

Name: Rights and Responsibilities of Clients and Families	Page: 1 of 2	Policy/Procedure: 1.3
Effective Date: June 2015	Revised: September 2025	

Policy

HSNS is committed to fostering a psychologically safe, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive environment. Rights and responsibilities are framed to uphold dignity, respect diversity, and support HSNS's Reconciliation and anti-racism commitments. HSNS ensures that clients, families, and caregivers are informed of their rights and responsibilities in a clear, respectful, and accessible manner, supporting informed decision-making and collaborative care.

This policy supports ethical decision-making, informed consent, and collaborative care, reinforcing a culture of dignity, inclusion, and psychological safety. Collaborative care may involve members of a client's support network (e.g., family members, caregivers, close friends). Clients have the right to bring any of their support network to an HSNS appointment. It also contributes to HSNS's broader commitments to Reconciliation, anti-discrimination, and equitable access to services across Nova Scotia.

The *Rights and Responsibilities of Clients and Families* document must be readily available to all clients and their families/caregivers. Communication methods will be tailored to individual needs, considering language, culture, accessibility, and the nature of services provided. Clients will be provided access to the Rights and Responsibilities document and given the opportunity to ask questions at their initial visit or service encounter, and at any point throughout their care at HSNS.

The implementation of this policy is overseen by HSNS Management Council, in collaboration with site leads and clinical managers, to ensure consistent application and continuous quality monitoring.

Procedures

To ensure clients understand their rights and responsibilities, **HSNS staff will:**

- Proactively ask clients, families, or caregivers if they have any questions about the Rights and Responsibilities of Clients and Families document.
- Assess and provide appropriate language, cultural, or accessibility supports, including the use of interpreters, visual aids, or alternative formats where needed.
- Offer support from a member of the client's care team, or a support person or family member, as appropriate.

Some examples of strategies to facilitate awareness and opportunity for questions include:

- HSNS staff may use a variety of strategies to enhance client awareness and facilitate meaningful engagement, including:
- Drawing attention to posted information in treatment rooms and waiting areas.
- Providing the handout directly to clients and families, using visually distinct formats (e.g., coloured paper, large print) as appropriate.
- Attaching the handout to appointment cards, treatment guidelines, or other client-facing documents.

Hearing and Speech Nova Scotia

Name: Rights and Responsibilities of Clients and Families	Page: 2 of 2	Policy/Procedure: 1.3
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- Including the handout with written correspondence to clients/families.
- Having copies available during counselling sessions, assessments, and meetings.
- Attaching the handout to clipboards with consent forms or other commonly used materials.
- Integrating the handout with the Newborn Hearing Screening “Sound Start” pamphlet.
- Referring clients to the HSNS website, where the information is publicly available and accessible.

Please refer also to:

[Rights and Responsibilities poster](#)

[Ethics Framework and Ethics Tool \(1.1\)](#)

[Code of Conduct \(1.5\)](#)

[Client/Patient Experience and Stakeholder Feedback \(2.6\)](#)

[Incident Reporting \(5.1\)](#)

[Client Abuse, Patient at Risk \(12.3\)](#)

[Suicide, Client at Risk \(12.5\)](#)

[Personal Health Information Act \(14.1\)](#)

[Confidentiality and Privacy \(14.2\)](#)

[Complaints \(Client, Stakeholder, Public\) \(16.4\)](#)

[Clearview Connects](#)

[Clinical standards and client/patient and family centred care](#)