



# High Desert Health System POLICY AND PROCEDURE

POLICY NUMBER: 779  
VERSION: 1

## **SUBJECT: 2017 INFORMED CONSENT**

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**PURPOSE:** Family planning decision can only be voluntary if people freely consent to receive these services. The United States legal system requires that patients provide informed consent for any service or treatment before it is administered.

**POLICY:** Informed consent encompasses the following elements:

*Informed:* implies that the patient, having received, read, understood and accepted the information, has a comprehensive understanding of the potential benefits and risks of proposed procedures or methods including the risk of failure as well as all his or her alternatives.

*Consent:* implies the patient is legally and mentally capable of giving consent and is not under any subtle or overt coercion or duress to make a particular decision.

### **POLICY GUIDELINES:**

Family Planning staff is obligated to give correct information in an unbiased way. The information must be based on facts and not on personal opinion. Unbiased information assists patients to better understand their options and choices. Patients can then make their own decision about family planning without unnecessary pressure from others. Furthermore, a patient who is informed and knowledgeable about her/his treatment or birth control method is more likely to be consistent with his/her follow-up care and, therefore, to be a more successful and effective user of a chosen birth control method. This may empower a patient who is informed and knowledgeable about reproductive health care to continue his/her level of wellness in all aspects of health care.

Patients also have the right to withhold their consent and they may change their decision at any time without affecting the health care services they receive. Verbal information or written material must be given to assist the patient's decision-making process. Each patient interaction regarding the informed consent procedure and discussion will be documented in the patient's chart.

**REFERENCES:**

Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Population Affairs (OPA)

Program Requirements Title X

California Family Health Council (CFHC)

California State Office of Family Planning (OFP)

California Department of Public Health Office of Family Planning (FPACT)

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