Courtesy phones are located in the following areas:

- OB/Surgery waiting room
- ER Lobby
- Chapel
- ICU waiting area

Please avoid using your cell phone in critical care patient care areas as it may interfere with equipment function.

- Spiritual Care is an important part of a patient’s wellbeing. In order to meet the diverse spiritual needs of our community, members of the local Ministerial Association provide chaplain services for Sweetwater Hospital Association. Your nurse will contact a hospital chaplain, or your personal clergymen, at your request.

A Chapel is available on the second floor of the hospital by the service elevators. It is open to all patients and families for quiet meditation and prayer.

- Toiletries including: shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, lotion, soap, feminine pads, deodorant, shaving cream and razors are available on request.
- Mail and flowers addressed to you will be delivered to your room. Mail received after your discharge will be forwarded to your home address. The local florist will be notified if flowers for you are received after your discharge.
- Parking is provided at no charge in designated spaces and lots around the facility.
- Waiting Areas are located on each floor for your comfort and convenience.

Care at the End of Life

SHA staff members understand the importance of compassionate care at the end of life. Special attention is given to:

- Pain Management
- Spiritual Assistance
- Family Visitation
- Observing the patient and families wishes regarding care at the end of life

Check-In

During your admission, you will be asked many, many questions by admissions and nursing staff. Though these questions may seem unnecessary or redundant at times, they are important sources of information for developing a plan of care specific to your needs and for maintaining your safety. In some cases questions/signatures are required by state or federal law and apply to all without distinction. These questions/signatures must be addressed each and every time you enter this hospital.

For your safety, you will be required to wear an identification band throughout your hospital stay. This band will be placed on your arm during the admission process. Review the information on this band and notify the admission or nursing staff immediately if anything is incorrect.

Important information/documents to bring to the hospital at the time of check-in:

- List of current medication noting the strength and frequency they are taken. Include all vitamins, minerals and herbal preparations.
- List of allergies and type of reaction experienced.
- List of prior hospitalizations and surgeries.
- Current copy of Advance Directive, Living Will, Power of Attorney or similar document.
- Insurance information.

Communication Aides

Communication aides are available for persons who have visual, speech, or auditory impairments or speak a foreign language.

Concerns

Sweetwater Hospital Association strives to resolve all patient/family/visitor concerns. There are several ways to make your concerns and suggestions known to us including:

1. Comment Cards and suggestion boxes located on each floor by the elevators, in the Emergency Department, and in the Cafeteria.
2. Speak to the Patient Care Representative who visits most patients at least once Monday-Friday.
3. Contact the Social Services Department at extension 581.

If your concern has to do with Patient Safety or Quality of Care, the following actions may be appropriate:

- Ask to speak to the Nursing Supervisor or Administration or call extension 457 or 526.

- If your concerns are not resolved, you are encouraged to contact one of the following:
 1. Tennessee State Ombudsman – 1-800-264-0904
 2. The Joint Commission- 1-800-994-6610 or complaint@jcaho.org,
Office of Quality Monitoring,
One Renaissance Boulevard
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

If you feel there is a conflict or ethical dilemma in the provision of your care, please notify your physician, nurse, Nursing Supervisor or the Social Worker at 581. There is an Ethics Committee available to assist in resolving these issues.

If you have a comment or suggestion for improvement regarding the care and/or services received at SHA please contact your nurse, Nursing Supervisor, or call the Nursing Administration Office at 457. A suggestion box is available in the cafeteria.

Discharge

Your doctor will decide when you have recovered enough to go home. At this time he or she will write discharge orders on your medical record.

In most cases the discharge is a rather lengthy process. There are forms to be completed, discharge instructions to gather and review with you and your family, final treatments and medications to administer, referrals for home care to be made, and prescriptions to call to the pharmacy. Please be patient with our staff as they work to make sure all arrangements have been made to ensure you a smooth transition to your home or other care provider.

Ethical Issues

SHA has established an Ethics Committee to handle ethical dilemmas which sometimes arise in today's complex world of health care.

Please notify your nurse if you would like a consultation with a member of the Ethics Committee.

Fire and Disaster Drills

The hospital periodically conducts fire and disaster drills to test the efficiency of the staff and emergency equipment. Do not be alarmed by the sounding of the alarm system during these drills. Unless you are instructed otherwise, you and your visitors should remain in your room during the exercise with the door closed.

Hospital Charges

Daily room charges include 24 hour nursing care, bedside meal service, between meal nourishment, housekeeping, linens, gowns and pajamas, processing of your insurance claims, telephones, television, and maintenance of your medical record.

Items/services not included in the daily room charge will be listed separately on the hospital's bill. This includes things such as operating room time, oxygen, blood transfusions, medications, respiratory therapy, speech and physical therapy.

