

# MY HEALTH, MY RIGHTS CHARTER REPORT





# THE MY HEALTH, MY RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

**W**e believe that every child has the right to the best possible health. To support this belief, we have launched a national My Health, My Rights Campaign. The aim of this national campaign is to voice the health concerns and priorities raised by the children and young people we support, whilst growing awareness of healthcare rights and the benefits of health-related play.

## How can you get involved?

We have developed a Healthcare Rights Quiz for those who would like to lend their support to the campaign and show they are #HealthcareRightsAware. To take the quiz, show your support and get an online sticker [CLICK HERE](#).

The campaign will build towards an end date of 2 October 2026 – the 50th Anniversary of Children's Health Scotland. If you would like to partner with us on any elements of the campaign then please give us a call on **0131 553 6553** or email us at [enquiries@childrenshealthscotland.org](mailto:enquiries@childrenshealthscotland.org)



“ I want disabled children like me to have their voices be heard, in a way that we would speak and what we think. ”  
- Alyssa, 16



# OUR MY HEALTH, MY RIGHTS CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHARTER



## Introduction

**T**his My Health, My Rights Charter has been created by children and young people living with health conditions in Scotland, their ages ranged from 5-18. Inspired by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the European Association for Children In Hospital (EACH) Charter they wanted to showcase their 10 most important health rights, in no particular order. They decided for them not to be numbered, as they are all equally important in their own right.

These children and young people are founders of our Health Rights Defenders and wanted to make sure that all children were represented, with their voices respected and listened to. They invited children from Burgh Primary School, Cranhill Primary School, Langbank Primary School,

Wishaw Academy, Royal Hospital for Children & Young People - NHS Lothian and The Royal Hospital For Children, Glasgow (RHC) to share their views and help them to defend the right of every child to the best possible health. The drawings and words on the Charter are from children and young people and by children and young people and it is a shining example on how Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) is at the heart of our charity.

At Children's Health Scotland, we listen to what children and young people tell us about their health and wellbeing and support their right to the best possible health. We think this Charter is amazing and send a big thank you to every individual who has helped us to create it.

Our Health Rights Defenders now want to invite you to know, understand and defend their rights. Join our Health Rights Defenders today and understand all about My Health, My Rights.



# MY HEALTH, MY RIGHTS

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHARTER

Here are the 10 health rights from the My Health, My Rights Charter created by children and young people in Scotland:



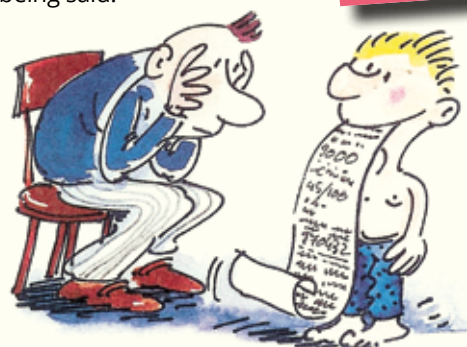
### A RIGHT TO INFORMATION IN A WAY WE UNDERSTAND



You have a right to ask questions if information is given to you and you don't understand. This allows you to make decisions on your health and care that is right for you. It is also okay if you don't understand. It can be lots of information to take in. A secret is most adults also struggle to understand things to do with their health. Health professionals should talk to you (not at you). This is your health so you should understand what is being said.

