



Eastlight Building
One West Lane, Suite B
Blue Hill, Maine 04614-1207

Phone 207-374-5007
Fax 207-374-5099

www.CoastalFamilyMedicineofMaine.com

PATIENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES POLICY 03/09:

Coastal Family Medicine of Maine, PLLC (CFMM) was formed with the goal of exemplifying a quality patient care experience. This extends to every aspect of the patients visit at CFMM from the physical environment, communication and interactions with staff, efficiency of service, and of course the quality of medical care provided (for more information see CFMM Vision, Philosophy and Practice Style.) CFMM also emphasizes our other responsibilities to our patients which include:

- Providing efficient and timely access to appointments
- Providing flexibility with the duration of patients visits to help defray costs when requested
- Providing adequate explanations for all fees
- Performing services only after obtaining express written or verbal agreement from the patient- we do not want there to be any financial surprises+
- Providing detailed patient education covering not only evidence based medical information but alternative treatment options, financial options, in addition to addressing second opinions from allied healthcare professionals.

Quality Care: Few would argue that quality medical care can be achieved without a quality medical provider. The foundation of this quality resides in large part within the personality of the individual provider, but is certainly also shaped by their medical training and experience. Additional information in this category is discussed in depth in the CFMM About Us document. Interested parties can obtain this document through our web site or by contacting our office.

In addition to the medical provider, quality medicine is derived through efficient, caring, and thoughtful consideration of many other aspects of the patients medical care. It is these areas where CFMM feels each patient has the right to the highest quality possible.

Practice Efficiency: The rapid and integrated access to medical information is a key aspect of CFMMs approach to providing an efficient, secure and high quality

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medical experience for our patients. CFMM's computerized medical information system encompasses the patient's individual medical records, all correspondence and communication with the CFMM office, all scheduling and appointment processing, as well as billing and accounting information. CFMM is prepared to handle the ever increasing amount of data being incorporated into patient's medical records through the use of this sophisticated, computerized medical records system. Other advantages to utilizing this computerized system includes: 1) rapid access to medical records, 2) the ability to electronically capture and incorporate all of a patient's previous medical records into a single source, 3) providing rapid electronic or faxed copies of patient's medical records to referral providers or to the patient at anytime upon their request, 4) providing electronic prescription capabilities- except in isolated situations, no paper prescriptions are needed by our patients, all prescriptions are securely and electronically transmitted to the pharmacy. Electronic prescribing and computerized medical records are the future of medicine, improving quality care and reducing medical errors. The federal government already has mandates for their use in the Medicare/Medicaid system by 2012 and CFMM will work hard to see that our system meets or exceeds all such requirements for our patients.

Delays and Cancellations: CFMM has scrutinized and refined many aspects of the patient's visit at our office to ensure a quality medical experience. These efforts include the use of a sophisticated computer system (described above), the physical design of the office spaces, and many other accommodations which we describe elsewhere (CFMM Vision, Philosophy and Practice Style: CFMM About Us.) However, despite these best efforts we must acknowledge that situations will arise which tax the efficiency of the office workflow and can subsequently result in unexpected delays for our patients. CFMM will make all efforts possible to limit or minimize such delays, but we must also ask for our patients understanding when they do occur. These situations could arise from computer or system outages, emergency patient appointments or phone calls, the need to speak to referral physicians, or other unforeseen factors. It is our responsibility to inform you, the patient, as quickly as possible about such potential delays, but unfortunately some such events are unavoidable. Should a delay in a previously scheduled appointment occur it is our responsibility to 1) inform you, the patient, as rapidly as possible of the delay, and 2) determine whether or not we need to reschedule the appointment if the delay is going to be lengthy or interfere with a patient's personal schedule.

Although we hope that delays or cancellations of patient appointments rarely ever occur, some circumstances will again be unavoidable. Given this fact, CFMM maintains the right to cancel or reschedule a patient at any time. Every attempt will be made to notify the patient as quickly as possible of the need for rescheduling or changes in appointments. Patients are asked to provide the courtesy of 24 hours notice prior to cancelling or rescheduling appointments. CFMM attempts to remain as flexible as possible, and we are working hard to ensure that there will be an adequate balance in the availability of same day and preventive medicine appointments.

Recommendations for Patients: A key factor in maintaining appointment availability is through ensuring the efficiency of office operations, a task which we strive to maintain at CFMM . However, CFMM also asks that patients seek to do their part to maintain the efficiency of the practice by following these guidelines: 1) Please arrive at the office at least 10 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment. This will allow us to pass on any new or updated information or policy changes, ensure your records are up to date, and ensure we are able to address all of your concerns in the allotted appointment time. 2) It is always recommended that patients bring a written list of questions or concerns. This helps to avoid running out of time during an office visit before the provider is able to address all of the desired issues. And most importantly this can help avoid failing to mention a critical health care need within the time allotted. 3) Please ensure that all medical information is updated with the CFMM office in writing. This would include notification of any major changes in your medical care including: new medications (prescriptions or supplements) obtained from other medical providers, including changes in dosage; all clinic notes, labs, radiologic studies and referrals or consultation notes from other providers. CFMM asks that patients have all of the previously described documents sent to the CFMM office for inclusion in your medical record. Patients are asked to fill out a CFMM Authorization for Release of Medical Information Form (copies are available on our web site or by contacting our office) for each provider, hospital, or practice from which medical records are available. Once these documents are digitized and incorporated into the patient's medical record CFMM will either return the original, paper documents to the patient or destroy them at the patient's request. CFMM will notify patients in writing of any unclaimed, paper medical records requesting that the patient either inform CFMM staff of their desired disposition for those documents. Documents which remain unclaimed 30 days from the time of written notification will be destroyed.