The following charges are **not included in the hospital's bill:**

- Professional fees for reading/interpreting x-rays, pathology tests, EKG's and other diagnostic tests.
- Professional fees for the administration of anesthesia or your doctor bills for treating you while in the hospital or performing surgery.

Financial arrangements will be discussed with you or your family when you are admitted. If you have hospitalization insurance, you will be asked to present your identification card at the time of admission so insurance staff may file for insurance benefits on your behalf.

Sweetwater Hospital Association and associated practitioners provide care based on identified patient needs. However, if your doctor, along with Sweetwater Hospital's Utilization Review Coordinator determines that your admission or continued stay cannot be justified, then your insurance coverage may not pay for your stay. Should this situation develop, you will be informed and given ample time for other arrangements to be made for your care.

You will receive a bill approximately 30 days after discharge. By that time, in most cases, your insurance company has responded to claims sent on your behalf. The bill you receive should reflect insurance and other adjustments with the balance remaining being the portion for which you will be responsible. If your insurance company has not responded, there will be no adjustments made and a note at the bottom of the bill will indicate insurance response is pending. If you do not have insurance you will receive a bill for the total amount due for which you will be responsible.

If you foresee any problem in settling your account or if you have questions about your bill, please feel free to call a Patient Accounts Representative at extension 537 or 539. After discharge you may call 865-213-8537 or 865-213-8539.

Leaving Your Room

If you are ambulatory and wish to leave your room for any reason other than treatments or examinations you are requested to inform your nurse of your whereabouts before leaving the room. This is to ensure your treatment schedule is not interrupted.

For your comfort and safety, transportation from your room to other areas of the hospital for medical treatments and procedures will be by wheelchair or stretcher with a hospital attendant.

Lost and Found

If you lose a personal item at the hospital, please notify your nurse as soon as possible. All items left in the hospital following patient discharge shall be disposed of after 30 days if not claimed.

***Do not store eyeglasses, dentures, or hearing aids on the over bed table or your food tray. Keep them in a storage case, your purse, or other secure location.**

Memorials

No greater tribute could be paid to a beloved relative or friend than a memorial which helps to support your local hospital's mission to provide quality care and promote good health for our community.

We welcome all gifts, great or small, memorials, endowments, or specified gifts. We pledge to use all contributions for the benefit of our patients.

Mission

Our mission is to provide the highest quality medical care available in our service area within our scope of care.

Vision

We will continue to have a reputation for having highly knowledgeable and technically skilled staff members providing outstanding patient care in state of the art facilities with genuine kindness and compassion for others.

Values Statement

Provide appropriate, effective and compassionate patient care;

- Recruitment and internal development of well trained, highly competent professional and medical staff members
- Building and acquisition of a state of the art facility and medical care equipment

Promote a record of outstanding patient safety;

- The right care
- The right way
- The right time

Show great respect for each patient and family's:

- Dignity
- Privacy
- Age, race, creed, culture, sex, disability, social class, religion
- Time

Maintain an exemplary level of livelihood of the organization;

- Harmonious and goal directed working relationship between the members of the staff, auxiliary personnel, Administration, Medical Staff and Board of Directors.
- Sound management of human, physical and financial resources

Pain Management

All patients have the right to pain management. If the pain relief methods ordered by your doctor do not help you please notify the nursing staff.

SHA uses a standard pain rating scale of 1-10 with 1 being the least pain and 10 being the greatest pain.

Non-medication pain relief measures which may be helpful include:

1. Deep breathing
 2. Imagery
 3. Massage
 4. Limiting visitors
 5. Keeping your room cool, dim light and quiet
- Report pain early before it becomes too intense
 - Report a history of chronic pain
 - Report previously effective pain measures

PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILY HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- Have high quality health care readily available, within our capability and mission and in compliance with law and regulation, without regard to age, sex, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, language, sexual orientation/gender identity/expression, physical or mental disability, or ability to pay/socioeconomic status.
- Decisions to admit, discharge, transfer, refer, continue a patient's stay and provide specific care, treatment or services are based on the identification of patient need not financial class, ability to pay, business relationships or other financial incentives.
- Respect for your privacy and confidentiality within the organization's capabilities and the limits of the law.
- Presence of a support person of the patient's choice, unless the individual's presence infringes on the rights of others, safety or is medically or therapeutically contraindicated.
- Respect for your dignity, safety, and comfort.
- Respect for your cultural, psychosocial, spiritual and personal values, beliefs, and preferences.
- Open communication and information about your health status and prognosis in terms that you can understand, and a review of your medical records.
- Names, affiliation and experience of our doctors and staff.

