

ROCKFORD AMBULATORY SURGERY CENTER	
SUBJECT: RESPONDING TO PATIENT GRIEVANCES	POLICY # 27
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POLICY:

Rockford Ambulatory Surgery Center informs each patient of his or her rights in a language or method of communication that the patient understands whenever possible. Complaints and grievances related to patient care and services at Rockford Ambulatory Surgery Center are addressed according to the following guidelines.

PURPOSE:

To provide guidelines for staff regarding the difference between complaints and grievances, and to identify the process for responding to patient grievances according to federal regulations.

DEFINITIONS:

Complaint – A patient care issue/problem that is identified and resolved promptly by staff or Administration.

Grievance –

- A patient grievance is a substantiated written or verbal complaint, related to and including, but not limited to, mistreatment, neglect, verbal, mental, sexual or physical abuse, that is made to the Center by a patient, or the patient’s representative, OR
- A complaint involving, or alleging, a violation of a patient’s rights, OR
- A patient or their representative requests their complaint be handled as a “grievance”

(Billing issues are not considered grievances unless the complaint also contains elements addressing patient service or care issues.)

GUIDELINES:

Prior to receiving care, patients will be informed of their rights, including their rights to resolution of a grievance. Every effort will be made to provide this information in a language and manner understandable to the concerned patient or patient representative.

- The grievance process will provide prompt resolution of substantiated allegations related to treatment or care that is (or fails to be) furnished.
- The patient will be assured that exercising this right will not compromise patient care.
- The patient will be assured of confidentiality.
- The patient will be informed of whom to contact within RASC to file a grievance.

The patient will be informed of the right to file the grievance directly with a state agency.

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1. Illinois Department of Public Health
535 W. Jefferson St.
Springfield, IL 62761
217-782-4977

or

122 S. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60603
312-814-2608

2. Medicare Ombudsman
Office of the Regional Administrator
233 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 600
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Website: www.medicare.gov/ombudsman/resources.asp

Addressing and resolving grievances:

Grievances submitted to RASC Administration in writing, verbally, via email, over the telephone, or in person determined to be substantiated, will be addressed within 30 days, and communication with the patient or their representative regarding the plan to investigate and follow-up the grievance will be completed in 60 days.

The investigation of the grievance shall be conducted by Administration and the manager(s) of the areas involved. All grievances will have a written response. Complicated grievances requiring extensive investigation and analysis may require a written interim response stating that RASC is still working on the issue. Exception: Grievances regarding situations that endanger the patient shall be addressed immediately.

The final written response shall include a contact person at RASC, the steps taken to investigate the grievance, the results of the grievance process, and the date of completion. All grievance response letters will be mailed to the patient's home address unless the patient or representative has asked otherwise. A copy of the response is maintained by RASC Administration.

The Facility Privacy Officer shall be responsible for overseeing complaints related to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act.

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Responsibility and Accountability:

The Board of Directors is responsible for the effective operation of the grievance process. The Board reviews quarterly data and information related to substantiate patient grievances. Communication involving the investigation and follow-up is aggregated, tracked, trended, and communicated through the Quality Improvement/Risk Management process.

Appeal Process For Grievant:

The grievant may appeal any continued unresolved grievances to one of the following:

1. The Compliance Officer
Rockford Ambulatory Surgery Center
1016 Featherstone Rd.
Rockford, IL 61107

2. Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC)
5250 Old Orchard Road, Suite 200
Skokie, IL 60077

Medical Director / Date

Director of Perioperative Services / Date