

Legal Framework in Healthcare

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1. Introduction

- The legal framework in healthcare comprises the laws and regulations that govern medical practice.
- It safeguards patients while defining the obligations of practitioners.

2. Sources of Law

- **Statute law:** acts of parliament regulating health professions and services.
- **Case law:** legal principles established through court judgements.
- Professional and institutional regulations add further detail.

3. Key Legal Duties

- **Duty of care:** providers must meet a reasonable standard of competent care.
- Breach of this duty causing harm can amount to negligence.

4. Consent and Records

- Lawful consent is required before treatment, except in defined emergencies.
- Accurate medical records are a legal as well as clinical requirement.

5. Accountability

- Regulatory bodies license practitioners and discipline misconduct.
- Patients may seek redress through complaints or the courts.

6. Summary

- The healthcare legal framework draws on statute, case law, and regulation to define duties, protect patients, and ensure practitioner accountability.