- Patient and family notification of admission, involvement in care planning and treatment.
- Prompt notification of your own physician when you are admitted, unless requested otherwise.
- Make informed decisions about your care including when or whether to receive treatment, what treatment to accept and how to handle care at the end of life, (withholding resuscitative services, withdrawal of life-sustaining treatment) and participation in investigational studies or clinical trials.
- Transfer to another institution if indicated or desired when an accepting physician can be arranged.
- As an inpatient, outpatient or Emergency Department patient you have the right to formulate, review and revise an Advance Directive and have practitioners and staff provide care consistent with these directives, or arrange for a transfer of care if unable or unwilling to honor your directives.
- Appoint someone else to make decisions for you if you cannot.
- Know the process for and be involved in resolving care dilemmas/ethical issues and general complaints.
- Protection and respect for your rights when asked to participate in research, investigation, and clinical trials involving human subjects.
- Appropriate assessment and management of pain.
- Pastoral care and other spiritual services.
- Access to protective services.
- Be free from all forms of abuse or harassment including restraints and/or seclusion unless needed for your safety or the safety of others.
- Access, request amendment to, and receive an accounting of disclosures regarding his or her health information as permitted under applicable law.
- Understand hospital charges and payment methods.

PEDIATRIC RIGHTS

- The child has the right for an adult (family member) to stay with him or her at all times. This helps children to cope with the strange environment of the hospital. A bed and meals will be provided for one attending adult during the child's stay. In addition, someone legally capable

of making healthcare decisions for the patient must be readily available at all times (e.g. present or reachable by phone).

- The child has the right to a safe environment. For the child's safety, parents are to leave the side rails of the bed or crib up at all times. At least one parent or guardian is required to stay with a minor at all times, especially infants and toddlers.
- The child has the right to visitation. It is requested that visitors will be limited to two at a time in the room so that the child and one attending adult will be able to rest when possible. Visitation by children is discouraged, but there are exceptions. We will work together to facilitate the best approach to visitation based on the needs of the patient.
- The child has the right to feel comfortable. To have a favorite toy or blanket from home can be very comforting to a child.
- The rights listed herein are intended to be in addition to and compliment the rights of every patient provided in the guidelines for "Patient Rights and Responsibilities".

PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILY ARE RESPONSIBLE TO:

- Give us past health information
- Provide information about self medication and therapies and herbal medicine
- Ask questions if you do not understand something
- Follow instructions
- Tell us if you are not happy with your care
- Help plan your care and do your part of the plan
- Tell us when you see changes in your health status
- Respect the rights of other patients, families and staff
- Keep all appointments or call to change them when you need to
- Pay your bill on time
- Take total responsibility if you refuse treatment or do not follow your care plan
- Respect the rules, regulations and requests of staff

- Present information regarding their advance directive if applicable and request information regarding this matter if you desire to have it
- Request a copy of their rights and responsibilities if you desire to have it

Privacy and Confidentiality

Sweetwater Hospital caregivers respect the confidentiality of your relationship with your doctor and other caregivers, and the sensitive information about your health that is part of that relationship. In addition, state and federal laws and hospital operating guidelines protect the privacy of your medical information. You will receive a Notice of Privacy Practices that describes the ways that we use, disclose and safeguard patient information and explains how you can obtain a copy of your health care record.

A copy of this notice is also included in this publication in the Privacy section.

Unless you tell us otherwise, your name will be listed in the hospital directory so that persons who ask for you by name may be directed to your room.

Please tell us if you do not want to be listed in the hospital directory.

Privacy Notice

This notice describes how medical information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information.

Please review it carefully.

If you have any questions about this notice, please contact the Health Information Management Department at 865-213-8527.

Who will follow this notice:

This notice describes our hospital's practices and that of:

Any health care professional authorized to enter information into your hospital chart.

All departments and units of the hospital.

Any member of a volunteer group we allow to help you while you are in the hospital.

All employees, including contract personnel, and medical staff of Sweetwater Hospital and Home Health.

The hospital, Home Health agency, and medical clinic(s) owned by or affiliated with Sweetwater Hospital Association

may share medical information with each other for treatment, payment or hospital operations purposes described in this notice.

Our pledge regarding medical information:

We understand that medical information about you and your health is personal. We are committed to protecting medical information about you. We create a record of the care and services you receive at the hospital. We need this record to provide you with quality care and to comply with certain legal requirements. This notice applies to all of the records of your care generated by the hospital, whether made by hospital personnel or your personal doctor. Your personal doctor may have different policies or notices regarding the doctor's use and disclosure of your

medical information created in the doctor's office or clinic. This notice will tell you about the ways in which we may use and disclose medical information about you. We also describe your rights and certain obligations we have regarding the use and disclosure of medical information. We are required by law to : Make sure that medical information that identifies you is kept private; Give you this notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to medical information about you; and follow the terms of the notice that is currently in effect.

