

*“Let’s Work Together!”*

*By Evelyn Pinto*

*We, as people and individuals, have the need to be treated with dignity and respect.*

*The places where it is needed more, it's lacking the most.*

*This is, especially true of my many experiences I've undergone, of being a patient in the hospital.*

*(I have serious, life threatening medical conditions that require the acute care of the hospital more than I, or anyone would like).*

*Doctors, nurses and many other medical personnel have stabilized my medical conditions, have improved my quality of life and have saved my life on occasions.*

*I love life and I am very grateful to the many people who have helped me and who still continue to help and support me.*

*Many times, as a patient in the hospital, the hospital staff do not give me the respect that I, as a person, should receive.*

*I am a competent, intelligent, capable adult and I really resent some of the all too common behaviors, practiced by staff.*

*I want to tell the people in the medical field:*

*1) I'm not just a body, disease and/or patient.*

*I am a person, value and worth just as much as the professionals who give me care or as anyone else!*

*2) I am not naïve and I am totally offended when, especially professional people, treat me like a child!*

*I am an adult in my right mind, who needs, wants and should be treated like the intelligent, competent, capable person I am.*

*Do not treat me like anything else, but this!*

*Common courtesy and the privacy rights of a patient is lacking, at times, by the best intentioned people.*

*Whether you be a doctor, nurse, technician or any other staff member, ask me "before" you examine me, touch me, and touch my clothing, my oxygen and my mobility device.*

*Need to know is essential to me*

*Tell me if there is any change in my medical condition(s) and when there is a change of people caring for me.*

*Please tell me of any test/procedure, before it happens.*

*From personal experiences, I know emergency do happen.*

*In an emergency I would want my doctors and medical team to do every necessary to save my life, in accordance to my wishes.*

*To make the right decision(s) for me, I need to know about my health conditions and treatments.*

*Do "not" make decisions for me.*

*The need for me to know the people caring for me, my medical issues, diagnosis, problems, medications, etc.... is not a request!*

*It's a right!*

*Privacy in my healthcare is essential to me.*

*People who do not need to know my medical record, medical information, history, problems, issues, diagnosis, should "not" have access to it.*

*If there is one thing that I could say to my doctors is:*

*Tell me about my medical conditions, symptoms, and the reasons I am experiencing these symptoms.*

*Share with me alternative treatments for my illness and the' usual progression.*

*Please, tell me all other criteria pertaining to the illness in my body.*

*Explain to me what treatment(s), if any, I could use in treating my medical conditions*

*Let me decide, with your guidance and input, how I am going to live with my medical conditions.*

*I am the one who decides what my quality of life should be!*

*The truth is a lot less scary than if I guess or google my health conditions, symptoms, diagnosis, etc....*

*In other words, talking with me about my health conditions, openly and honestly, in a manner I understand, is the best way to treat me.*

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*Evelyn Pinto*

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