



**Addendum to the Trust Visiting Policy
Revised Visiting Guidance - Supporting Family Presence &
Participation with patients and/or residents during COVID**

19

July 2020

Final Version – 3 July 2020

Changes to Our Visiting Policy:

Trust Facilities Visiting Guidance - Supporting Family Presence & Participation with patients and/or residents during COVID 19.

The Department of Health issued its final 'COVID-19: REGIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR VISITING IN CARE SETTINGS IN NORTHERN IRELAND' on 30 June 2020, with an implementation date of 6 July 2020, dependent on local arrangements being in place to safely facilitate the resumption of visiting. Specific Guidance has been issued for Maternity Services and Nursing and Residential Care Homes

Set out below is the Western Trust's Updated Visiting Guidance which will be kept under review and updated to reflect the regional direction as a phased approach.

The Trust will try to adhere as close as possible to the regional guidance.

Introduction

This guidance will be issued as an addendum to the WHSCT '**Hospital Visiting Policy – Supporting Family Presence & Participation**' – April 2017. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing of our patients, communities and individuals and teams remain our absolute priority.

This Visiting Guidance has been developed to facilitate visiting while the Trust is in a Pre or Low Surge during Covid 19 (evidence of community spread and/or increasing numbers of hospital admissions). The Guidance is subject to change should any individual Ward or Facility have two or more confirmed or suspected cases in either patients/residents or staff of Covid 19, in which case all visiting will cease. Our priority is to safeguard and protect people who are receiving care and protect our Health Care Workers so that they are able to care for patients and families.

The Trust will consider special circumstances relating to visiting, for example, people receiving End of Life care.

Particular considerations to support visiting

- The decision to permit visitors into Trust facilities will on a day to day basis, lie with the nurse-in-charge, in hospital settings, and the home manager in trust residential home settings. This will depend on the ability to ensure social distancing and safety of both patients/residents and the visitor. This Guidance will be reviewed and updated as the journey of the surge level of the Pandemic (virus) changes.

- Where possible virtual visiting remains the preferred option, to support this all areas will continue to facilitate virtual visiting.
- Before visiting, the Ward Sister/Charge Nurse/Home Manager/admitting nurse will advise visitors of the arrangements for visiting.
- On admission, each patient/resident will be asked to nominate a maximum of two people to visit. As far as possible, only these two people will be permitted to visit throughout the patient's stay in hospital and each visit will consist of only one of the named individuals. The designated person/s to visit will be recorded in the visiting book held at the entrance to the Ward/facility and the visitor will be directed to the patient's room.
- The visitors contact details (Name, phone number) will be recorded, as this will be important for contact tracing if required. *See attached template at **Appendix One**.*
- **The number of visitors at the bedside is limited to ONE nominated person.**
- Each ward/facility will clearly display the number of visitors that are safely allowed to visit at any one time, mindful of social distancing and Infection Prevention and Control measures including cleaning areas before and after visitors leave.
- However, where it is possible to maintain social distancing throughout the visit, the second nominated person may be permitted in certain circumstances, i.e., individuals receiving end of life care.
- In multi-bedded bays and/or rooms, there will be a maximum of two visitors allowed to visit at a time and this will be factored in when organising the visiting times for the day (e.g. this means a maximum of 2 visitors for 4 patients in an open bay area).
- Visitors will be informed in advance about what to expect when they see the patient and, be given practical advice about social distancing, wearing personal protective equipment if appropriate, hand washing and risks associated i.e. the removal of gloves to hold hands. An information leaflet and Poster will be available detailing the Do's and Don'ts of visiting within Western Trust facilities. *See attached Poster at **Appendix Two**.*
- Visitors will be informed of the time slot allocated to them by Ward staff. There may be local negotiation with staff and families to ensure the time suits the person to visit and ensure that visiting numbers are spread across the visiting times as possible.
- All people visiting Health and Social Care Settings and Care Home settings will be required to wear face coverings for the foreseeable future. People will be required to supply their own face covering, and will not be permitted to enter the facility without it. *See attached advice on Wearing a Face Covering at **Appendix Three**.*
- Anyone showing symptoms of coronavirus or indeed who feels unwell must not visit, even if these symptoms are mild or unconfirmed, due to the risk they pose to others. This is important for infection prevention and control.
- Visitors may not be permitted to Wards in certain circumstances, where this applies local guidance and information will be available at Ward level. Patients and relatives will be informed of the reasons for a No visiting approach.
- Patients requiring special assistance with communication and social care may have a carer attend while they are in hospital – this person does not count as a visitor. This person will also be required to leave their contact details, for contact tracing if required.