How we may use and disclose medical information about you:

The following categories describe different ways that we use and disclose medical information. For each category of uses or disclosures we will explain what we mean and try to give some examples. Though, all the ways that we are permitted to use and disclose information will fall into one of these categories, this is not necessarily an exhaustive list of uses or disclosures.

For Treatment: We may use medical information about you to provide you with medical treatment or services. We may disclose medical information about you to doctors, nurses,

technicians, medical students, or other hospital personnel who are involved in taking care of you at the hospital. For example, a doctor treating you for a broken leg may need to know if you have diabetes because diabetes may slow the healing process. In addition, the doctor may need to tell a dietitian if you have diabetes so that we can arrange for appropriate meals.

Different departments of the hospital also may share medical information about you in order to coordinate the different things you need, such as prescriptions, lab work and x-rays. We also may disclose medical information about you to healthcare and/or social agencies outside the hospital who may be involved in your medical care after discharge eg. Home Health, Nursing Homes, and TN Care office.

For Payment: We may use and disclose medical information about you so that the treatment and services you receive at the hospital may be billed to and payment may be collected from you, an insurance company or a third party. For example, we may need to give your health plan information about surgery you received at the hospital so your health plan will pay us or reimburse you for the surgery. We may also tell your health plan about a treatment you are going to receive to obtain prior approval or to determine whether your plan will cover the treatment.

For Health Care Operations: We may use and disclose medical information about you for hospital operations. These uses and disclosures are necessary to run the hospital and make sure that all of our patients receive quality care. For example, we may use medical information to review our treatment and services and to evaluate the performance of our staff in caring for you. We may also combine medical information about many hospital patients to decide what additional services the hospital should offer, what services are not needed, and whether certain new treatments are effective. We may also disclose information to doctors, nurses, technicians, medical students, and other hospital personnel for review and learning purposes. We may also combine the medical information we have with medical information from other hospitals to compare how we are doing and see where we can make improvements in the care and services we offer. We may remove information that identifies you from this set of medical information so others may use it to study health care and health care delivery without learning who the specific patients are.

Appointment Reminders: We may use and disclose medical information to contact you as a reminder that you have an appointment for treatment or medical care at the hospital.

Treatment Alternatives: We may use and disclose medical information to tell you about or recommend possible treatment options or alternatives that may be of interest to you.

Health-Related Benefits and Services: We may use and disclose medical information to tell you about health-related benefits or services that may be of interest to you.

Hospital Directory: We may include certain limited information about you in the hospital directory while you are a patient at the hospital. This information may include your name, location in the hospital, your general condition (e.g., fair, stable, etc.). The directory information, may be released to people who ask for you by name. This is so your family and friends can visit you in the hospital and generally know how you are doing. If you do not want your information included in the directory you must indicate this on the "Patient Objection to being listed in Patient Directory" form.

Individuals Involved in Your Care or Payment for Your Care: We may release medical information about you to a friend or family member who is responsible for decisions regarding your medical care. We may also give information to someone who helps pay for your care. We may also tell your family or friends your condition and that you are in the hospital.

Community Disaster: In addition, we may disclose medical information about you to an entity assisting in a disaster relief effort so that your family can be notified about your condition, status and location.

As Required By Law: We will disclose medical information about you when required to do so by federal, state or local law.

To Avert a Serious Threat To Health or Safety: We may use and disclose medical information about you when necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health and safety or the health and safety of the public or another person. Any disclosure, however, would only be to someone able to help prevent the threat.

Special situations:

Organ and Tissue Donation: If you are an organ donor, we may release medical information to organizations that handle organ procurement or organ, eye or tissue transplantation or to an organ donation bank, as necessary to facilitate organ or tissue donation and transplantation.

Military and Veterans: If you are a member of the armed forces, we may release medical information about you as required by military command authorities. We may also release medical information about foreign military personnel to the appropriate foreign military authority.

Workers' Compensation: We may release medical information about you for workers' compensation or similar programs. These programs provide benefits for work-related injuries or illness.

Public Health Risks: We may disclose information about you for public health activities. These activities generally include the following:

To prevent or control disease, injury or disability;

To report births and deaths;

To report child abuse or neglect;

To report reactions to medications or problems with products;

To notify people of recalls of products they may be using;

To notify a person who may have been exposed to a disease or may be at risk for contracting or spreading a disease or condition;

To notify the appropriate government authority if we believe a patient has been the victim of abuse, neglect or domestic violence. We will only make this disclosure if you agree or when required or authorized by law.

Health Oversight Activities: We may disclose medical information to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law. These oversight activities include, for example, audits, investigations, inspections, and licensure. These activities are necessary for the government to monitor the health care system, government programs, and compliance with civil rights laws.

