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THE NHS CONSTITUTION

INTRODUCTION

This constitution establishes the principles and values of the NHS in England. And sets out rights to which patients, public and staff are entitled, and pledges which the NHS is committed to achieve, together with responsibilities, which the public, patients and staff owe to one another to ensure that the NHS operates fairly and effectively.

PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE THE NHS

- 1. The NHS provides a comprehensive service, available to all** irrespective of gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion, belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity or marital or civil partnership status.
- 2. Access to NHS Services is based on clinical need, not an individual's ability to pay.** NHS services are free of charge, except in limited circumstances sanctioned by Parliament.
- 3. The NHS aspires to the highest standards of excellence and professionalism** – in the provision of high quality care that is safe, effective and focused on patient experience.
- 4. The NHS aspires to put patients at the heart of everything it does.** It should support individuals to promote and manage their own health
- 5. The NHS works across organisational boundaries and in partnership with other organisations in the interest of patients, local communities and the wider population.**