

Oregon Support Person Legislation: *Implications for Patients & Families*

Oregon State law requires hospitals to accommodate patient support persons for individuals with disabilities. Such patients may designate at least three support persons to assist with:

- Communicating with hospital staff.
- Making medical decisions.
- Helping with daily activities.

At least one support person can be with the patient at all times in the emergency department and during the hospital stay, if necessary, to facilitate the patient's care.

Important elements of Oregon's Support Person Law that you should know:

- Unless a patient states otherwise, a hospital must make sure that a support person is present for any conversation where the patient is electing hospice care or to sign advanced planning forms, like an advanced directive. Treatment cannot be conditioned on having an advanced directive, Portable Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) or an order withdrawing or withholding life support such as a Do Not Resuscitate Order.
- A hospital can require a support person to follow hospital safety protocols. Examples include wearing personal protective equipment and restricting physical access if they are sick or have flu like symptoms.
- A patient and their support person can request a support care conference to discuss access restrictions.

If you have a concern about your care, please bring it to the attention of your nurse, a nurse leader or Patient Relations at 1-866-222-6822. Please give the hospital the opportunity to help resolve your concern about access to a support person and/or patient care.

A copy of the hospitals support person policy can be requested/found here: peacehealth.org/patient-rights-and-responsibilities.

You may contact the Oregon Health Authority, Health Care Regulation and Quality Improvement division, at 971-673-0540, or by email at: hclc@state.or.us.

References: Oregon Administrative Rules Oregon Revised Statutes