

Guide to the Law on the protection of Patients` Rights

Context

City / Country: North Macedonia

Structure : Guide

Area of activity : Healthcare System

Identified needs

Many patients are unsure of the steps they should take if their rights are infringed upon. A clear explanation of how to file complaints, who to contact, and what authorities are responsible for reviewing complaints is crucial. Simplifying this process can empower patients to assert their rights with confidence.

Effective communication between healthcare providers and patients is another identified need. The guide must emphasize the importance of open, respectful communication, ensuring that patients know how to engage with their healthcare providers about their conditions and treatment options. Clear language is essential to help patients fully understand medical advice and treatment plans, thus fostering a more collaborative approach to healthcare.

The guide also needs to clarify patient responsibilities, such as cooperating with healthcare providers and following medical advice. These responsibilities should be presented in simple, understandable terms to avoid any confusion.

Access to information is a key aspect that needs to be addressed. Patients must be made aware of their right to access their medical records and seek second opinions, which can help them make more informed decisions about their healthcare.

Lastly, the guide should direct patients to support systems like Patient Rights Protection Advisors and other organizations that can help them when they face difficulties in exercising their rights. By making this information easily accessible and understandable, patients are more likely to seek out these resources when needed.



In summary, adapting this guide using clear language is essential for making the information more accessible, empowering patients to better understand and exercise their rights, and fostering a more transparent and equitable healthcare environment.

Objectives

The objectives of adapting the "Guide to the Law on the Protection of Patients' Rights" using clear language are:

- **Educating patients** about their legal rights and protections within the healthcare system, ensuring they understand rights such as privacy, consent, and participation in decision-making.
- **Providing an understanding of the legal framework** governing patients' rights by explaining the responsibilities of healthcare providers and processes related to medical documentation and complaints.
- **Encouraging active participation** of patients in their healthcare decisions, promoting open communication with healthcare providers, and ensuring clarity regarding treatments.
- **Outlining procedures** patients should follow if their rights are violated, offering clear guidance on how to file complaints and access relevant authorities.
- **Highlighting patient responsibilities**, including providing accurate health information, cooperating with healthcare professionals, and adhering to medical advice.
- **Ensuring transparency and accessibility** by offering information on accessing medical records and requesting second opinions.
- **Guiding patients to support systems**, such as patient rights advocates and the Commission for the Protection and Promotion of Patients' Rights, for additional assistance and guidance.

Target groups

The target groups for adapting the "Guide to the Law on the Protection of Patients' Rights" using clear language include patients and their families, healthcare providers, healthcare institutions, and organizations focused on patient advocacy and legal experts. Patients and their families are the central audience, as they need to understand their rights and responsibilities to engage in healthcare decisions and protect their interests when accessing medical services. This group includes



individuals with limited knowledge of healthcare laws or those facing challenges like chronic conditions or disabilities.

Healthcare providers, such as doctors, nurses, and administrative staff, are also key target groups. They must be informed about patient rights to ensure they provide care in accordance with legal standards and maintain patient-centered practices. Healthcare institutions, including hospitals and clinics, must adhere to regulations regarding patient rights and implement processes to ensure that patients are informed and protected within the system.

Finally, organizations that focus on patient advocacy and legal experts are important groups. These entities can use the guide to assist patients in understanding their rights and navigating legal processes if they believe their rights have been violated. By targeting these groups, the guide ensures a broad impact, supporting patients in protecting their rights and helping healthcare professionals comply with legal and ethical standards.

Existing Proposal

The existing proposal for the "Law on the Protection of Patients' Rights" outlines the rights and protections provided to patients within the healthcare system. It includes guidelines regarding the delivery of healthcare services, the duties of healthcare providers, and the procedures for safeguarding and addressing patients' rights. The proposal also addresses key issues such as **informed consent**, **access to medical information**, **privacy protection**, and **mechanisms for patient complaints** and legal actions.

The document serves as an essential reference for understanding the **legal framework** surrounding patient rights, ensuring that patients are aware of their entitlements and know how to exercise them when necessary. It provides clarity on how healthcare providers must respect patient rights and the steps that can be taken if those rights are violated.

The full proposal is available through the following link https://opm.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/prava_pacienti_mk.pdf

Adaptation process

The process starts with reviewing the original text to identify complex words, technical terms, long sentences, or legal jargon that could confuse readers. These



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terms are replaced with simpler words, and long sentences are broken down into shorter, clearer ones.

Next, any unnecessary details that might overwhelm the reader are removed. The remaining information is organized in a way that's easy to follow, using **headings**, **bullet points**, or **numbered lists** to make the content more digestible.

During the adaptation, the focus will be on **clear communication**. Active voice, simple words, and direct sentences will be used to engage readers and make the content approachable for everyone, no matter their background or familiarity with healthcare or legal terms.

Finally, after the adaptation is complete, the text will be reviewed by people who represent the target audience. This helps ensure the content is not only easier to understand but also meets the needs of the readers, empowering them to make informed decisions about their rights.

Returns

The benefits of adapting documents using clear language are significant. **First and foremost, increased accessibility** is a key advantage. By simplifying the language, more people—including those with limited literacy skills or those who are not experts in legal or healthcare topics—can understand the content. This empowerment leads to **better-informed decision-making**, as individuals can fully comprehend their rights and responsibilities.

