



# UNIVERSITY *of* MARYLAND SHORE REGIONAL HEALTH

A Member of the University of Maryland Medical System



PATIENT & FAMILY **HANDBOOK**



We hope this **HANDBOOK** will help answer questions you may have during your inpatient stay at the medical centers of the University of Maryland Shore Regional Health.

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Bottom right cover photo courtesy Talbot County Chamber of Commerce

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## Welcome



A health system does more than care for the medical needs of a community. This is especially true at the University of Maryland Shore Regional Health, the Mid-Shore's primary provider of medical services. Every day, we take care of our friends and neighbors and our relationships continue well after a hospital encounter. The University of Maryland Shore Medical Centers at Chestertown, Dorchester and Easton have served the community for over 100 years. Although technology and the delivery of health services are continually changing, our commitment to your health and the well-being of your family will never waiver.

Our team includes 2,600 employees, two medical staffs consisting of approximately 320 attending, consulting and associate staff members, and over 700 active volunteers. It represents your friends, neighbors and family members who are dedicated to meeting the health care needs of the 170,000 people who live in the Mid-Shore region. We work together to meet your needs when you are a patient in one of our medical centers and when you require primary or specialty care in an outpatient setting. The expertise of our clinical staff and our knowledge of the communities in which we live and work are further expanded through our affiliation with the University of Maryland Medical System and its network of specialty services.

Thank you for choosing UM Shore Regional Health for your health care needs. We strive to provide powerful medicine, close to home, for you and your family.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kenneth D. Kozel'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

**KENNETH D. KOZEL, FACHE**  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
University of Maryland Shore Regional Health



## About Us

University of Maryland Shore Regional Health is a regional, nonprofit, medical delivery care network formed on July 1, 2013, through the consolidation of two University of Maryland partner entities, the former Shore Health and the former Chester River Health.

The University of Maryland Shore Regional Health network serves the Mid-Shore region, which includes Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's and Talbot counties.

### **INCLUDED IN THE UM SHORE REGIONAL HEALTH NETWORK ARE THREE HOSPITALS:**

- University of Maryland Shore Medical Center at Chestertown
- University of Maryland Shore Medical Center at Dorchester
- University of Maryland Shore Medical Center at Easton

### **University of Maryland Shore Regional Health also includes the following:**

- University of Maryland Shore Emergency Center at Queenstown
- University of Maryland Shore Medical Pavilion at Queenstown
- University of Maryland Shore Nursing & Rehabilitation Center at Chestertown
- A broad array of inpatient and outpatient centers and services in locations throughout the five-county region.

**CONTACT US:**

University of Maryland Shore Medical Center  
at Chestertown:

100 Brown Street  
Chestertown, MD 21620  
410-778-3300  
TDD/TTY: 1-800-735-2258

University of Maryland Shore Medical Center  
at Dorchester

300 Byrn Street  
Cambridge, MD 21613  
410-228-5511  
TDD/TTY: 410-228-7685

University of Maryland Shore Medical Center  
at Easton

219 South Washington Street  
Easton, MD 21601  
410-822-1000  
TDD/TTY: 410-820-5704

University of Maryland Shore Emergency Center  
at Queenstown

115 Shoreway Drive  
Queenstown, MD 21658  
410-827-3900



## During Your Stay

We have policies and procedures in place to help you and your family work with our doctors, nurses and staff to get the most benefit from your stay. Please take a few minutes to review these guidelines with your loved ones.

### VISITOR GUIDELINES

Visits from family and friends are important to your recovery. Our visitation policy is designed solely to aid the recovery of our patients by providing a secure, supportive and healthful environment. Please ask your friends and family to observe the visitor guidelines posted at the medical center.

### VISITOR RESTROOMS

Visitors are asked to refrain from using the bathrooms in patient rooms. They are reserved only for patients in order to protect their health. Public restrooms are located throughout the medical centers.

### DURING YOUR STAY

Many people are involved in making your stay exceptional. We want to make you and your family as comfortable as possible. The physician who directs your treatment, the nurses who provide your daily care, the staff member who serves your meal or cleans your room and the volunteer who lends a hand and a smile—all are committed to seeing you well again. For every nurse or clinician you see, there are other hospital employees working behind the scenes. Engineers, cooks, accountants, administrators and others are members of a team of experienced, caring employees working together to provide you with the best possible service. They all wear photo identification badges with their name and department for your reference. If you have questions about any of the people who care for you, please feel free to talk to him or her directly or ask your nurse.

