

# Your Patient Rights

## Section 6 Quick Reference Card

### National Health Act 61 of 2003

Before your doctor prescribes psychiatric medication or recommends any mental health treatment, they are **LEGALLY REQUIRED** to inform you about **ALL** available options—including non-pharmaceutical alternatives like Dianetics.

### Section 6: User to have full knowledge

(1) Every health care provider must inform a user of—

- (a) the user's health status except in circumstances where there is substantial evidence that the disclosure would be contrary to the best interests of the user;
- (b) the range of diagnostic procedures and **treatment options generally available** to the user;
- (c) the **benefits, risks, costs and consequences** generally associated with each option; and
- (d) the user's **right to refuse health services** and explain the implications, risks, obligations of such refusal.

(2) The health care provider concerned must inform the user in **a language that the user understands** and in a manner which takes into account the user's level of literacy.

### Your Rights in Simple Terms

- ✓ **< b > You have the right to know ALL your options.** Your doctor must tell you about medication, therapy, Dianetics, and other treatment options.
- ✓ **< b > You must be told about risks and costs.** Your doctor must explain side effects, dependency risks, and long-term consequences of each option.
- ✓ **< b > You can refuse treatment.** You have the legal right to say no to medication or any treatment. Your doctor cannot force you to take any treatment.
- ✓ **< b > Information must be clear.** Your doctor cannot use complex medical jargon. They must explain everything in simple terms.

### What to Say to Your Doctor

**"Before I consent to any treatment, I need to exercise my rights under Section 6 of the National Health Act. Please inform me about:**

1. ALL available treatment options for my condition, including non-pharmaceutical alternatives
2. The benefits, risks, costs, and long-term consequences of each option

3. My right to refuse any treatment you recommend

**I want to make an informed decision, so please provide this information in writing if possible."**

## **Failure to Comply is a Breach of Law**

If your doctor prescribes psychiatric medication without presenting you with a full range of treatment options, **they are in violation of Section 6 of the National Health Act**. You have the right to demand this information before consenting to any treatment.

## **Learn More**

### **Official Sources:**

- National Health Act 61 of 2003: [www.gov.za](http://www.gov.za)
- Section 6 Full Text: [lawlibrary.org.za](http://lawlibrary.org.za)

### **Mental Health Resources:**

- HelpAnxiety.co.za - Independent mental health research
- Learn about treatment options: [helpanxiety.co.za/treatment-guide](http://helpanxiety.co.za/treatment-guide)
- Dianetics information: [dianetics.org](http://dianetics.org)