Lawsuits and Disputes: If you are involved in a lawsuit or a dispute, we may disclose medical information about you in response to a court or administrative order. We may also disclose medical information about you in response to subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process by someone else involved in the dispute.

Law Enforcement: We may release medical information if asked to do so by a law enforcement official:

In response to a court order, subpoena, warrant, summons or similar process;

To identify or locate a suspect, fugitive, material witness, or missing person;

About the victim of a crime if, under certain limited circumstances, we are unable to obtain the person's agreement;

About a death we believe may be the result of criminal conduct;

About criminal conduct at the hospital; and

In emergency circumstances to report a crime; the location of the crime or victims; or the identity, description or location of the person who committed the crime.

Coroners, Medical Examiners and Funeral Directors. We may release medical information to a coroner or medical examiner. This may be necessary, for example, to identify a deceased person or determine the cause of death. We may also release medical information about patients of the hospital to funeral directors as necessary to carry out their duties.

National Security and Intelligence Activities: We may release medical information about you to authorized federal officials for intelligence, counterintelligence, and other national security activities authorized by law.

Protective Services for the President and Others: We may disclose medical information about you to authorized federal officials so they may provide protection to the President, other authorized persons or foreign heads of state or conduct special investigations.

Inmates: If you are an inmate of a correctional institution or under the custody of law enforcement official, we may release medical information about you to the correctional institution or law enforcement official. This release would be necessary (1) for the institution to provide you with health care; (2) to protect your health and safety or the health and safety of others; or (3) for the safety and security of the correctional institution.

Your rights regarding medical information about you:

You have the following rights regarding medical information we maintain about you:

Right to Inspect and Copy. You have the right to inspect and copy medical information that may be used to make decisions about your care. Usually, this includes medical and billing records, but does not include psychotherapy notes.

To inspect and copy medical information that may be used to make decisions about you, you must submit your request in writing to the Health Information Management Department. If you request a copy of the information, we may charge a fee for the costs of copying, mailing or other supplies associated with your request.

We may deny your request to inspect and copy in certain very limited circumstances. If you are denied access to medical information, you may request that the denial be reviewed. Another licensed health care professional chosen by the hospital will review your request and the denial.

The person conducting the review will not be the person who denied your request. We will comply with the outcome of the review.

Right to Amend. If you feel that medical information we have about you is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information. You have the right to request an amendment for as long as the information is kept by or for the hospital.

To request an amendment, your request must be made in writing and submitted to the Health Information Management Department. In addition, you must provide a reason that supports your request.

We may deny your request for an amendment if it is not in writing or does not include a reason to support the request. In addition, we may deny your request if you ask us to amend information that:

Was not created by us, unless the person or entity that created the information is no longer available to make the amendment;

Is not part of the medical information kept by or for the hospital;

Is not part of the information which you would be permitted to inspect and copy; or

Is accurate and complete.

Right to an Accounting of Disclosures: You have the right to request an “accounting of disclosures.” This is a list, compiled manually, of the disclosures we made of medical information about you. To request this list or accounting of disclosures, you must submit your request in writing to the Health Information Management Department. Your request must state a time period which may not be longer than six years and may not include dates before April 14, 2003. The first list you request within a 12 month period will be free. For additional lists, we may charge you for the costs of providing the list. We will notify you of the cost involved and you may choose to withdraw or modify your request at that time before any costs are incurred.

Right to Request Restrictions: You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the medical information we use or disclose about you for treatment, payment or health care operations. You also have the right to request a limit on the medical information we disclose about you to someone who is involved in your care or the payment for your care, like a family member or friend. For example, you could ask that we not use or disclose information about a surgery you had.

We are not required to agree to your request. If we do agree, we will comply with your request unless the information is needed to provide you emergency treatment.

To request restrictions, you must make your request in writing to the Health Information Management Department. In your request, you must tell us (1) what information you want to limit; (2) whether you want to limit our use, disclosure or both; and (3) to whom you want the limits to apply, for example disclosures to your spouse.

Right to Request Confidential Communications: You have the right to request that we communicate with you about medical matters in a certain way or at a certain location. To request confidential communications, you must make your request in writing to the Health Information Management Department. We will not ask you the reason for your request. We will accommodate all reasonable requests. Your request must specify how or where you wish to be contacted.

Right to a Paper Copy of This Notice. You have the right to a paper copy of this notice. You may

ask us to give you a copy of this notice at any time. Even if you have agreed to receive this notice electronically, you are still entitled to a paper copy of this notice.

You may obtain a copy of this notice at our website www.sweetwaterhospital.org.

To obtain a paper copy of this notice, contact the Health Information Management Department at **865-213-8527**.

Fundraising Communication:

You have the right to opt out of fundraising communications.