## **CALLING YOUR NURSE**

A call signal near your bed permits you to talk directly with the nursing station on your unit. When you press the button on your intercom cord, a light cues the nursing staff to respond. When your call is answered, please speak in a normal tone of voice.

## **INTERPRETERS**

Interpretation services for many foreign languages are available to assist patients and their families who do not speak English through the AT&T Language Line. Certified Sign Language Interpreters for the hearing impaired also can be arranged. Please let your access representative or nurse know if you require an interpreter.

## **FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED**

We want to communicate in your language preference. We will contact a certified interpreter or you may use our video remote interpreter via the designated laptop until an interpreter is available. The medical center has TTY service for the hearing impaired. If you need TTY hook-up, please ask your nurse for assistance. The TTY numbers are 1-800-735-2258 (Chestertown), 410-228-7685 (Dorchester), and 410-820-5704 (Easton).

## **TELEPHONE**

Telephones are provided in all patient rooms. Calls may be placed or received 24 hours a day.

## **FOOD SERVICES**

Food service options are located on the ground level at UM Shore Medical Center at Dorchester, the first floor at UM Shore Medical Center at Easton and on the second floor at UM Shore Medical Center at Chestertown. Visitors are welcome to dine in the cafeteria. Please check the signs outside each cafeteria for specific details about hours of operation and menu offerings.

## **GIFT SHOP**

Each of our medical centers provides a gift shop in the main lobby, operated by Auxiliary members. Each of these shops offers a variety of gifts, reading materials and snacks. Proceeds from these shops benefit their respective medical centers.

## **BANK/ATMS**

An ATM machine is located near the main lobby on the first floor of each medical center and is available 24 hours a day.

## **MAIL**

Mail is delivered once a day, Monday through Friday. Packages are brought to your room as soon as possible. If mail arrives after you are discharged, it will be forwarded to your home.

## **WIRELESS INTERNET SERVICE**

So that you feel connected to your family and friends, UM Shore Regional Health offers free wireless connection for mobile devices and wireless computer users. If your laptop has a wireless network card, you will be able to log on.

## **FIRE SAFETY**

We conduct fire drills periodically. If you hear an alarm, stay where you are. In the event of an actual emergency, medical center staff will notify you and provide information to you and your visitors. In the event of a Code Red (Fire), do not use the elevators.

## **IDENTIFICATION BAND**

Your identification (I.D.) band shows your name, date of birth and medical record number. The I.D. band is used to match you with the treatment and medications you need. Please do not remove your identification bracelet during your stay.

## **SMOKING**

Smoking is not permitted on any UM Shore Regional Health property. Visitors may not smoke on our grounds. Patients are not allowed to leave their unit or floor to smoke inside or outside any UM Shore Medical Center facility. Patients who are classified as inpatients, patients awaiting surgery, and patients registered in the Emergency Departments are prohibited from smoking. We are aware this may be difficult for patients who smoke; however, a smoke-free environment is a vital part of good health and safety. The medical staff has approved a protocol to help with nicotine withdrawal. If you smoke, please work with your doctor or nurse to see if this protocol would be helpful to you. Educational materials regarding smoking cessation are available from your nurse.



## **MEDICATIONS**

Medications prescribed by your physician during your stay are part of a carefully planned program of treatment. Use of other medications may upset the plan and could be harmful to you. The pharmacy will fill your prescriptions while you are an inpatient and the nurses will deliver your medications to you at the proper time. We recommend that you carry a list of your medications with you. Any medications brought from home should be sent home with a family member.

## **ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES**

Due to safety concerns, some personal electrical equipment may not be used during your stay. They include fans and personal heaters. Toothbrushes and CPAP devices are permitted.

## **VALUABLES**

Anything you do not need should be sent home, including luggage, jewelry, money and extra clothes. Please store belongings in the bedside table or cabinet. Put dentures or eyeglasses in a case. Do not wrap small items in paper towels or tissues because they may be mistaken for trash. Do not leave valuables on your meal tray.

Valuables that cannot be sent home can be placed temporarily in the medical center safe by Security. UM Shore Regional Health shall not be liable for money or property of any kind retained by the patient or kept in the hospital room.

## **VENDING MACHINES**

Vending machines are located in various places in each of the medical centers. Please ask a staff member for the nearest machine.

## **SPIRITUAL CARE**

Chaplains provide patients and their families with the opportunity to talk to clergy. If you would like to speak with one of our chaplains, please ask your nurse to contact the Pastoral Care Office. Chapels are located on the first floor near the main lobby of each medical center and are open for private meditation 24 hours a day.

