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Owner: Claudia Cleary: Infection Control Preventionist
Area: Infection Prevention
Keywords: Clinical

Visitation Levels During a Public Health Emergency

Policy:

To protect the health and safety our patients and staff, Monadnock Community Hospital has developed three visitation risk levels — green, yellow and red to guide caregiver and approved visitor procedures. Monadnock Community Hospital evaluates risk factors to update our visitation level. Guidance as to what is a Public Health Emergency will be from DHHS and/or DPHS communication.

- All approved caregivers/family or approved visitor/guests will be 18 years of age or older
- All approved caregivers/family or approved visitor/guests will be screened for COVID-19 symptoms, COVID diagnosis within 10 days, and contact with anyone suspected or confirmed to have had COVID-19 in the past 10 days.
- All approved caregivers/family or approved visitor/guests will wear an approved mask at ALL times within Monadnock Community Hospital Facilities. If the caregiver, family, visitor/guest does not have an approved mask, Monadnock Community Hospital will provide one
- All approved caregivers/family or approved visitor/guests will maintain a 6-foot distance from other people whenever possible.
- Anyone accompanying patients who is not permitted into the building will be directed to parking areas on the campus where they should remain until called to assist the patient.
- Anyone with symptoms or unable to comply with the safety requirements will not be allowed to visit.
- The process of determining level of visitation is performed by the Infection Preventionist

Purpose:

1. To establish and clarify visitation restrictions during an infectious disease public health emergency; and
2. To establish the process for determining and communicating level of visitor restriction during a public health emergency.

Scope

This policy applies to Monadnock Community Hospital physicians, associate providers, clinical staff members, and all personnel involved in the decision-making process with respect to patient visitation.

Definitions

Compassionate Care:

Compassionate care is care designed to make the patient more comfortable when they are actively in the dying process. This may also be known as Comfort Measures Only. Compassionate care visits are **special visits**, in which a family member **OR** other visitor provides comfort, support and/or assistance to a patient/resident who is dying.

Exceptions to Caregiver/ Family Presence, or Visitor:

Clinically necessary or reasonable further restrictions or limitations that may be imposed by Monadnock Community Hospital on a patient's visitation rights as necessary to provide safe care to the patient and/or other patients.

Exceptions to Caregiver/ Family Presence, or Visitor Patient *Restrictions*:

- Caregivers whose presence is required for physical, cognitive, or other support associated with the patient's health care (such as a driver for sedated outpatients), and/or necessary to navigate to the appointment (for example cognitively impaired or physically challenged patients).
- End of Life Care

Level of Visitation:



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| GREEN | More Open to Visitation |
| YELLOW | Some Limits to Visitation |
| RED | More Limited Visitation |

Patient:

Anyone admitted to a hospital bed or receiving care at an outpatient/ambulatory visit.

Percent positivity:

The percentage of all coronavirus tests performed that are actually positive, or: $(\text{positive tests})/(\text{total tests}) \times 100\%$. The percent positive (sometimes called the "percent positive rate" or "positivity rate") helps quantify transmission in the community.

Caregiver/Family:

Is defined as a family member, friend, or other support person whose presence is required for physical, cognitive, or other support (such as a driver for sedated outpatients) associated with the patient's health care. An individual or group of individuals with a continued legal, genetic and/or emotional relationship as defined by the patient. When the patient lacks capacity to make his/her own healthcare decision, the patient's designated healthcare agent will be appointed or, in the absence of a designated healthcare agent, the surrogate decision maker will provide guidance in defining "family" for the purposes of visitor policies.

Visitor/Guest:

- A guest of the patient or family, who may or may not be a "blood relation", "legally related by marriage", or defined as family or caregiver as noted above.
- Clergy visitation is considered and counted as a visitor. I.e, if allowed 1 visitor per day and Clergy arrives, that is the only visitor allowed for the day.

Volunteers:

A volunteer is one who is coming into the facility to help out in an area where basic work might be needed such as mail delivery, working in the gift shop. During levels of substantial (red) positive Covid rates, a volunteer would only be allowed to participate in non-clinical areas.

Procedure

Levels of Visitation determination:

- Data will be reviewed every Monday by the Infection Preventionst to determine if there is a change indicated for level of visitation. A sustained change in data is required before a decision is made to change guidance (min. 2 weeks).
- Visitation Level Influencing Factors (Primary) (must be one or both):
 1. Percent positivity (MCH testing data unless advised by DPHS to utilize state data)
 2. 7 day average of COVID hospitalization
- Level of Visitation Triggers
 1. **GREEN: Standard Visitation**= Percent positivity at 0-2.5%, and/ or 7 day average at less than 2 inpatients
 2. **YELLOW: Mildly Restrictive Visitation** = Percent positivity at 2.5-10%, and/ or 7 day average at 2-12 inpatients
 3. **RED: Strict Visitation**= Percent positivity at >10%, and/or 7 day average at greater than 12 inpatients
- Visitor Level Influencing Factors (Secondary): Other factors, including those serving as triggers in the surge planning document, that may reflect increasing community transmission or other barriers preventing us from providing safe and effective care to our patients, may also be considered while changing visitation policy.