Restricting certain disclosures of protected health information:

You have the right to restrict certain disclosures of protected health information (PHI) to a health plan when:

- The disclosure is for the purpose of payment or healthcare operations and is not otherwise required by law.
- The protected information pertains to a healthcare item or service which has been paid in full and out of pocket other than by the health plan, i.e. (if you pay for a service in full and out of pocket).

Breach:

You have the right to be notified of a breach of unsecured protected health information (PHI) in the event you are affected.

Changes to this notice:

We reserve the right to change this notice. We reserve the right to make the revised or changed notice effective for medical information we already have about you as well as any information we receive in the future. We will post a copy of the current notice in the hospital. The notice will contain on the first page, in the top right-hand corner, the effective date. In addition, each time you register at or are admitted to the hospital for treatment or health care services as an inpatient or outpatient, we will offer you a copy of the current notice in effect.

Complaints:

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with the hospital or with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. To file a complaint with the hospital, contact the Health Information Management Department, 865-213-8572.

You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.

Other uses of medical information:

Other uses and disclosures of medical information not covered by this notice or the laws that apply to us will be made only with your written permission. If you provide us permission to use or disclose medical information about you, you may revoke that permission, in writing, at any time. If you revoke your permission, we will no longer use or disclose medical information about you for the reasons covered by your written authorization. You understand that we are unable to take back any disclosures we have already made with your permission, and that we are required to retain our records of the care that we provided to you.

Rehabilitation Referrals

Your doctor may order Rehabilitation Therapy (e.g. physical therapy or speech therapy) to help you increase your level of functioning and to be as independent as possible. Nursing and Discharge Planning staff will coordinate your rehabilitation needs while you're in the hospital and after discharge.

Sitters

It is the responsibility of the family to arrange and pay for sitter services if needed. However, the nursing or social services staff will assist in making these arrangements as needed.

Smoking

Sweetwater Hospital Association is a Smoke Free facility. Professional staff discourages patients from smoking and offers stop smoking information and education. If a patient chooses to smoke against professional advice, they will be asked to attest to their understanding of the risks of smoking and sign a release of responsibility to smoke **OUTSIDE**.

Smoking is permitted outside the building in designated smoking areas only. **Please notify the nursing staff each time before you leave your room to go outside to smoke.** Designated smoking areas for patients and visitors are located outside the main entrance and the covered area below the main entrance lobby. Smoking cessation literature and nicotine replacement products are available on request.

For your own safety and the safety of others do not smoke in your room or your bathroom or public bathrooms.

Spiritual Care

You may have spiritual beliefs or values that are important to your well-being. These beliefs and values will be taken into account as much as possible throughout your hospital stay. Make sure your doctor, your family, and your health care team knows your wishes.

Suggestions

SHA is committed to Continuous Quality Improvement.

Please direct your suggestions to the Patient Care Representative who visits your room or call 457 for the Nursing Administration Department.

Valuables

You are advised to leave valuables at home or send them home by your family. If this is not possible, a member of the nursing staff can lock your valuables in a safe in the Nursing Administration Office. A release must be signed for this deposit and retrieval.

Hearing aids and dentures are also valuable items which are often kept at the bedside for use in the hospital. To prevent loss, these items should always be stored in an appropriate container when not in use, (e.g. denture cup or hearing aid case). Never lay your dentures or hearing aid on your food tray. Never wrap your dentures in a napkin and lay them on your food tray or even

your bedside table. If you do not have an appropriate container for these items please request one from the nursing staff.

The hospital cannot be responsible for money, jewelry, or other valuables kept in your room.

Visitation

Philosophy

At SHA we recognize that families/support persons play an important part in the healing process and are vital contributors to the health care team. We welcome families/support persons 24 hours a day according to patient preference. Family members/support persons, as identified by the patient, provide support, comfort, and important information during their hospital stay regardless of time of day, day of week or department. The concept of open visitation allows the nurses the opportunity to assess every situation carefully between the families/support persons to provide the safest environment possible without compromising the best care for the patients. We believe having families/support persons with the patients promotes faster healing, decrease stress and anxiety and allows the staff to learn more about the patient.

Patient's Visitation Rights & Guidelines **2nd and 3rd Floor Patient Care Units**

- One support person may be present at all times, at the patient's request, unless their presence infringes on the rights of others or is medically or therapeutically contraindicated.
- Posted visitation hours apply to all others with the exception of the designated support person.
 - 8:00am – 9:00pm
- A maximum of two to three persons may visit at one time.
- Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult at all times.
- Please do not visit if you or your children are ill with an infectious disease, such as a cold or flu.
- It's important to wash your hands before entering and exiting a patient's room.
- The appointment of the support person by the patient may change over time.
- The appointment of the support person may be rescinded by the patient at any time.
- Bring reading material, etc. for yourself to help pass the time when the patient is asleep or unable to talk.
- Be aware that food is not allowed in the patient rooms, but the cafeteria is available to visitors at the following times:
 - Breakfast 6:30am – 8:30am
 - Lunch 11:15am – 1:30pm
 - Supper 5:00pm – 7:00pm
- Be aware there may be emergency situations in which the nursing staff or physician asks you to step into the lobby, even if you are the designated support person. Alternate visitation times may be arranged in the case regular visitation is interrupted.