## **TELEVISION**

Televisions (TV) are available at no cost in patient rooms. Televisions are equipped with cable and captioning for the hearing impaired. Please be considerate of others by keeping the TV volume down and turning off your TV at bedtime.

## **PATIENT SAFETY**

Your health and safety are our top priorities. While you are in our medical center, you and your family are a vital part of our team. Become a partner in your care by being an informed participant in all decisions about your treatment.

You are the center of our health care team!

## **IDENTIFY YOURSELF**

The staff will ask you to state your name and birth date many times during your stay. This is done to prevent any errors that could be the result of treating the wrong patient. Be sure that all staff members ask your name and birth date and check your I.D. bracelet whenever you are given a medication, including IVs, and before having a test or procedure of any kind. If they do not check your identification, you have the right to ask them to do this before treating you.

## **PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF GERMS**

- Hand washing/hand hygiene is the best way to prevent the spread of germs and infection!
- We expect health care workers, including nurses and physicians, to perform hand hygiene before touching you and as they leave your room. If you do not see them doing this, please feel free to ask staff if they have washed their hands or used the alcohol-based sanitizer.

## PREVENTING FALLS

- Ask for help when getting out of bed, especially at night. The medical center is an unfamiliar place and most falls occur when patients try to get out of bed on their own to go to the bathroom. **Remember: Call, Don't Fall!**
- Make sure the nurse call button on your bed works, that you know how to use it and that you can reach it.
- If possible, call for help before the need to get to the bathroom becomes urgent.
- Make sure there is enough light in your room to see and keep your eyeglasses within reach.
- Wear slippers with rubber soles to prevent slipping or ask the staff for slipper socks.
- Let the staff know if there are any spills or objects on the floor or in your room so we can make your room a safe one for you, your family and visitors.
- Ask for help when getting in and out of a wheelchair and be sure the brakes are locked when you do this. Let staff know about your need for a walker, cane or crutches.
- Make staff aware of your regular routine so they can assist you.

## IF YOUR CONDITION WORSENS

Each medical center has a “rapid response team,” a team of nurses, respiratory therapists and physicians who respond to patients experiencing a worsening condition. Inform the nurse on duty if you feel your condition is deteriorating rapidly.



## Patient Rights and Responsibilities

### AS A PATIENT, YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO:

- Receive considerate, respectful and compassionate care regardless of your race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or source of payment.
- Participate in the development and implementation of your plan of care.
- Receive information about your diagnosis, condition and treatment in terms that you can understand. You have the right to give written informed consent before any non-emergency procedure begins.
- Be informed about outcomes of care, treatment and services provided, including unanticipated outcomes.
- Refuse treatment to the extent permitted by law and to be informed of the possible consequences of the refusal.
- Agree or refuse to take part in medical research studies. You may withdraw from a study at any time.
- Participate or refuse to participate in recording or filming for purposes other than identification, diagnosis or treatment.
- Have access to sign language or foreign language interpreter services, which will be provided at no cost to you. We will provide an interpreter as needed.
- Formulate advance medical directives and have them followed within the limits of the law and the organization's capabilities. We can provide you with information that will help you complete an advance medical directive.
- Have your pain assessed and to be involved in decisions about managing your pain.
- Know the names and professional titles of your physicians and caregivers.
- Be involved in your discharge plan. You can expect to be told in a timely manner of the need for planning your discharge or transfer to another facility or level of care. Before your discharge, you can expect to receive information about follow-up care that you may need.

- Be free from restraint or seclusion, of any form, imposed by staff as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience or retaliation. Restraint or seclusion may only be used to ensure the immediate physical safety of you, staff or others, and must be discontinued at the earliest possible time.
- Choose a person to give you emotional support (spouse, domestic partner, family member or friend) during the course of your hospitalization.
- Receive visitors who have full and equal visitation privileges consistent with your preferences and protection of the health and safety of patients, staff and visitors. You have the right to withdraw or deny visitation privileges at any time during your stay. UM Shore Regional Health does not restrict or deny visitation privileges based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability.
- Know about professional and financial ties between institutions and people caring for you.
- Request that your family or representative of your choice and your own physician be notified of your admission to the medical center.
- Access protective and advocacy services in cases of abuse or neglect. The medical center will provide a list of protective and advocacy resources.
- Pastoral and other spiritual services. Chaplains are available to help you directly or contact your clergy.
- Confidential clinical and personal records.
- See your medical record within the limits of the law.
- An explanation if we restrict your visitors, mail or telephone calls.
- An explanation of medical center rules.
- An examination and explanation of your bill, regardless of how it is paid.

You and your family members have a right to discuss ethical issues with an **ethics committee** representative.

