Your Responsibilities as a Patient or Family Member

By taking an active role in your own health care, you can help your caregivers best meet your needs. That is why we ask you and your family to share with us certain responsibilities. They include:

» Letting us know your expectations about hospitalization and treatment.

» Asking questions and making sure you understand any instructions given to you so that you can safely care for yourself when you leave the hospital or doctor's office.

» Being open and honest with us about your health history, including all medications you are taking and any legal or illegal addictive substances you use.

» Telling us about any situation at home or work that may affect your ability to care for yourself, so that we can direct you to resources that can help.

» Letting us know if you feel you cannot follow a plan of care that has been prescribed-or telling us when things do not seem to be going well-so that, together, we can develop the right plan of care for you.

» Appointing a health care proxy and completing an advanced care directive, so that we can know what kind of care you wish to have, should you become unable to tell us.

» Expressing concerns to your caregivers in a respectful manner (if you need additional assistance or are angry or upset about your care, a BWH Patient Relations or Ethics Committee representative can help you).

» Being honest with us about your financial needs so that we may connect you to resources that can help cover your medical expenses.

» Letting us know if you have objections to students or researchers participating in your care-as a teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School, BWH trains health care professionals and medical investigators from all disciplines, and your wishes always determine the extent to which they are involved in your care.

» Following Brigham and Women's Hospital rules and regulations.

» Being considerate of Brigham and Women's Hospital staff and property, as well as other patients and their property.