- Please utilize the phone in the ICU Waiting Area for calls concerning the patient. The ICU Waiting Area phone number is 865-213-8211. Do not have family members and friends call into the main Nursing Unit Number as this is disruptive to patient care.
- Members of the clergy will be allowed to visit at the patient's request.
- The patient/family/support person will be given both verbal and written information regarding Visitation Guidelines at the time of admission. It is also available throughout the stay in the Patient Room Handbook and in the ICU Waiting Area.
- Exceptions to the posted Visitation Guidelines are at the discretion of the nursing staff and by physician order.

Intensive Care Unit

- One support person may be present at all times, at the patient's request, unless their presence infringes on the rights of others or is medically or therapeutically contraindicated.
- Posted visitation hours apply to all others with the exception of the designated support person.
 - 9:30 – 10:00am
 - 1:00 – 1:30am
 - 5:00 – 5:30am
 - 9:00 – 9:30pm
- A maximum of two persons may visit at one time.
- Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult at all times.
- Please do not visit if you or your children are ill with an infectious disease, such as a cold or flu.
- It's important to wash your hands before entering and exiting a patient's room.
- Support persons and visitors are not allowed to lay in the patient beds with the patient.
- The appointment of the support person by the patient may change over time.
- The appointment of the support person may be rescinded by the patient at any time.
- Bring reading material, etc. for yourself to help pass the time when the patient is asleep or unable to talk.
- The nursing staff will attempt to schedule meals, procedures and treatments at times other than general visitation hours.
- Work out a plan of who will stay with the patient and for how long each visit will be if the support person role will be rotated between multiple people.
- Remain in the room as long as you can before changing sitting partners, as frequent trips through the ICU could disturb the other patients and may interfere with other nursing care.
- Be aware that food is not allowed in the ICU, but the cafeteria is available to visitors at the following times:
 - Breakfast 6:30am – 8:30am
 - Lunch 11:15am – 1:30pm
 - Supper 5:00pm – 7:00pm

- Be aware there may be emergency situations in which the nursing staff or physician asks you to step into the lobby, even if you are the designated support person. Alternate visitation times may be arranged in the case regular visitation is interrupted.
- Please utilize the phone in the ICU Waiting Area for calls concerning the patient. The ICU Waiting Area phone number is 865-213-8211. Do not have family members and friends call into the main ICU as this is disruptive to patient care.
- Members of the clergy will be allowed to visit at the patient's request.
- The patient/family/support person will be given both verbal and written information regarding Visitation Guidelines at the time of admission. It is also available throughout the stay in the Patient Room Handbook and in the ICU Waiting Area.
- Exceptions to the posted Visitation Guidelines are at the discretion of the nursing staff and by physician order.

Emergency Department

- One support person may be present at all times, at the patient's request, unless their presence infringes on the rights of others or is medically or therapeutically contraindicated. *Both parents may stay with children who are patients.
- A maximum of two persons may visit at one time.
- Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult at all times.
- Please do not visit if you or your children are ill with an infectious disease, such as a cold or flu.
- It's important to wash your hands before entering and exiting a patient's room.
- The appointment of the support person by the patient may change over time.
- The appointment of the support person may be rescinded by the patient at any time.
- Bring reading material, etc. for yourself to help pass the time when the patient is asleep or unable to talk.
- Work out a plan of who will stay with the patient and for how long each visit will be if the support person role will be rotated between multiple people.
- Remain in the room as long as you can before changing sitting partners, as frequent trips through the Emergency Department could disturb the other patients and may interfere with other nursing care.
- Be aware that food is not allowed in the Emergency Department, but the cafeteria is available to visitors at the following times:
 - Breakfast 6:30am – 8:30am
 - Lunch 11:15am – 1:30pm
 - Supper 5:00pm – 7:00pm
- Be aware there may be emergency situations in which the nursing staff or physician asks you to step into the lobby, even if you are the designated support person.
- Please utilize the phone in the Emergency Department Waiting Area for calls concerning the patient. Do not have family members and friends call into the main Emergency Department as this is disruptive to patient care.
- Members of the clergy will be allowed to visit at the patient's request.
- The patient/family/support person will be given both verbal and written information regarding Visitation Guidelines at the time of arrival to the Emergency Department.

This information is also available throughout the stay in the Patient Room Handbook and in the Emergency Department Waiting Area.