When documents are easy to read and understand, readers are more likely to engage with the material, retain the information, and take appropriate action, such as filing complaints or seeking medical advice. This also helps reduce **misunderstandings** or confusion that could arise from complex language.

For healthcare providers and institutions, clear language enhances **compliance with regulations** and fosters a more transparent relationship with patients. It encourages **trust** between patients and providers, as clear communication helps patients feel respected and heard, reducing the likelihood of disputes or dissatisfaction.

Moreover, adapting documents using clear language can lead to **better patient advocacy**. Patients and their families will be more equipped to navigate the healthcare system, identify when their rights are being violated, and know how to take action. It also improves **efficiency** within the system by minimizing the need for clarification or additional support.



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In the long run, these returns contribute to creating a healthcare environment that is **more equitable, transparent, and patient-centered**, where individuals are empowered to protect their rights and make informed choices about their healthcare.

General comment from Milo, Logopsycom: it's hard to assess the documents just from the summary note, and I'm a bit lost as for which documents in the folder are the ones I should check. I hope my comments make sense but if there are any doubts, don't hesitate to message me to get an explanation.

Length and conciseness <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the material appropriately concise while retaining essential content?• Has excessive density or information overload been avoided?	<p>Some sections are lengthy, but I'm not sure if it could be shortened, since I don't understand the language (Logopsycom)</p> <p>The adapted text is significantly shorter and more concise, making it easier to read and understand. The key information appears to be retained while eliminating unnecessary complexity. Splitting the text into paragraphs enhances readability and prevents information overload. (Studium)</p> <p>The text seems to be less lengthy and more concise (LAPP)</p>
Language complexity and clarity <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the language clear, accessible, and free from unnecessary technical terms, jargon, or overly complex structures (e.g., passive voice, long sentences)?• Does the text align with relevant linguistic criteria (e.g., CEFR levels A1, A2, etc.)?	<p>The adaptation simplifies complex legal and medical terms, making the content more accessible. Since the text is in another language, its exact clarity cannot be assessed, but the structural improvements suggest better readability. Additional emphasis on key terms (e.g., bolding or highlighting important points) could further enhance clarity. (Studium)</p>
Purpose and effectiveness	<p>Yes, it communicates patient rights and legal protections. (Logopsycom)</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the goal of the material (e.g., to inform, instruct, persuade) clearly conveyed and maintained in the adaptation? 	<p>The primary goal - educating patients about their rights and responsibilities - is clearly maintained.</p> <p>The purpose remains strong, though some key points could be visually distinguished to reinforce important messages. (Studium)</p>
<p>Audience suitability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the material appropriate for the intended audience in terms of reading level, language, and needs? 	<p>The material is appropriate for a broad audience, including patients, healthcare providers, and advocacy organizations. (Studium)</p>
<p>Structure and readability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the content well-organised, with logical flow, clear headings, bullet points, and other structural elements that enhance comprehension? 	<p>Well-structured but could use more bullet points and subheadings for ease of reference. (Logopsycom).</p> <p>Breaking up the text into smaller sections and paragraphs improves readability. The use of headings, bullet points and lists, as well as some keywords and crucial points could be visually marked (bold, italics, underlining) to improve comprehension. (Studium)</p> <p>It's good that the adapted text shows structuring – headers, bolding, underlining. It makes the text a lot more accessible. I think, however, that</p>

	<p>the rule of using the bold should be reviewed: I would not recommend just bolding the first letter of the word, as to me it's more of an obstacle than a facilitation and it serves a clearly visual purpose, and not making the text more accessible or putting an emphasis on some word. Also, to me it may not be necessary to bold out a whole page (although i do not speak the language), because then it loses its importance. I think bullet points or icons could be added in places where you're enumerating (if I understood correctly). Also, the font size seems to be inconsistent. (LAPP)</p>
<p>Visual elements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are visuals (charts, diagrams, etc.) clear, relevant, and effectively aligned with the text? • Have visual adjustments improved clarity and usability? 	<p>I don't see much visuals; maybe a flowchart or infographic summarizing key rights would help? (Logopsycom)</p> <p>The adaptation improves text layout but does not introduce significant visual enhancements. There are no clear improvements regarding formatting issues such as text overlaying images. Additional adjustments, such as spacing, text alignment, and font size optimization, could further enhance usability. (Studium)</p>

	<p>The blue underlinings need to be placed better – somehow it's on the text and so it's more of a visual obstacle than a facilitation. (LAPP)</p>
<p>Educational and practical value</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the material maintain its usefulness and accuracy despite any simplifications or modifications? 	<p>It seems valuable from what I can tell from the summary (Logopsycom)</p> <p>The content retains its educational value, helping patients understand their rights and responsibilities. By simplifying language and structure, the document becomes more practical for real-world application. Further improvements in visual design could make the content even more engaging and effective. (Studium)</p>
<p>Accessibility and usability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the format user-friendly, avoiding design issues (e.g., small fonts, poor layout) that could hinder accessibility? Is the material easy to understand and implement for the target audience? 	<p>I think it could be improved with clearer formatting and more visuals but overall it's quite good. (Logopsycom)</p> <p>The adapted text is more accessible due to its simpler language and improved structure. Minor refinements, such as marking key phrases and using better spacing would further enhance usability. (Studium)</p> <p>I would further simplify the document by maybe putting a bit of more white space in between the sections; structuring the text better and resolving</p>

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	the bolding and font size issues. There's an improvement, however I think there's a lot more to do. (LAPP)
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