



# Patient Safety Rights Charter

[Source: WHO](#)

## Why in News?

Recently, the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) launched a first-ever **Patient Safety Rights Charter** at the **Global Ministerial Summit on Patient Safety**.

- It is the **first Charter to outline patients' rights** in the context of safety.
- It will help governments and hospitals in **formulating the legislation, policies** and guidelines needed to ensure patient safety.

## What are the Key Features of the Patient Safety Rights Charter?

- The charter outlines **the core rights of all patients in the context of the safety of health care** and seeks to assist governments and other stakeholders to ensure that the voices of patients are heard and their right to safe health care is protected.
- The Charter covers **10 patient safety rights** crucial to **mitigate risks** and prevent unintentional harm, which includes the
  - Timely, effective and appropriate care
  - Safe health care processes and practices
  - Qualified and competent health workers
  - Safe medical products and their safe and rational use
  - Safe and secure health care facilities
  - Dignity, respect, non-discrimination, privacy and confidentiality
  - Information, education and supported decision making
  - Access medical records
  - To be heard and fair resolution
  - Patient and family engagement.

## What is Patient Safety?

- **About:**
  - **Patient safety** encompasses efforts to prevent unintended harm during healthcare provision, a critical aspect of global healthcare.
- **Factors Contributing to Patient Harm:**
  - **Identified Sources of Harm:** Medication errors, surgical errors, healthcare-associated infections, sepsis, diagnostic errors, and patient falls as frequent causes of patient harm.
  - **Varied Factors:** Patient harm arises from **system and organisational failures**, technological limitations, human factors, and patient-related circumstances, illustrating the multi-dimensional nature of patient safety incidents.

## What is the Need of Patient Safety Charter?

- **Ensuring Safety of Patients:**
  - **Approximately 1 in 10 patients** encounter harm during healthcare procedures, resulting in over 3 million annual deaths attributed to unsafe care, as reported by the [Organisation](#)

### for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

- According to the OECD, **investing in patient safety positively impacts** health outcomes, reduces costs related to patient harm, improves system efficiency, and helps in reassuring communities and restoring their trust in health care systems.
- **Preventing Avoidable Harm:**
  - The **majority of patient harm is avoidable**, underscoring the vital role of engaging patients, families, and caregivers in minimising harm.
  - Patient harm often results from **poorly designed healthcare systems**, not isolated incidents.
- **Implementation of the Global Patient Safety Action Plan 2021-2030:**
  - A **2023 survey of WHO Member States** revealed gaps in implementing the **Global Patient Safety Action Plan 2021-2030**, emphasising the need for patient representation and addressing income-based disparities in implementation.
  - Interim results of the survey showed **only 13% of responding countries have a patient representative** on the governing board or an equivalent mechanism in the majority of their hospitals.
- **Targeting SDG:**
  - Patient safety is a **critical global priority** and essential for achieving the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)-3**: "Good Health and well-being".

## UN SPECIALISED AGENCIES

UNSAAs are 15 autonomous international organizations working with the UN

Part III  
ILO, WHO  
and ITU

ILO

The only tripartite (govt., trade unions, employers) and the 1<sup>st</sup> affiliated UNSA

- Estd. - 1919 (Treaty of Versailles)
- Headquarters - Geneva, Switzerland
- Functions -
  - » Set labour standards
  - » Develop policies & programmes for promoting decent work for all
- Member States - 187 (India a founding member + permanent member of ILO Governing Body)
- International Labour Conference -
  - » Meets annually in Geneva
  - » aka International Parliament of Labour
- ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work 1998 (Principles) -
  - » Freedom of Association and The Right to collective bargaining
  - » Elimination of forced or compulsory labour
  - » Abolition of child labour
  - » Elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

WHO

WHO became functional on April 7, 1948 (now celebrated as World Health Day)

WHO's regional office for SE Asia is located in New Delhi

- Estd. - 1948
- Headquarters - Geneva, Switzerland
- Functions -
  - » Provides leadership on global health matters
  - » Shaping health research agenda
  - » Monitoring, assessing health trends
- Member States - 194 (incl. India)
- World Health Assembly - WHO's decision-making body, held yearly at Geneva
- Major Initiatives -
  - » UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030)
  - » UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025)
  - » GLASS Initiative (AMR)
  - » WHO 1+1 Initiative (2019) (TB)

ITU

- Estd. - 1865
- Headquarters - Geneva, Switzerland
- Functions -
  - » Facilitate intl. connectivity in communication networks
  - » Allocate global radio spectrum and satellite orbits
- Member States - 193 (India a regular member since 1952)
- Important Publication -
  - » Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI)

## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

### **Mains:**

**Q.** Critically examine the role of WHO in providing global health security during the Covid-19 pandemic.  
**(2020)**

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/patient-safety-rights-charter-1>

