

BACKGROUND

As the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) situation continues to evolve, and in alignment with recommendations from the Ministry of Health, LHSC is taking additional precautions to keep patients, families, and staff safe including temporary changes to our Visitor Policy. LHSC remains committed to patient and family-centered care and will make every effort to ensure that the needs of patients and families are met while these temporary measures are in place.

PURPOSE

- The purpose of this policy is strictly to minimize risk of infection for patients, families, and staff.
- Support family presence to ensure the emotional wellbeing of patients, by allowing [alternative options to in-person visitation](#).
- Ensure preservation of personal protective equipment

POLICY

- LHSC is only allowing limited visitation to **essential visitors**.
Essential visitors include the following:
 - One visit by one visitor to a patient who is actively dying
 - One support person for a woman in labour
 - Parent/guardian of an ill child or youth
- Exceptions to this policy may be considered for circumstances not prescribed. See below.
- Essential visitors require an identification badge while in hospital, which is provided during screening upon confirmation of eligibility.
- Essential visitors will be restricted if they:
 - Are less than 18 years of age
 - Are symptomatic
 - Have been outside of Canada in the last 14 days
 - Have tested positive for COVID-19
 - Have had close contact with a confirmed case or probable case of COVID-19
 - Have had close contact with a person with an acute respiratory illness who has been **Outside of Canada** in the 14 days before their symptom onset

A Patient Who is Actively Dying (or has planned withdrawal of life-support)

- Only one visitor will be identified by patient (or substitute decision maker)
- Must be age 18 or older
- No visitation for patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19, due to the extremely high risk to patients, staff, and visitors. Virtual visits for these patients will be supported using technology such as iPads

Woman in Labour

- One visitor will be chosen by patient
- Must be age 18 or older.

Visitation Policy During COVID-19
Effective 11 April 2020

- Following the birth, the visitor becomes essential for the newborn and must remain the bedside until discharge (the mother is not allowed a separate visitor post-delivery). If the essential visitor leaves the hospital after the birth, they cannot return and no additional visitors would be permitted.
- If Woman in Labour is confirmed or suspected COVID-19
 - Visitor remains with patient in the same physical environment throughout the care delivery,
 - The clinical team is able to provide visitor with a safe environment and teaching necessary for infection control.
 - The visitor is masked and reports to Public Health as they may be required to self-isolate, depending on test results

Children's Hospital

- Up to 2 caregivers can be identified upon admission and recorded at the unit level.
- Only one caregiver can be at the bedside at any given time. A switch between the two named caregivers will be permitted once every 24-hour interval.
- Exceptions to this would be for palliative patients, critically ill patients and by a case by case review related to extenuating circumstances.

PERSONAL ITEM DROP OFF - Addendum 1

- Food or other personal items may not be dropped off for delivery to a patient's room.
- Glasses, hearing aids, dentures, one personal cell phone/tablet, or clothing required for patients who are being imminently discharged may be dropped off at a hospital entrance and it will be taken to a patient's room.

All personal items must be bagged and room tagged prior to delivery. (please refer to infection control processes related to the reception of personal items.)

POLICY EXCEPTIONS - Addendum 2

Exceptions in Emergency/Out-Patient Visits

- The exceptions process for emergency or out-patient visits involves a risk assessment conducted by the clinic/service to determine the risks posed to the patient, other patients and the visitor.
- Patients with profound disabilities that are determined by clinical teams to require personal support of a family member/caregiver will be allowed a visitor who will remain with patient for the entire visit or in space designated by the clinical team if a procedure requires it.

Requests for Exception for In-Patients

- Exceptions are only considered in rare and truly exceptional circumstances.

Visitation Policy During COVID-19
Effective 11 April 2020

- If a family member wishes to seek an exception to the visitation policy, they should contact Patient Relations at 519-685-8500 ext. 52036
- Patient relations will communicate with the clinical team first, but if needed will initiate a review process including Ethics.
- The family member will be contacted once the review process is complete with an answer