- Inform your doctor or nurse if you'd like to talk with the medical center's **ethics committee**.

You have a right to voice your concerns about the care you receive.

If you have concerns, we urge you to:

- Tell your physician, nurse or caregiver about your concern.
- If you believe further action needs to be taken, talk to the manager of your nursing unit.

You may also contact the patient advocate at each medical center at the following numbers.

- Chestertown: 410-810-5671
- Dorchester: 410-822-1000, ext. 5828
- Easton: 410-822-1000, ext. 5828
- You may also call the **Maryland Office of Health Care Quality** at 1-877-402-8218 or **The Joint Commission** at 1-800-994-6610 if you feel we have not adequately responded to your concern.

### **AS A PATIENT, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:**

Providing the medical center with complete and accurate information when required, including the following:

- Your full name, address, home telephone number
- Date of birth
- Social Security number
- Insurance carrier
- Employer
- Your health and medical history
  - present condition
  - past illnesses
  - previous hospitalizations
  - medicines
  - vitamins
  - herbal products
  - any other matters that pertain to your health, including perceived safety risks
- Providing the medical center or your doctor with a copy of your advance directive, if you have one.
- Asking questions when you do not understand information or instructions.
- Telling your doctor if you believe you can't follow through with your treatment plan.
- Outcomes that result from you not following the treatment and services plan.
- Reporting changes in your condition or symptoms, including pain, to a member of the health care team.
- Acting in a considerate and cooperative manner and respecting the rights and property of others.
- Following the rules and regulations of the health care facility.
- Keeping your scheduled outpatient appointments or cancelling them in advance if at all possible.



# Informed Consent and Advance Directives

## INFORMED CONSENT

To help you understand your medical treatment, your doctor will talk to you about:

- Your illness
- The plan for treating your illness
- The possible benefits and risks of the treatment
- Other ways to treat your illness
- What may happen if you decide against treatment

Your consent is needed before any treatment is initiated that may involve significant risk to you. Consent is not needed in certain emergencies in which treatment cannot wait.

## ADVANCE DIRECTIVES AND MOLST (MEDICAL ORDERS FOR LIFE-SUSTAINING TREATMENT)

Advance Directives are written instructions that allow you to make decisions about your future medical care, and/or to designate somebody to make those decisions for you if you are no longer able to do so. Advance Directives can include: appointment of a health care agent, your health care instructions, a living will, and Do-Not-Resuscitate (DNR) orders. You may give these instructions to your family, close friends, nurses or doctors. Writing down your instructions is the best way to make sure everyone knows what you want.

Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (MOLST) is a Maryland law. The MOLST form contains medical orders about cardiopulmonary resuscitation and other life-sustaining treatments specific to your condition. If you create a MOLST form, it puts into operation a broader, patient-developed Advance Directive. It helps to ensure that your wishes to receive or decline care are honored by all health care providers throughout the course of your care. To be valid, a MOLST form must be signed and dated by a health care provider with a Maryland license.

You may have an Advance Directive and a MOLST form or just one of these documents. The Medical Center will honor the most current document.

As required by Maryland law, most of our adult inpatients and some of our pediatric inpatients will need a MOLST completed before discharge. During admission, the nurse will ask the patient or the patient's authorized decision-maker (health care agent, guardian, parent, surrogate) if there is an existing Advance Directive or MOLST form. Also, the nurse will offer MOLST educational materials to the patient or to the patient's authorized decision-maker.

Your physician or nurse practitioner will create a MOLST based on a discussion with you or your authorized decision-maker. By law, you or your authorized decision maker can decline to discuss the MOLST.

If you wish to create a written Advance Directive, the social worker is available to answer any of your questions and to assist you in creating this document.

If you have an Advance Directive and/or MOLST form, please bring them with you. These documents will become a part of your medical record, which will help to ensure that we honor your wishes.

### **NOTICE OF INFORMATION ON PRIVACY PRACTICES**

UM Shore Regional Health has a legal responsibility to protect your health information. Your rights regarding this protected information are outlined in our Notice of Information Privacy Practices, a copy of which is given to you upon registration. UM Shore Regional Health may use and disclose this protected information to continue your treatment, to receive payment for services and for other purposes as described in the notice. If you have any questions, please refer to the Notice of Information Privacy Practices or contact a Patient Advocate.



## PATIENT CARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Patient Care Advisory Committee is made up of the chief medical officer, medical staff representatives, nursing staff representatives, a social worker, educators, legal consultant, ethicist, a member of the clergy, community members and the regional director of patient and family engagement/patient advocate. The committee is an impartial body that collectively shares their expertise. This committee is available to you, your family and those who care for you, to help sort out issues and questions relating to ethical dilemmas that may arise when there is an apparent conflict between medical technology and personal wishes. To access the committee, call the director of ethics at 410-822-1000, ext. 5259, or dial the medical center operator.