Communication: any change to visitation level will be communicated via

- E-mail to leadership
- Update to greeter/screener program
- Announcement at DASH

How Caregiver/Family/Visitor/Guest Determination is made:

- If the Hospitalist and/or staff feel that a patient/resident should have a visitor they would:
 - Bring the request to Interdisciplinary rounds for discussion;
 - If approved the visitor will be contacted and a date and time will be determined. The visitor will be

told where to enter the facility and must wear a KN95 at all times

- A staff member from the unit **MUST** meet the visitor downstairs and escort the patient for the first visit and educate on process for next approved visit-always being screened.
- The unit will notify in writing the screeners and Switchboard of the approved visitor, date and time
- At **NO** time is someone to be allowed to go into anywhere in the hospital without appropriate screening.

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Levels of Visitation

GREEN Standard Visitation

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The visitor restrictions and allowances at the Green Level of visitation

| Location of Visit | Visitor Allowances and Restrictions |
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| Confirmed or suspected COVID-19 | No visitors whatsoever except for caregiver/family of pediatric patients and patients in labor. Must be 18 years of age or older. |
| In-patient Units | Up to two same visitors (caregiver, family, or visitor/guest) per day may visit at the same time; may change during admission. If visitors rotate, the new visitor may arrive the day after the current visitor exits the hospital (does not apply to end of life). If the number of care partner rotations is a safety concern for the care team, they will discuss with the patient and rotations may require a visitor exception. |
| Emergency Department | Up to two same visitors (caregiver/ family, or visitor/guest) or may visit at the same time as space permits. Must be 18 years of age or older. |
| Surgical Services | One Caregiver/family can be with the patient until patient is taken into OR/Procedure room as needed for continuity of care, provided there is enough space for physical distancing. |
| Birthing Suite | Outpatient prenatal patients may bring one adult with them to their prenatal and ultrasound visits. Labor and delivery , up to two adult support persons, including a partner, may be present for labor, delivery and duration of birth parent's hospital stay, dependent on space for social distancing. If support persons rotate, the new visitor may arrive the day after the current visitor exits the hospital. If Mom is COVID-19 positive, may only have Birth Partner with them. Post-partum patients may bring one adult with them to their appointments. |
| Pediatrics | Emergency Department pediatric patients may have up to two adult primary caregivers/family (parents or legal guardians) with them, as space permits. Ambulatory (outpatient) pediatric patients are permitted one adult primary caregiver/family per visit. We will work with our patients' parents or guardians to accommodate special circumstances, but exceptions must be approved by the appointment provider prior to arrival for the visit. |
| All other Ambulatory | One person may accompany patients to out-patient/ambulatory appointments |
| Patients requiring aerosolizing procedures | No caregiver/family or visitor/guest may be in the patient's room during the procedure but they may enter once the procedure is done. Must be |

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| | 18 years of age or older. Exception in Birthing Suite OR ED with Nitrous Oxide usage with filter. |
| Compassionate Care | <p>Examples of compassionate exceptions may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of life • Clergy visits and spiritual care needs • When a patient is experiencing a challenging situation, such as a life-changing diagnosis, prolonged hospitalization, limited cognitive abilities, etc. <p>No limit, at the discretion of the clinical team.</p> |

YELLOW Mildly Restrictive Visitation

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The visitor restrictions and allowances at the Yellow Level of visitation

| Location of Visit | Visitor Allowances and Restrictions |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Confirmed or suspected COVID-19 | No visitors whatsoever except for caregiver/family of pediatric patients and patients in labor. Must be 18 years of age or older. |
| In-patient Units | One same visitor (caregiver/family, or visitor/guest) per day allowed (may rotate ie dtr one day, son next) End of Life care exception. Must be 18 years of age or older. No visitors for inpatient's coming from skilled, group homes, assisted Living and LTC facilities. |
| Emergency Department | One same visitor (caregiver/ family, or visitor/guest) for the entire duration of ED care, provided there is enough space for social distancing. End of Life care exception. Must be 18 years of age or older. The Charge Nurse in conjunction with the ED Clinician will make determinations based on risk and safety of staff, patients and visitors based on activity current in the ED |
| Surgical Services | One Caregiver/family can be with the patient until patient is taken into OR/Procedure room as needed for continuity of care, provided there is enough space for physical distancing. |
| Birthing Suite | <p>Outpatient prenatal patients may bring one adult with them to their prenatal and ultrasound visits.</p> <p>During labor and delivery, up to two adult support persons, including a partner, may be present. One support person may stay throughout the hospital stay dependent on space for social distancing and may leave once every 24 hours. If Mom is COVID-19 positive, may only have Birth Partner with them.</p> <p>Post-partum patients may bring one adult with them to their appointments.</p> |
| Pediatrics | Emergency Department pediatric patients may have up to two adult primary caregivers (parents or legal guardians) with them, as space |

