

Assisting Our Patients and their families to make informed decisions

Informed decision making is essential for person centred care. Patients admitted to our Hospital have the right to decide whether or not they wish to receive health care. As a general rule, no operation, procedure or treatment may be undertaken without the consent of the patient, if the patient is a competent adult.

It is our commitment to all patients that adequate information will be provided for any proposed treatments. St Vincent's Private Hospital has in place, policies and procedures to guide employees in best practice with regard to informed consent.

We believe that the best practice in gaining informed consent includes communication of the benefits, risks and alternatives of treatment, taking into account the consumer's personal circumstances, beliefs, and priorities including:

- Temperament, attitude and level of understanding
- Cultural and linguistic diversity
- Influences that are non-medical but may have an impact, or
- Communication and/or cognitive difficulties

We consider your consent to be valid if:

- There is capacity of the individual to give consent
- Full information on risks, benefits and alternatives has been provided and understood, with understanding demonstrated
- The consent is given freely, and
- The consent is specific to the procedure

Your admitting Doctor should discuss the following key components prior to obtaining either your verbal or written consent:

- The possible or likely nature of the illness
- The proposed approach to investigation and treatment including:
 - What the proposed approach entails;
 - The expected benefits;
 - Common side effects and material risks;
 - Whether the procedure is conventional or experimental; and
 - Who will undertake the intervention
 - Other options for diagnosis and treatment
- The degree of uncertainty of the diagnosis and any therapeutic outcome
- The likely outcome of not having the procedure or treatment, or of not having any procedure or treatment at all
- Any significant long term physical, emotional, mental, social, sexual or other outcome which may be associated with the proposed intervention; and
- The time and cost involved including any out of pocket expenses.

All patients are able to seek advice from another medical practitioner, nurse or allied health professional regarding the nature of a treatment, operation or procedure This advice shall be documented in your medical file and if the health professional has any doubts about your consent and/or ability to understand they will take action to ensure you receive the necessary additional information from your admitting Doctor.

If you or your family have any concerns please do not hesitate to speak to an alternative health care professional.