

AHS Consent to Treatment / Procedure(s) Policy

Alberta Health Services (AHS) is committed to best practice which contributes to Patient safety, and enhances the Patient experience. The AHS Consent to Treatment/Procedure(s) policy and procedures will facilitate a fair, respectful and informed Consent Process that is achieved consistently across the organization.

The Consent Process

Obtaining consent is a process involving a discussion or series of discussions and interactions between the Most Responsible Health Practitioner and the Patient, his/her Co-Decision Maker or Alternate Decision-Maker (as applicable). There are five steps to the process:

Step 1. The determination of Capacity

Assess the Patient's Capacity to make the decision at hand

Step 2. The provision of relevant information

Provide the Patient with the information required to understand the proposed Treatment/Procedures and to make an informed decision

Step 3. The verification of understanding

Provide the Patient with the opportunity to ask questions and provide understandable answers

Step 4. The decision-making

Patient makes the health care decision

Step 5. Documentation of the Consent Process and outcome

Ensure appropriate documentation of the Consent Process and outcomes on the Patient's Health Record

Emergency Health Care

Adult Patient:

Emergency health care may be provided to an Adult without consent if health care is necessary to:

- Preserve the Adult's life;
- Prevent serious physical or mental harm to the adult; or
- Alleviate severe pain

AND

1. The Adult lacks Capacity to consent as a result of drug or alcohol impairment, lack of consciousness or another cause.
2. There is no knowledge/evidence that the Adult had previously expressed wishes to the contrary.
3. No Guardian or Agent for the Adult in existence or immediately available and accessible.

Minor Patient:

Emergency health care for a Minor may be provided where a Mature Minor or Legal Representative is unable to provide consent if the Minor has an illness or injury and their life or health is immediately threatened.

AND

There is no knowledge that the Mature Minor or Legal Representative would have objected to the Treatment/Procedure.

Refusal / Withdrawal

Adult Patient:

An Adult Patient determined to have Capacity has the right to refuse or revoke a prior consent to a proposed Treatment/Procedure on any grounds, even when it is clear that the health care is necessary to preserve their life or health.

Minor Patient:

In the event that a Mature Minor, or the Legal Representative for a Minor, refuses to provide consent or withdraws consent for essential medical, surgical or other remedial Treatment necessary for the health or well-being of the Mature Minor or Minor, this shall be immediately reported to the Director of Child and Family Services Authority.

Duration of Consent

A consent is valid until:

- The Treatment/Procedure consented to is performed
- The Patient's condition changes
- The Patient withdraws the consent
- Further risks become known
- Alternative Treatments become available

Disclaimer

This summary sheet is intended to be a guide and is not to replace the content of the AHS policy Consent to Treatment/Procedure(s) and its related procedures or legal advice. Examples herein are for illustrative purposes only; the application of the AHS policy/procedures and legislation may vary depending on circumstances unique to each situation. Readers are encouraged to view the policy/procedure documents and legislation directly and should consult Professional Practice Consultation Service (PPCS) {practice.consultation@ahs.ca} if in need of clarification.