

HUMAN RIGHTS FOR OLDER PEOPLE



DID YOU KNOW?

We all have a Right to Life. This means that medical care cannot be withheld simply on the grounds of age.

We all have a Right to a Family Life. This means that we should not be taken away from our home unless we agree that this is what we want.

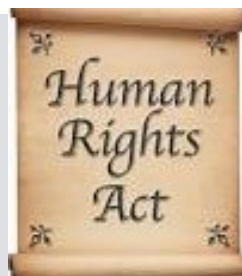
We all have a Right not to be subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment. This means that when we require hospital or social care it should be given in a way that respects our dignity and offers us choice.

The Human Rights Act



After the horrors of the 2nd World War, Winston Churchill and other world leaders agreed some basic principles which led to the European Convention on Human Rights 1953

In the 1990s, The British Government decided that these principles were so important that they would incorporate them into our own legislation as The Human Rights Act 1998. This means that when breaches occur, they can be dealt with in British Courts.



A couple who had been married for 65 years were separated when he had to go into a care home because of physical frailty. She had depended on him because she was blind. They challenged the decision claiming their Right to a Family Life and were reunited in the Care Home.

You may recall the scandal at a hospital where patients had been neglected and treated with scant regard to their dignity. These abuses were deemed a breach of the patients' Rights not to be subject to inhuman or degrading treatment.

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Cases of this kind led the Care Quality Commission, which is responsible for inspecting health and care providers, to use Human Rights as their inspection framework. On the next page you will see a set of basic standards for the provision of all care and against which providers are judged.

Standards Expected of Care Providers

Person-Centred Care You must receive care that is tailored to your individual needs and choice.

Dignity and Respect You must be treated with dignity and respect at all times, which includes being encouraged and enabled to remain independent.

Privacy and Confidentiality Your privacy must not be invaded without your consent; and care should be taken to ensure confidentiality at all times.

Consent As long as you are able to understand what is happening to you and to appreciate consequences, no treatment or actions should occur without your agreement.

Safeguarding from Abuse This includes neglect, being handled roughly, being inappropriately restrained or having your freedom restricted.

Food and Drink You must be given (and helped to consume if necessary) sufficient food and drink to keep you nourished and well. But no one should force you to eat or drink against your will.

Safety All care environments and equipment must be hygienic and free of hazards.

Complaints You must be given written information about how to complain if standards are breached.

Demand Your Rights

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Many older people don't make complaints because they don't want to make a fuss or they may even be scared to do so. People receiving care funded by the Council are entitled to have an advocate to speak for them who may be a friend or relative.

Advance Directives

None of us knows if, in the future, we may not be able to express our views because of illness such as stroke or dementia. If you have wishes in relation to your future care, write them down and give them to your family or GP.



Useful Contacts

St. Georges Hospital Complaints Dept	020 8725 3492
Wandsworth Council Complaints Dept	0800 023 2011
Wandsworth Healthwatch	020 8516 7767
Citizens Advice	0300 330 1169
Wandsworth Safeguarding Adults team	020 8871 7707
Age UK Equality Advice and Support	0808 800 0082



This leaflet was produced by Wandsworth Older People's Forum
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