



Our Charter of Rights



St. John of God *Hospitaller Services*

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all our service users and staff for their contribution to this Charter, in particular to the members of our Rights Committee (October 2003 to December 2004):

Freddie Kavanagh and Gerardine McKeown,
St John of God Kildare Services

Sonya O'Callaghan and Lexi Houston,
STEP Enterprises

Patsy Dunne and Pat Needham,
St John of God Menni Services

Michael McHale and Jerry Smith,
St John of God Breannán Services

Catherine McCann and Margaret Finnegan,
St John of God North East Services

Aimee Richardson, Gerry Byrne & Edel Kennedy,
St John of God Carmona Services

Caroline Roche, *St Joseph's Centre*

Orla Ni Ghabhlain, *St Augustine's School*

Brigid Butler, *Programme Development*

Contents

Foreword	4
Introduction	6
Charter of Rights	
The Right to Have a Voice	8
The Right to Know my Rights	10
The Right to Choose	12
The Right to Dignity and Respect	14
The Right to Freedom from Abuse and Neglect	16
The Right to Advocate	18
The Right to a Person Centred Plan	20
The Right to Access	22
The Right to Have Friends and Relationships	24
The Right to Privacy	26
The Right to Healthcare	28
The Right to Take an Informed Risk	30
The Right to Vote	32
The Right to Meaningful Daily Activity	34
The Right to Complain	36
The Right to Control My Own Money	38

Foreword

I am very pleased to welcome this Charter of Rights for all the people who use our services. It's the first time we have put these rights together in this way and we can all be very excited about it.

We should all know exactly what our rights are. Making sure we are always treated as people who have the same rights as everyone else is also very important.

A lot of people worked very hard for a very long time to get this booklet ready. They went to a lot of trouble to make sure it says what the people who use our services want it to say.

This booklet should help people to learn more about their rights. It will also help the rest of us to make sure that everyone is respected and has every chance to use his or her rights.

If you see anything that we have missed or something that could be said in a better way, please make sure to tell us about it, so we can keep improving what I hope you will see as 'your Charter'.

Fintan Brennan-Whitmore O.H.,
Provincial,
Granada House,
Stillorgan, Co Dublin.

January 2005

Introduction

A Provincial Committee came together last September to develop a Charter of Rights for people with intellectual disabilities at St. John of God Services. I was asked to represent service users at Menni Services on the committee.

Each committee member linked in with the advocacy and client representative groups in their services to get their opinion and advice as to what should be in their Charter of Rights. From this we agreed that there were 16 key rights most important to us at this time.

This Charter of Rights is to give people who use our services their own identity and courage to exercise their rights.

I feel this Charter will improve our lives and I am very proud to introduce it on behalf of the Committee.

Patsy Dunne

St. John of God Menni Services

January 2005



I have the Right To have a Voice

- To be listened to.
- To be heard.
- To talk to others.
- To talk in private.
- To say what I am thinking.
- To communicate and be understood.



I have the Responsibility

- To speak up for myself, to tell staff my needs.
- To say what I am thinking and feeling.
- To ask questions and give my opinion.
- To let people know if I am having problems.
- To respect others' views and opinions.



I have the Right To know my Rights

- To have people understand the rights that are important to me.
- To have information on rights.
- To get help to understand my rights.



I have the Responsibility

- To learn about my rights.
- To learn about what is expected of me.
- To learn about decision-making.



I have the Right To Choose

- Work.
- Daily Activity.
- Leisure.
- Religion.
- Accommodation.



I have the Responsibility

- To take responsibility for my choices.
- To take part as agreed in activities at times agreed.
- To make sure that I know the risks and consequences of the choices that I make.



I have the Right To Dignity and Respect

- To be accepted as I am.
- To be safe and feel comfortable in talking to others.
- To be involved in decisions affecting my life.
- To have my feelings and opinions respected.
- To confidentiality.



I have the Responsibility

- To state who it is that I feel comfortable talking to.
- To take part in meetings and discussions which affect my life.
- To say when I want particular information to be kept private.



I have the Right To Freedom from Abuse and Neglect

- The right to be safe.
- The right to be free from physical, sexual, verbal or emotional abuse.
- The right to know what to do if I am abused/neglected.
- To be safe from being taken advantage of.



I have the Responsibility

- To take care of my personal well-being and safety.
- To be kind and considerate to others.
- To make known my particular safety needs or concerns.



I have the Right To Advocate

- To have an advocate if I want one.
- To speak up for myself.
- To get help when I need to advocate.
- To choose someone who will speak up for me.



