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Owner: *Brian Patrick: Vice President of Nursing*
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Visiting Policy/Procedure During COVID-19 Emergency, 644

PURPOSE:

To establish guidelines for visitation during the COVID-19 Emergency.

POLICY:

Good Shepherd Health Care System recognizes that visitation by family and friends can be an important therapeutic tool in the healing process. In order to promote this philosophy while also taking pandemic response measures into consideration, the following guidelines have been established.

Good Shepherd Medical Group

All clinics within Good Shepherd Medical Group allow one escort for adult patients (18+) and two escorts for minors (under 18).

Patients may also qualify for additional support persons pursuant to policy "Disabled Patients Right to Designate Support Persons".

Good Shepherd Medical Center

Inpatients

We ask you to consider using phone calls or video chat (FaceTime, Zoom, etc.) as a way for you to visit your loved ones while they are in the hospital. We can help them access video technology, if needed.

- Two support persons may be allowed for:
 - a. Children admitted to the hospital
 - i. Parent/guardians of children admitted may stay with the minor child 24/7
 - ii. No infant/child under five years of age shall be left unattended in the patient's room
- One support person may be allowed for:
 - a. Patients receiving end-of-life or palliative care on a case-by-case basis.
 - b. Other special circumstances, as needed
 - i. Special circumstances may be determined by the Nurse Manager, Nursing Supervisor, or Vice President of Nursing

- ii. Special circumstances shall be communicated to Patient Financial Services for access privileges and documented in the patients chart
- c. Maternity patients
 - i. may have one support person with them through labor, delivery and the initial postpartum recovery time.
 - ii. Additional precautions may apply for the care of newborns. In special cases involving surrogacy deliveries, the visitor limit may be expanded to three to allow for intended parents and patient's support person.
- Patients may also qualify for additional support persons pursuant to policy "Disabled Patients Right to Designate Support Persons".

Emergency Department

Any support person who arrives with a person needing **emergency care** either must remain in the same room with the patient, or should return to their car. All visitors may be restricted at the discretion of the Emergency Department staff. Special circumstances may alter this guideline.

Outpatient Services

Outpatient ancillary and rehabilitation services allow one escort/support person for adult patients (18+) and two for minors (under 18).

- Including but not limited to: Ambulatory Surgical Services, Diagnostic Imaging, Laboratory, Speech Therapy, Cardiopulmonary Rehab, Treatment Center, Diabetes & Nutrition Center, etc.
- Some services may have further restrictions depending upon procedure being performed.
- Escorts or Visitors will typically be requested to wait in the designated waiting areas or may depart the facility.

Patients may also qualify for additional support persons pursuant to policy "Disabled Patients Right to Designate Support Persons".

Facility Entrance Screening Process for Visitor(s) and/or Support Person(s)

All visitors/support persons/escorts must be 16 years of age or older and healthy. They must answer "no" to all screening questions, and must be without any cold/flu symptoms or fever and must follow safety guidelines to limit the spread of COVID-19, including washing their hands, limiting the surfaces you touch and using any personal protective equipment required by the hospital. They must remain in the patient's room except during certain care procedures.

Any unruly visitor/support person/escort will be asked to leave by the nurse on duty. If they refuse to leave, the nursing supervisor will be notified. The night security/police may be called, if necessary.

Screening Questions:

- Are you currently experiencing any of the following symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, headache, sore throat, muscle pain, diarrhea or vomiting, new loss of taste or smell)?
- Have you been tested or diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last 14 days?
- Are you here today to be tested for COVID-19?
- Have you had direct contact with someone who has known or suspected COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
- Have you traveled within the last 14 days to areas with widespread or ongoing COVID-19 community spread?

If a visitor/support person/escort answers "yes" to any question or has a temperature above 100.0 F, they may be denied entry to the facility. If any escort, visitor, or support person(s) are non-compliant with the screening process or refuse to wear a mask/face covering, they will not be permitted to enter the facility.

Definitions

Escort: An individual accompanying a patient to a scheduled clinic appointment or an outpatient ancillary service.

Support Person: A family member, guardian, personal care assistant or other paid or unpaid attendant selected by the patient to physically or emotionally assist the patient or ensure effective communication with the patient.

Visitor: A guest entering the facility to visit a patient; this person may or may not be actively involved in the patient's care as a support person.

Reference:

CMS Guidance for Infection Control and Prevention of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) in Hospitals, Psychiatric Hospitals, and Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs): FAQs, Considerations for Patient Triage, Placement, Limits to Visitation and Availability of 1135 Waivers

[Disabled Patients Right to Designate Support Persons](#)

Attachments

No Attachments

Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
Executive Team Approval	Jenny Sullivan: Service Excellence Coordinator	8/12/2021
	Brian Patrick: Vice President of Nursing	8/12/2021