Authorization for Treatment and Services: Patient's or patient's legal guardians (hereto referred to as patients) who have initialed and signed the CFMM New Patient Notice of Policy and Procedures Document at their first scheduled clinic appointment have provided their consent for evaluation and the initiation of medical care by CFMM staff. This does not cover the requirement for Informed consent for specific medical treatments which will be discussed individually with each patient by the treating provider. Signature and initialing of the CFMM New Patient Notice of Policy and Procedures Document also acknowledges the patient's acceptance of the listed CFMM policies and documents, including but not limited to issues of payment and dispute resolution. Patients are bound to the payment terms as outlined, foremost of which is the patient's responsibility for payment, in full, of all associated appointment fees at the conclusion of each clinic appointment. In other words, the patient is responsible for understanding and abiding by the fee for service policy of the practice. CFMM does not submit insurance claims on behalf of patients. CFMM will provide a detailed invoice for the patient to submit to their insurance carrier for reimbursement. It is the patient's responsibility to understand that the nature of the reimbursement provided by the patient's insurance carrier is entirely dependent on the policies of that carrier and any questions or disputes resulting from such reimbursement is outside the purview of

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CFMM and is an issue between the patient and their insurance carrier alone. CFMM works hard to provide a detailed invoice for each patient at the conclusion of their visit. This invoice contains specific codes utilized by the insurance industry to validate the nature and type of services for reimbursement purposes. CFMM will not be held responsible for coding disputes initiated by the insurance carrier and will not alter the appointment invoice for any such purpose. All billing and coding by CFMM is final upon the termination of the clinic visit. Patients should be advised that any reimbursements received by their insurance carrier may not cover the total amount of a CFMM invoice. For more information please see the CFMM Fee and Payment Policy.

Patients age 17 and younger may be treated by CFMM staff without the presence of the patient's parent or legal guardian when the following circumstances have been met: 1) The patient's parent or legal guardian has provided a written note authorizing the patient to be seen in their absence. 2) The patient is not new to CFMM. In other words, the patient has been seen for a first time appointment in the past, and at that appointment the patient's parent or legal guardian was present and completed (signed and initialed) the CFMM New Patient Notice of Policies and Procedures document.

Disputes and Suggestions: CFMM is open to, and appreciative of, any constructive suggestions or comments from our patients. These comments may be passed on directly to our staff, in writing, or through the Contact Us section of our web site. Additional information is available for patients in the CFMM Dispute Resolution and Suggestion Policy which is available on our web site or through our office. CFMM will address and respond to all written complaints and suggestions, and will do so in writing in no more than 30 days.

Treatment and Care of Hospitalized Patients: It should be known that CFMM does not provide for care or treatment of patients who are admitted to a hospital or an in-patient treatment facility. In other words, the CFMM provider will not take responsibility for the treatment plan or day to day care provided in the hospital. This does not, however, mean that CFMM has no role or responsibility for patients empanelled with CFMM who are admitted to a hospital. As a primary care provider, CFMM staff will work diligently to ensure that the in-patient medical facility has ready access to the patient's CFMM medical record and treatment plans, and that there is open discussion and mutual assistance among CFMM and the in-patient treating providers (hospitalists.) The role of CFMM in such patient scenarios and the role of hospitalists (or dedicated in-patient providers and medical teams) are also discussed within the CFMM Vision, Philosophy and Practice Style Document located on the CFMM web site or through our office.

Patient Behavior: Coastal Family Medicine of Maine PLLC (CFMM) strives to treat all patients with the dignity and respect they deserve- this is our responsibility to you, the patient. It is likewise expected that all patients will extend the same courtesies and respect to the CFMM staff and other CFMM patients. Any behaviors deemed unacceptable by CFMM staff will be grounds for refusal of initial or ongoing care, and

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will result in expulsion of the patient from the CFMM premises and possibly refusal of future care at CFMM (Also see Termination of Patient Care below.) Patients who have a dispute with CFMM are encouraged to contact our office to arrange a time to meet with CFMM staff to discuss, and hopefully resolve, the issue. Additional avenues of recourse are outlined in the CFMM Dispute Resolution and Suggestions Policy which is available on the CFMM web site or through our office.

Termination of Patient Care: CFMM will extend every option to resolve a dispute or conflict before having to resort to the termination of a patient from the practice (see CFMM Dispute Resolution and Suggestion Policy.) However, if an established primary care patient with Coastal Family Medicine of Maine fails to maintain their status in good standing the following will occur: 1) The patient will be notified in writing of the digression/reason for termination and provided 30 days to respond, 2) The patient will be provided with a full copy of all his/her medical records at a cost of \$1.50 per page of documentation which will be distributed upon receipt of payment in either paper or electronic format at the patients discretion, and 3) CFMM will provide a list of area providers with whom the patient can seek to establish a new primary care relationship. Additional information which may be of assistance is outlined in the CFMM Dispute Resolution and Suggestions Policy which is available on the CFMM web site or through our office.