I have the Responsibility

- To speak up for myself when I can.
- To respect other peoples' right to speak up for themselves.
- To identify someone who will represent me if I am not able to speak for myself.



I have the Right To a Person Centred Plan

- To have a plan stating my goals and the supports I need.
- To be involved in decisions made about me.
- To be treated as an individual.
- To know, see and understand what is written about me.
- To give or not to give my consent.
- To have continuity of service.
- To have staff who are committed to me.



I have the Responsibility

- To participate in the development of my personal plan.
- To do what I agree to in the plan.
- To use the supports provided to help me with my plan.



I have the Right To Access

- To be able to go to all public places easily.
- To on-going education and training.
- To travel independently.
- To use all services in the community.
- To information on anything I need, in a way that I can understand.



I have the Responsibility

- To learn the safety measures I need to take to keep safe.
- To take part in safety training if necessary.
- To let someone know of any difficulties I experience.
- To respect other members of the community.
- To have information I need to use community resources.



I have the Right To Have Friends and Relationships

- To have necessary supports to make and have friendships of my choice
- To choose my friends.
- To have friends and family visit.
- To personal relationships.



I have the Responsibility

- To behave in an appropriate manner.
- To respect the rights and privacy of others.
- To maintain my personal appearance.
- To take part in activities which encourage and maintain friendships.
- To choose my friends.
- Not to bully or put pressure on other people.



I have the Right To Privacy

- To have my privacy needs known.
- To have my privacy respected at all times.
- To personal space.
- To my own space - for personal belongings.
- To spend time alone.
- To make and receive phone calls in private.
- To receive visitors.
- To receive and read my mail in private.



I have the Responsibility

- To respect the privacy of others.
- To tell people my privacy needs.
- To respect my personal space.
- To take responsibility for my health and safety when alone.
- To respect others' need for confidentiality.



I have the Right To Healthcare

- To have all my healthcare needs known and met.
- To make appointments.
- To have my doctor talk to me.
- To have someone with me if I want to.
- To be told about my medication.



I have the Responsibility

- To look after my healthcare needs.
- To ask for the support necessary to meet my healthcare needs.



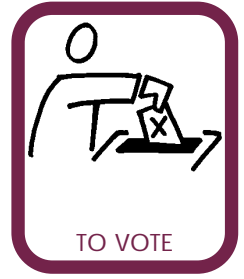
I have the Right To Take an Informed Risk

- To know what is involved in taking a risk.
- To get the information and advice I need in taking a risk.
- To be helped to understand what will, or could happen, if I take a risk.
- To be supported in my decisions.



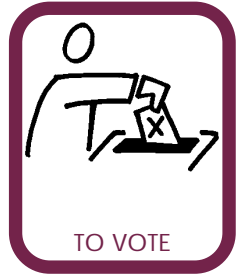
I have the Responsibility

- To understand and accept the risk that may be involved if I make certain choices or decisions.
- To act on agreed action to prevent risk.
- To follow rules and regulations that are in place.



I have the Right To Vote

- To register to vote.
- To learn about who is going for election.
- To learn about the issues.
- To learn how to vote.
- To travel to vote.



I have the Responsibility

- To learn why voting is important.
- To prepare to take part in the voting process.
- To look for help to register and participate in the voting process, if necessary.



I have the Right To Meaningful Daily Activity

- To work in a job of my choice.
- To try to learn new jobs.
- To be paid for a job.
- To choose how to spend my day.
- To have my needs and abilities supported and met.



I have the Responsibility

- To take part in training and engage in employment, as agreed.
- To do my job/participate in training or other activity to the best of my ability.



I have the Right To Complain

- To know what to do if I have a complaint.
- To be supported in making a complaint.
- To feel safe about making a complaint.
- To have professional people speak for me.



I have the Responsibility

- To discuss any problem I have with staff before it becomes too serious.
- To understand that people may see things from different points of view.
- To listen to other people if they make a complaint about me.
- To learn about the steps I need to take if I want to make a complaint.
- To ask for support in making or dealing with a complaint.



I have the Right To Control My Own Money

- To decide how to spend my money.
- To benefits/allowances.
- To a minimum wage.
- To have a post office/bank account.
- To have the help I need in managing my money.



I have the Responsibility

- To manage my money in accordance with my means and needs.
- To prioritise how I spend my money in an informed way.
- To ask for support if I need it to allow me to take care of my money.

A Charter of Rights for People with Intellectual Disabilities Availing Of Our Services

Published by:
St. John of God Hospitaller Services
Provincial Administration
Stillorgan, Co. Dublin,
Ireland.

© St. John of God *Hospitaller* Services 2005



St. John of God *Hospitaller* Services