**YOUNG  
PEOPLE  
SHOULD  
HAVE  
SOMEONE  
WITH  
THEM FOR  
SUPPORT.**

Based on EACH Charter  
Point 2

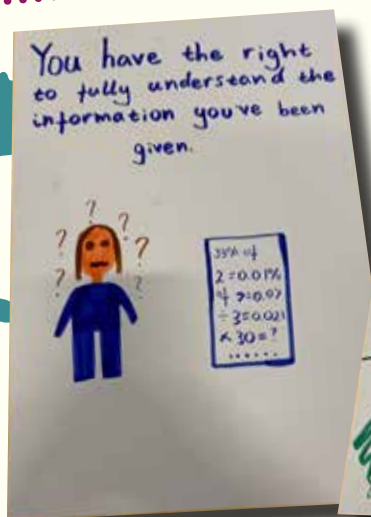


**YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE THE RIGHT  
TO INFORMATION IN A WAY THEY  
CAN UNDERSTAND.**

Based on EACH Charter point 4

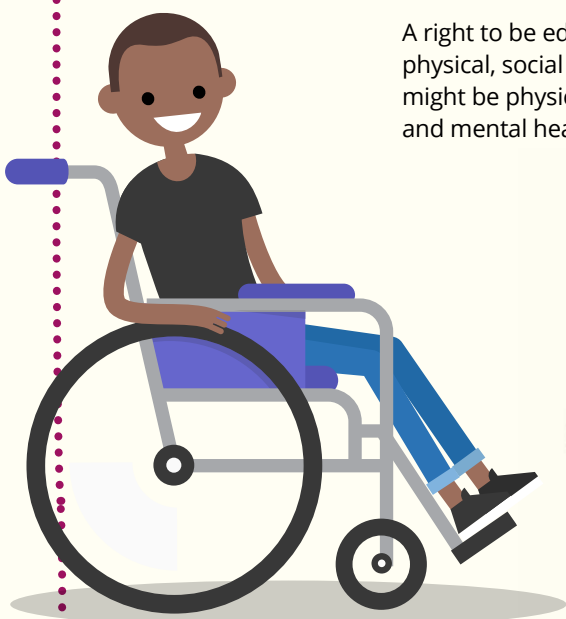






# A RIGHT TO BE EDUCATED ON OUR HEALTH

A right to be educated on all parts of our health, including physical, social and mental health. Some people think health just might be physical things but actually we have our social health and mental health too.



**YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE SOMEONE WITH THEM FOR SUPPORT.**

Based on EACH Charter point 2



**THE PERSON SUPPORTING A YOUNG PERSON SHOULD BE ABLE TO STAY OVERNIGHT WITHOUT COST.**

Based on EACH Charter point 3



**Continues overleaf...**



Continued...

# A RIGHT TO ACCESS BENEFICIAL FOOD AND WATER

A right to have access to food that gives us energy, fuels our body and benefits us and our health. Some children and young people also need different things to help. We also have a right to have access to clean and fresh drinking water. None of us should be going hungry.



“ My Health, My Rights is really important because it lets kids know they have rights. It lets them know that they can have information given to them in a way they understand and I think it's going to be really exciting being a part of a campaign like that. Young people like me often get forgotten about, we don't get to have our voices be centre stage. But with My Health, My Rights we do. ”

- Jess, 15

# A RIGHT TO FUN

A right to be able to have fun and play. We should be able to take part in activities we find interesting and that is fun to us (because everyone has different interests).

**YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR EDUCATION AND RECREATION AND BE CARED FOR IN SURROUNDINGS DESIGNED TO MEET THEIR NEEDS.**

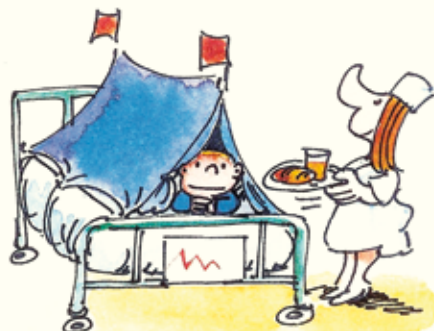
Based on EACH Charter point 7





# A RIGHT TO RESPECT, PRIVACY, AND DIGNITY

Everyone should be treated with respect, with privacy and be given dignity. Children and young people deserve to have respect, privacy and dignity in all settings, especially in healthcare settings. No one should be saying personal information to a room full of people or making you feel embarrassed. People should also explain things so that you feel respected and can understand what is happening.



**YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD BE TREATED WITH THE RESPECT, UNDERSTANDING AND PRIVACY THEY NEED AT ALL TIMES.**

Based on EACH Charter point 10



# A RIGHT TO KNOW A TRUSTED ADULT CAN STAY WITH US

A right to have a trusted adult stay with us in all healthcare settings whether that is appointments, overnight stays or just speaking to someone. This adult is someone we trust and we have a right to ask for an adult. This shouldn't come at any cost to us (or our adult) and we know that having a trusted adult with us can help us feel safe, comforted and help us understand information.

**THE PERSON SUPPORTING A YOUNG PERSON SHOULD BE ABLE TO STAY OVERNIGHT WITHOUT COST.**

Based on EACH Charter point 3



**YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD BE PROVIDED WITH CONTINUITY OF CARE FOR AS LONG AS REQUIRED EVEN AFTER THEIR STAY IN HOSPITAL.**

Based on EACH Charter point 9

**Continues overleaf...**



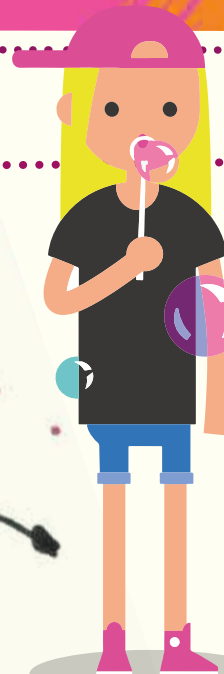
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## A RIGHT TO BE ME

A right to be exactly who we are and have a right to have our accessibility needs met so we can truly be us! Everyone is different and no one should feel that they can't be themselves.

**YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD BE CARED FOR WITH OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE WITH THE SAME NEEDS AND NOT ON AN ADULT WARD.**

Based on EACH Charter point 6



**“It’s been really good to hear from the children and young people you work with. It was a master class in how to explain rights to young people. I was in awe of how they responded and all the ideas they had. We will be taking My Health, My Rights to the Strategic plan.”**

- Elaine Kerridge, The Children & Young People’s Commissioners Scotland Office.

## A RIGHT TO HAVE MY BELIEFS RESPECTED, PROTECTED AND UNDERSTOOD

A right to believe and have those beliefs respected, protected and understood by adults who support us. People all over the world have their own unique beliefs and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) says we have a right to have these respected.





# A RIGHT TO SAFE SPACES

A right for spaces to be safe for children and young people and any needs we may have. We have a right to be in public and a right to feel safe. We should be given access to safe spaces suitable for us and our accessibility needs.



**YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD ONLY GO TO HOSPITAL WHEN THEY CANNOT BE CARED FOR AT HOME.**

Based on EACH Charter point 1



**YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD BE CARED FOR BY STAFF TRAINED TO UNDERSTAND AND MEET THEIR PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS.**

Based on EACH Charter point 8

# A RIGHT TO BE HEARD AND RESPECTED

A right to use our voice and be heard and respected. We can ask questions, state our beliefs and should always be included when discussing what happens to us. We have a right to be part of the decisions made around our health.

**YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD BE LISTENED TO AND TAKE PART IN ALL DECISIONS AFFECTING THEIR HEALTH CARE.**

Based on EACH Charter point 5





# THE MAKING OF MY HEALTH, MY RIGHTS CHARTER



**C**hildren and young people from Self-Management Skills (SMS) Programmes had been telling us that they felt they needed a Charter that represented them and their health in the wider community. They stressed the importance of the EACH Charter and UNCRC and how excited they were for it to be incorporated into Scots Law, but felt the voices of children and young people with health conditions were missing. They wanted something truly made by children and young people, for children and young people. Children and young people from our SMS Programmes are aged 9-18.

