

Dying Person's Bill of Rights

- I have the right to be treated as a living human until I die.
- I have the right to maintain a sense of hopefulness, however changing its focus may be.
- I have the right to be cared for by those who can maintain a sense of hopefulness, however changing this may be.
- I have the right to express my feelings and emotions about my approaching death in my own way.
- I have the right to participate in decisions concerning my care.
- I have the right to expect continuing medical and nursing attention even though “cure” goals must be changed to “comfort” goals.
- I have the right to not die alone.
- I have the right to be free of pain.
- I have the right to have my questions answered honestly.
- I have the right to retain my individuality and not be judged for my decisions, which may be contrary to the belief of others.
- I have the right to expect that the sanctity of the human body will be respected after death.
- I have the right to be cared for by caring, sensitive, knowledgeable people who will attempt to understand my needs and will be able to gain some satisfaction in helping me face my death.

**Created at a workshop, “The Terminally Ill Patient and the Helping Person,” in Lansing Michigan sponsored by the South Western Michigan Inservice Education Council and conducted by Amelia Barbus (1975), Associate Professor of Nursing, Wayne State University*