Deferred Elections

You should complete an election form on or prior to admission. Exceptions may arise in the following circumstances:

- After hours emergency admissions where hospital staff are unable to organise completion of the election form until the following working day.
- You may be unable to make a valid election at the time of admission due to reasons such as unconsciousness, shock, severe pain or other reasons that may inhibit informed decisions.

In such cases election may be deferred until you or your legally authorised representative can complete the election process. In circumstances where a patient cannot speak English, hospital staff may facilitate translation assistance.

Changes to Elections

You may only change your election after admission in the event of unforeseen circumstances. Unforeseen circumstances may include:

- A change in medical circumstances ie where you are admitted for a particular procedure but are found to have complications requiring additional procedures.
- Your length of stay has been extended beyond that originally and reasonably planned by an appropriate health care professional.
- Change in social circumstances while you are in hospital eg loss of job.

Please note that inadequate health insurance cover is not normally a sufficient reason to change your election from private to public unless unforeseen circumstances apply. In situations where a valid election is subsequently changed, the change of status is effective from the date of change onwards.

Nursing Home Type Patients

Should your stay in hospital exceed 35 days and your doctor decides that you no longer require acute care you will be reclassified to a “Nursing Home Type” patient and charged accordingly even if you had elected to be a public patient.

This 35-day period includes previous hospitalisation, including stays in other hospitals, if you have been discharged and readmitted within 7 days for the same medical condition. Please contact our Admissions staff if you require more information on “Nursing Home Type” patients.

Please note that a private patient election is still valid in circumstances where only one doctor has private practice rights at a hospital.

Please note that single rooms may be allocated to other patients based on clinical needs. If another patient’s condition warrants a single room you may be required to move from your single room to assist with this clinical need.
This document contains important information concerning the election process for admitted patients in NSW public hospitals. Please ensure that you have read and understood this document prior to completing the Inpatient Election Form or the Inpatient Election Information Sheet.

All Medicare eligible persons have the choice to be treated as either public or private patients in NSW public hospitals. The basic principle is that you should freely make an informed decision based on accurate information. Patients with private insurance can elect to be treated as a public patient. We have provided information on what it means to elect to be admitted as a public and a private patient below.

Our staff will go through this information with you and assist you with any questions.

### Private (chargeable) Patients

If you elect to be treated as a private patient:
- You may choose to be treated by a specialist(s) of your choice, including the specialist on call, provided your chosen doctor holds private practice rights with this hospital. Your chosen doctor may call other doctors into consultation to assist with your care.  
- You may elect to request a bed in a single room if one is available.  
- Post discharge care will usually be carried out by your chosen specialist in his/her rooms.  
- You will be charged for hospital accommodation (shared or single room rates), medical services (clinical and diagnostic) and if applicable surgically implanted prostheses and other services.  
- You can claim 75% of medical (clinical and diagnostic) costs from Medicare and may be able to claim remaining costs from your health fund. If your private health insurance includes hospital cover, the cost of your hospital accommodation can usually be claimed from your health fund.

We recommend you seek advice from your fund concerning medical and accommodation costs. Confirming your level of insurance is important as you may not be fully covered for fees relating to your hospital admission or you may need to pay an excess. Please ask our Admissions staff if you require assistance. Our Patient Liaison Officers can check your health fund cover for you, and can help you with any other concerns or questions you may have about electing to be a private patient in a public hospital.

### Hospital (non chargeable) Patients

If you elect to be admitted as a public patient:
- You will be treated by a doctor(s) nominated by the hospital  
- You will not be charged for hospital accommodation, medical services or if applicable, other services such as surgically implanted prostheses.  
- If applicable, you are responsible for the payment of convenience items.  
- Post discharge care may be carried out in an outpatient clinic or in the doctor's private rooms depending on the circumstances.

### OTHER PATIENT CATEGORIES

Please advise our staff if you may be entitled to compensation under Workers Compensation, Third Party, Public Liability Insurance or any other form of compensation, as you are required to complete the “Compensable Patient Declaration”. If you incorrectly complete an inpatient election form and are later found to be eligible for compensation, you will be reclassified as a “compensable patient” and retrospectively charged compensable rates.

Other patient categories include Department of Veterans’ Affairs, Overseas Visitors and Defence Force Personnel. Please advise our staff if you may belong in one of these categories, as you are required to complete a different form.