- Exceptions to the posted Visitation Guidelines are at the discretion of the nursing staff and by physician order.

Labor/Delivery

- One support person may be present at all times, at the patient's request, unless their presence infringes on the rights of others or is medically or therapeutically contraindicated.
- A maximum of three persons may visit at one time.
- Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult at all times.
- Please do not visit if you or your children are ill with an infectious disease, such as a cold or flu.
- It's important to wash your hands before entering and exiting a patient's room.
- The appointment of the support person by the patient may change over time.
- The appointment of the support person may be rescinded by the patient at any time.
- Bring reading material, etc. for yourself to help pass the time when the patient is asleep or unable to talk.
- Work out a plan of who will stay with the patient and for how long each visit will be if the support person role will be rotated between multiple people.
- Remain in the room as long as you can before changing sitting partners, as frequent trips through the Labor and Delivery Area could disturb the other patients and may interfere with other nursing care.
- Be aware that food is not allowed in the Labor and Delivery Area, but the cafeteria is available to visitors at the following times:
 - Breakfast 6:30am – 8:30am
 - Lunch 11:15am – 1:30pm
 - Supper 5:00pm – 7:00pm
- Be aware there may be emergency situations in which the nursing staff or physician asks you to step into the lobby, even if you are the designated support person.
- Please utilize the patient room phone or the waiting area phone for calls concerning the patient. Do not have family members and friends call into the Labor and Delivery Nursing Area as this is disruptive to patient care.
- Members of the clergy will be allowed to visit at the patient's request.
- The patient/family/support person will be given both verbal and written information regarding Visitation Guidelines at the time of arrival to the Labor and Delivery Area. This information is also available throughout the stay in the Patient Room Handbook and in the Labor and Delivery Waiting Area.
- Exceptions to the posted Visitation Guidelines are at the discretion of the nursing staff and by physician order.

Nursery

- Visitation in the Nursery is limited to the mother of the infant in cases where the infant is unable to visit in the mother's room.
- Arrangements for visitation in the Nursery by a designated support person, with proper identi-band verification are by request of the mother and at the discretion of the nursing staff and physician.

Surgery

- One support person may be present at all times in the Holding and Recovery Room Areas, at the patient's request, unless their presence infringes on the rights of others or is medically or therapeutically contraindicated.
- A maximum of two persons may visit at one time in the Holding Area and a maximum of one person in the Recovery Room.
- Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult at all times.
- Please do not visit if you or your children are ill with an infectious disease, such as a cold or flu.
- It's important to wash your hands before entering and exiting a patient's room.
- The appointment of the support person by the patient may change over time.
- The appointment of the support person may be rescinded by the patient at any time.
- Bring reading material, etc. for yourself to help pass the time when the patient is asleep or unable to talk.
- Work out a plan of who will stay with the patient and for how long each visit will be if the support person role will be rotated between multiple people.
- Remain in the room as long as you can before changing sitting partners, as frequent trips through the Surgical Area could disturb the other patients and may interfere with other nursing care.
- Be aware that food is not allowed in the Surgical Area, but the cafeteria is available to visitors at the following times:
 - Breakfast 6:30am – 8:30am
 - Lunch 11:15am – 1:30pm
 - Supper 5:00pm – 7:00pm
- Be aware there may be emergency situations in which the nursing staff or physician asks you to step into the lobby, even if you are the designated support person.
- Please utilize the patient room phone or the waiting area phone for calls concerning the patient. Do not have family members and friends call into the Surgical Care Nursing Area as this is disruptive to patient care.
- Members of the clergy will be allowed to visit at the patient's request.
- The patient/family/support person will be given both verbal and written information regarding Visitation Guidelines at the time of arrival to the Surgical Area. This information is also available throughout the stay in the Patient Room Handbook and in the Surgical Waiting Area.
- Exceptions to the posted Visitation Guidelines are at the discretion of the nursing staff and by physician order.

PHONE DIRECTORY

Number	DEPARTMENT	SERVICES
234	Gift Shop	
0	Operator	
9	Outside Call	Dial 9-423- 10 digit dialing for local calls
526	Administration	
457	Nursing Administration	Patient Care concerns and suggestions
581	Utilization Review/Discharge Planning	TN Care Applications, Discharge Planning
423-213-8537	Business Office	
877-237-0026	Child Protective Services	
865-594-5685	Adult Protective Services	
423-442-4937	Elder Abuse	
423-442-5096	Domestic Violence	
1-800-994-6610 complaint@jcaho.org Office of Quality Monitoring One Renaissance Boulevard Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181	JCAHO	Report unresolved concerns regarding patient safety or quality of care.
1-800-264-0904	State Ombudsman	Report unresolved concerns regarding patient safety or quality of care.