

Nurse Practitioner FAQ's

There is a client relationship that is becoming increasingly difficult and I want to terminate the NP-client relationship.
Am I able to do this and what must I consider?

Unless alternate care can be immediately arranged, such a decision should only be made in unusual circumstances and for the best of reasons.

Clients have the right to information, to ask questions, to insist on informed consent, and to make reasonable requests for second opinions. They also have the right to accept or reject any intervention or treatment offered by the NP. Only when a client does something to adversely affect the NP-patient relationship in a fundamental way, may the NP consider the option of asking the patient to find care elsewhere. Some examples may include: the client repeatedly rejects interventions, repeatedly misses appointments, or threatens the NP.

In those circumstances, the NP is obligated to communicate the nature of the problem directly to the patient, making it clear that there is a potential for the patient to be discharged from the practice. It is only if the situation does not resolve after such notice that the NP can formally advise the patient that the relationship is being concluded.

When such a final decision has been made, it should be communicated directly to the patient, preferably by registered mail. The patient should be advised that ongoing care will be provided for a reasonable period of time to allow them to make alternate arrangements. In some circumstances, a period of two to three months is considered appropriate. The patient should also be advised that relevant records will be forwarded to a new primary care provider upon request.

It is in the best interest of the NP to discuss termination of a provider-client relationship with the employer to see if there are employer policies in place to support the NP.