# Financial Arrangements

## YOUR HOSPITAL BILL

Health care billing can be a very confusing process for patients and their families, especially during times of illness. We are committed to providing our patients with accurate, patient-friendly billing statements, quality customer service, and financial assistance when needed. Should you have a billing issue or concern that you have been unable to resolve to your satisfaction, please contact the Patient Financial Services management staff at UM Shore Regional Health to assist you in resolving these matters.

You will receive more than one bill for your medical care. You will receive a bill from the medical center representing charges that reflect the facility's equipment, personnel and supplies. The physicians who rendered care will also send you a separate bill for their services. We realize several bills are inconvenient; however, we must comply with federal and state regulations requiring separate billing for the medical center and physicians. If you have questions about the billing policy, please call Patient Financial Services Billing Office to speak with a customer service representative at 410-822-1000 ext. 1020 or 1-800-876-3364.

If payment arrangements need to be made, please contact our business office. Partial payments on the balance due will not discontinue collection efforts for the full outstanding balance. A formal agreement must be made with the medical center to avoid collection efforts.

## INSURANCE BENEFITS

UM Shore Regional Health will attempt to contact patients when services are scheduled to verify demographic and insurance information in advance. This "pre-registration" process will reduce wait times for registration and will avoid potential billing problems. Thank you for assisting our staff when they contact you. We will make every attempt to verify your benefits before your scheduled visit; however, it is your responsibility to ensure that services performed will be covered by your insurance company and that all appropriate referrals and authorizations have been obtained by you or your physician. You should contact your insurance company prior to your visit to ensure your services will be covered and to determine your payment responsibility. If prior authorization is required, please ensure that your physician has done so.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

UM Shore Regional Health understands that patients may be faced with a difficult financial situation when they incur medical bills that are not covered by insurance. We encourage every patient and family to pursue all available programs that may be offered through the local Departments of Social Services. There are many programs that you and your family may be eligible for, including pharmacy coverage and children's programs, even if your income may be above state guidelines. UM Shore Regional Health can offer financial assistance to our patients who are denied state assistance. Please speak with a financial services representative to determine if you may be eligible for either full or discounted services under this program. You may also contact our financial assistance coordinator at 800-876-3364, ext. 8619, for further information. Our financial aid programs will only apply to bills from your hospitalization, and again, we encourage you to contact the Department of Social Services for assistance in paying all your medical bills. We may reschedule or delay non-emergency services until financial assistance or payment arrangements have been made. Please contact our office immediately to discuss the options that may be available to you.

## APPEAL PROCESS

Under Maryland law, every patient has the right to contest a decision by an HMO or health insurer that a proposed or delivered health care service was not medically necessary. This law allows the Health Education and Advocacy Unit (HEAU) of the Office of the Attorney General to assist you in filing an internal grievance with the HMO or health insurer and allows you to externally appeal the final decision to the Maryland Insurance Administration (MIA). You may appeal the initial decision directly to the MIA if you can demonstrate compelling reason not to file an internal grievance with the HMO or health insurer. A health care provider may also file an internal grievance or external appeal on your behalf. You may be asked to sign consent for the transfer of information or you may appeal directly to:

**Maryland Insurance Administration**  
**200 St. Paul Place**  
**Baltimore, Maryland 21202-2272**  
**Telephone: 1-800-492-6116; 800-735-2258 (TTY)**



## Discharge

### GOING HOME

When your doctor feels that you are ready to leave the medical center, he or she will authorize a medical center discharge. Please speak with your nurse about our discharge procedures. Be sure you and/or your caregiver have spoken with a discharge planner and that you understand what services you may need after leaving the medical center.





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## **CONTRIBUTIONS**

A donation to UM Shore Regional Health is a way to recognize special care during your stay. It allows you to honor a loved one, friend or caregiver. It also can be a birthday, anniversary or congratulatory present. Your gift supports important clinical expansion and programs.

### **UM Chester River Health Foundation**


100 Brown Street  
Chestertown, MD 21620  
410-810-5660

### **Dorchester General Hospital Foundation**

Attn: Ida Jane Baker  
P.O. Box 439  
Cambridge, MD 21613  
410-228-5511, ext. 8401

### **UM Memorial Hospital Foundation**

P.O. Box 1846  
Easton, MD 21601  
410-822-1000, ext. 5915





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