So, we got to work! We listened to what children and young people told us and started our Health Rights Defender's Circle (like a focus group), with planned activities and play around exploring our health rights and what was important to children and young people with health conditions in Scotland today – especially after the Covid 19 pandemic. Play is a fundamental right for children and young people, and we always take a health rights-related play approach at Children's Health Scotland. We put this at the heart of the development of this Charter. This ensured we captured exactly what our children and young people wanted, making sure it was their voices that shone brightly through. This wasn't a resource made by adults, this was a resource made by children. They also understood that it was a resource that had to be used by all children, so a vast variety of ages took part.

The making of the Charter took over a year, after the initial stages with our children (now known as our Health Rights Defenders) they told us they didn't just want it to be their voices, but to represent all children and young people in Scotland. Our Health Rights Defenders recognise that all children have the right to the best possible health. They understand what it is like to not have your voices heard and to not be included and wanted to make sure all children felt heard, valued, respected and most importantly included.

The next stage was using this same approach with schools and hospitals. With the help from professionals and the health play specialists from RHC, we worked in partnership to take on a child centred approach to gathering the thoughts and voices of children and young people from across Scotland. These children were from different backgrounds, different areas of Scotland and all had different life experiences which made their voices unique, special, valued and important.

Using their drawings and words we then had our outstanding My Health, My Rights Charter. This resource has been made easy to read, colourful and with the access needs of all children and young people in mind. Pre-school aged children to teenagers took part in its creation and drawings come from as young as 5 to the age of 18. Children with additional support needs also contributed making sure that it represented children and young people of all ages and stages – a resource you can now use to defend the right of every child to the best possible health. To read the EACH Charter visit [www.each-for-sick-children.org/each-charter/](http://www.each-for-sick-children.org/each-charter/)



**“ Children and young people know what we need and I think these 10 rights show that we want everyone to feel included and safe! ”**

**- Katie, 11**



# KEY POINTS OF THE CHARTER



1.

**Equal Importance of Rights:** The Charter lists ten health rights, all considered equally important by the children and young people who created it. These rights are not numbered to emphasise their equal significance.

2.

**Children's Participation:** The Charter was developed with children and young people for children and young people, ensuring that their voices and experiences are at the forefront. Children aged 5-18 took part in developing and designing this resource making sure it could be used by nursery, primary and secondary aged children. We also made sure to include children from different backgrounds, different beliefs and with children with health conditions leading the charge making sure that all children were represented.

3.

**Support and Advocacy:** Children's Health Scotland supports the Charter by promoting awareness and understanding of these rights through various campaigns and educational initiatives.

## RIGHTS HIGHLIGHTED IN THE CHARTER

**Right to the Best Possible Health:** Every child has the right to the best possible health and this lies at the heart of Children's Health Scotland and our ongoing work.

**Respect for Children's Views:** Children have the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them.

**Protection from Harm:** Children have the right to be protected from all forms of harm and abuse.

**Access to Information:** Children should have access to information that is essential for their health and wellbeing. They should have this in a way that is accessible to them.



“ I think it's important that our voices are heard and adults don't tell us what we want. ”

- Marley, 14





# CONCLUSION

**O**ur My Health, My Rights Charter is a powerful tool for empowering children and young people in Scotland. By recognising and promoting their health rights, Children's Health Scotland is supporting the right of every child to the best possible health.

We are looking at the future and the next steps for our Charter. We will continue to support our Health Rights Defenders and amplify the voices for children and young people across Scotland.

Our children and young people hope the My Health, My Rights Charter means that they won't always have to explain and defend their health rights – but that people will know and understand their health rights.

If you would like more information on our My Health, My Rights Campaign, Charter or Health Rights Defenders then please contact us on [CYPHRS@childrenshealthscotland.org](mailto:CYPHRS@childrenshealthscotland.org)



[www.childrenshealthscotland.org](http://www.childrenshealthscotland.org)

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**Registered office:** Children's Health Scotland  
Cameron House, Forthside Way, Stirling FK8 1QZ  
[enquiries@childrenshealthscotland.org](mailto:enquiries@childrenshealthscotland.org)  
[www.childrenshealthscotland.org](http://www.childrenshealthscotland.org)

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