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| | permits. Ambulatory (outpatient) pediatric patients are permitted one adult primary caregiver per visit. We will work with our patients' parents or guardians to accommodate special circumstances, but exceptions must be approved by the appointment provider prior to arrival for the visit. |
| All other Ambulatory | No visitors except for caregiver/family. Must be 18 years of age or older. |
| Patients requiring aerosolizing procedures | No caregiver or visitor under exception may be in the patient's room during the procedure but they may enter once the procedure is done. Must be 18 years of age or older. Exception in Birthing Suite OR ED with Nitrous Oxide usage with filter. |
| Compassionate care | Care teams will assess whether they can offer compassionate exceptions whenever appropriate. Examples of compassionate exceptions may include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of life • Clergy visits and spiritual care needs • When a patient is experiencing a challenging situation, such as a life-changing diagnosis, prolonged hospitalization, limited cognitive abilities, etc. <p>No more than two visitors allowed at one time, and as directed by the care team.</p> |

RED: Strict Visitation

*See attached for printer friendly version

The visitor restrictions and allowances at the Red Level of visitation

| Location of Visit | Visitor Allowances and Restrictions |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Confirmed or suspected COVID-19 | No visitors whatsoever except for caregiver/family of pediatric patients and patients in labor. Must be 18 years of age or older. |
| In-patient Units | No visitors except for caregiver/family for End of Life care exception. Must be 18 years of age or older. |
| Emergency Department | No visitors except for End of Life care exception. Must be 18 years of age or older. |
| Surgical Services | No visitors except for caregivers/family as planned with the surgical services team in advance |
| Birthing Suite | Outpatient Birthing Suite prenatal patients -1 healthy adult partner over 18 years old may accompany. During labor and delivery , up to two adult support persons, including a partner, may be present and must stay in the room entire length of stay. The 2 nd support person must show proof of being fully vaccinated. Must be the same person(s) throughout labor & delivery. After the delivery only 1 support person may remain. If Mom is COVID-19 positive, may only have Birth Partner with them and they need to remain throughout |

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| | <p>stay. Hardship requests may be granted.</p> <p>Post-partum Birthing Suite outpatient visits-No visitors</p> |
| Pediatrics | <p>Emergency department pediatric patients may have up to one adult primary caregivers (parents or legal guardians) with them, as space permits.</p> <p>Ambulatory (outpatient) pediatric patients are permitted one adult primary caregiver per visit. We will work with our patients' parents or guardians to accommodate special circumstances, but exceptions must be approved by the appointment provider prior to arrival for the visit.</p> |
| All other Ambulatory | No Visitors unless caregiver/family necessity as predetermined by the provider prior to arrival of visit |
| Patients requiring aerosolizing procedures | No caregiver or visitor under exception may be in the patient's room during the procedure but they may enter once the procedure is done. Must be 18 years of age or older.Exception in Birthing Suite OR ED with Nitrous Oxide usage with filter. |
| Compassionate care | <p>Care teams will assess whether they can offer compassionate exceptions whenever appropriate. Examples of compassionate exceptions may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of life • Clergy visits and spiritual care needs • When a patient is experiencing a challenging situation, such as a life-changing diagnosis, prolonged hospitalization, limited cognitive abilities, etc. • No more than two visitors allowed at one time, and as directed by the care team. |

Keywords

COVID, restrictions, visitor, end of life, comfort measures, caregiver

References

All revision dates:

01/2022, 10/2021, 03/2021

Attachments

- A. [GREEN Level of Visitation - Job Aid.docx](#)
- B. [YELLOW Level of Visitation - Job Aid.docx](#)
- C. [RED Level of Visitation - Job Aid.docx](#)

Approval Signatures

| Step Description | Approver | Date |
|----------------------------------|---|---------|
| CLC Approval | Vicki Loughery: Vice President, Patient Care | pending |
| Infection Preventionist Approval | Claudia Cleary: Infection Control Preventionist | 01/2022 |

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