

COVID-19: REGIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR VISITING IN CARE SETTINGS IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

(REVISED 26.02.21)

Anyone showing or experiencing the symptoms of COVID-19 or any other infection should not visit, even if these symptoms are mild and unconfirmed. In these circumstances the individual should remain at home and follow the latest public health advice on self-isolation and testing

All people visiting/attending Health and Social Care Settings will be required to wear face coverings for the foreseeable future. Children under the age of 13 are exempt from wearing a face covering

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



Department of
Health

An Roinn Sláinte

Mánnystrie O Poustie

www.health-ni.gov.uk

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This table outlines the restrictions which apply from 1st March 2021 in line with Regional Alert Level Position which reverted to Alert Level 4 from 25 February 2021 - this is subject to change and will be reviewed frequently.

This summary MUST be read alongside the full guidance applicable in each setting.

Local outbreaks in HSC Trust areas and Care Homes may occur which will require an additional specific local response.

Alert Level	Level 4 - A high or rising level of transmission - enforced social distancing
Area Of Care	Visiting and accompanying of visitors will be limited as follows
General Hospital (including ICU)	<p>Only one family member or carer to be permitted access to visit.</p> <p>Where the person visiting requires assistance and is accompanied by a carer and this can be accommodated within social distancing guidance then a second person may be admitted (prior arrangement with ward staff is essential).</p>
Hospice Facilities	<p>One family member or carer to be permitted access to visit where the environment is COVID secure.(* see definition) for up to one hour daily</p> <p>Where the person visiting requires assistance and is accompanied by a carer and this can be accommodated within social distancing guidance then a second person may be admitted (prior arrangement with ward staff is essential).</p>
Emergency Departments	<p>One person only to accompany the patient where the patient is unable to understand or communicate with staff.</p>
Out Patient Departments	<p>Where necessary for the patient to attend face to face appointment only one person to accompany where patient is unable to understand or communicate with staff.</p>
Paediatric/neonatal hospital settings	<p>Neonatal unit: One of two nominated parents/caregivers can be accommodated at any given time</p> <p>Paediatrics: Any child admitted can be accompanied by one of two nominated parents/caregivers at any given time for the duration of the stay</p>
X Ray Departments	<p>One person only to accompany the patient where the patient is unable to understand or communicate with staff.</p>

Cancer/Burns/Renal Units	<p>One visitor to be permitted to visit where the environment is COVID secure (* see definition) for up to one hour per week.</p> <p>Where the person visiting requires assistance and is accompanied by a carer and this can be accommodated within social distancing guidance then a second person may be admitted (prior arrangement with ward staff is essential).</p>
Day Procedure Units	<p>One person only to accompany the patient where the patient is unable to understand or communicate with staff.</p>
Care Homes	<p>Where the home is not in an outbreak, visiting for residents should be arranged using well-ventilated designated rooms/visiting pods, with additional visiting arranged as outdoor visits, window visits and virtually supported visits.</p> <p>Where visits can only take place in a resident's own room, this should be arranged where this can be accommodated within social distancing.</p> <p>End of life visiting can take place in a resident's own room as agreed with the care home manager.</p> <p>Please refer to Appendix 5 for full details, including guidance on deciding the frequency/duration of visits, visiting in an outbreak situation, and care partner arrangements.</p>
Maternity Units	<p>Birth partner will be facilitated to accompany the pregnant woman to dating scan, early pregnancy clinic, anomaly scan, Fetal Medicine Department, when admitted to individual room for active labour (to be determined by midwife) and birth and, to visit in antenatal and postnatal wards for up to one hour once a week.</p>
Mental Health Wards	<p>One person to visit for up to one hour once a week, or more where deemed necessary to support the mental health and wellbeing of the patient.</p> <p>Alternatives in line with visiting policies, e.g. outdoor visiting, virtual visits, designated visiting rooms etc.</p>
Learning Disability Wards	<p>One person to visit for up to one hour once a week, or more where deemed necessary to support the mental health and wellbeing of the patient.</p> <p>Alternatives in line with visiting policies, e.g. outdoor visiting, virtual visits, designated visiting rooms etc.</p>

***COVID-19 Secure:** To maintain

- a social distance of 2 metres when possible
- Optimal hand hygiene and personal hygiene measures
- Good ventilation
- Use of PPE when required
- Face Coverings