

## **Consumer Rights in Relation to Health Care**

### **Consumers' Association of Canada**

Summary of document outlining the vital interests of citizens in relation to health care  
(originally created in 1971, revised in 1989, published October 1989)

- ***Right to be informed...***
  - About the health care system (extent of public/private plans, referral systems to auxiliary health and social services)
  - About the individual's own diagnosis and treatment program
  - About the specific costs undertaken on behalf of the individual
  - About the policies and procedures of the health care facility
  - About preventative health care including education on nutrition, birth control, drug use and safety, appropriate exercise
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- ***Right to be respected as the individual with a major responsibility for his or her own health care***
  - Right that confidentiality of his or her health records be maintained
  - Right to refuse experimentation and participation in teaching programs
  - Right of adult to refuse treatment, right to die with dignity
  - Right to considerate and respectful care
  - Right to access own medical records and records should be portable
- ***Right to participate in decision-making affecting his or her health...***
  - Through informed consumer representation at each level of government in planning and evaluating the system of health services, the types and qualities of service and the conditions under which health services are delivered
  - With the health professionals and personnel involved in his or her direct health care.
- ***Right to equal access to health care regardless of the individual's economic status, sex, age, creed, ethnic origin and location...***
  - Right to access to adequately qualified health personnel
  - Right to a second medical opinion
  - Right to prompt response in emergencies
  - Right to expect continuity of care

#### ***Consumer Responsibilities***

- To seek information
- To participate in decision making
- To respect the rights of other health care consumers
- To participate, though *informed* consumer representation in planning and evaluating health services and the conditions under which services are delivered
- To lead a healthy lifestyle as much as possible
- To work to enhance consumer rights in health care