- No children (up to 16 years) will be allowed to visit until further notice (special circumstances will be dealt with on an individual basis and risk assessed).

Visiting times will vary to assist the trust to manage footfall of people in hospital and community facilities, and to maintain a safe environment for our patients and health care workers. Families will be provided with the individual specific visiting timetable.

We appreciate your assistance and understanding as we endeavour to protect patients and visitors during this pandemic and equally to protect our Health Care workers.

Duration of visiting time – Strictly up to a maximum duration of One Hour, once per day and to one patient.

Visiting Arrangements

Acute Hospitals

Visiting times will be from 2pm to 3pm and 4pm to 5pm each day, excluding Maternity whose times are noted below.

- **Inpatient wards** - One visitor only per patient at any one time.
- **Intensive Care Units** - One visitor only per patient at any one time, for up to a maximum of one hour per day. Visiting will be more flexible in exceptional circumstances.
- **Emergency Department** – One person only to accompany patient where the patient is unable to understand or communicate with staff.
- **Outpatient Appointments** - Where necessary for patient to attend face to face appointment only one person to accompany where patient is unable to understand or communicate with staff.
- **Radiology Department** (Including Breast Screening appointments) - Patients are encouraged to attend on their own due to limited space within departments, exceptions are in the following circumstances:
 - Patient is unable to understand or communicate with staff,
 - Patient requires physical or emotional assistance beyond that which Radiology staff can provide.
 - Patient is a child, so must be accompanied by a parent or chaperone. In these cases one person only to accompany patient.
- **Fetal Anomaly scanning** - Ladies attending for Anomaly scanning may be accompanied by one birth partner or nominated person.
- **Any patient developing Covid symptoms prior to their appointment should contact their local Radiology Department for rescheduling advice**
- For all attendances at Radiology a face covering must be worn.
- **Cancer/Burns/Renal Units** – One visitor only per patient at any one time.
- **Day Procedure Units** – One person only to accompany patient where the patient is unable to understand or communicate with staff. However, a person may accompany the patient on arrival and admission process and will re-join patient at

patient discharge process (visitors will not be permitted to remain in the Day procedure unit).

- **Maternity** - Birth partner/nominated person will be facilitated to accompany the pregnant woman to fetal anomaly scan. Women must attend all other scan appointments in Ante Natal Clinic, Gynae Ward 43 and Fetal Assessment Unit on their own. This may be reviewed at a later date.
 - Ante Natal Ward – their birthing partner, who can stay for one hour on admission, can accompany women being admitted for induction of labour. Birthing partners can visit in Ante Natal Ward for 1-hour between 7.30pm and 8.30pm.
 - Labour Ward/ MLU - Birth partner/nominated person can remain with the woman during active labour and birth.
 - Post Natal Ward – Partner only will be permitted to visit for 1-hour period. Ward Manager depending on which room/bed the woman is in to allow for social distancing in four bedded areas will allocate the time slot. It will be either 2.00pm to 3.00pm or 7.30pm to 8.30pm.
- **Children's wards** - One designated family member or carer. One adult at a time from the same household unless due to family circumstance's the child regularly spends their time in two households, in which case one adult from each household (alternate visit or as agreed between both parties). Parent will be required to wear a face covering when not at the child's bedside.

Trust Residential Homes – No more than two people will be permitted access to visit at any one time where this can accommodated within social distancing. Initially visits to be limited to once a week per resident. This will allow the management of footfall within the Home and allow time to assess the impact of the reintroduction of visiting. The frequency of visits will be kept under review.

Community hospitals and Intermediate care facilities – One designated family member or carer per patient at any one time.

Mental Health/ Older People Mental Health - No more than two people will be permitted access to visit at any one time where this can accommodated within social distancing.

Learning Disability - No more than two people will be permitted access to visit at any one time where this can accommodated within social distancing.

Physical Disability - No more than two people will be permitted access to visit at any one time where this can accommodated within social distancing.

Hospital Chaplains are members of the multi-disciplinary teams providing pastoral care to patients/residents and are not counted in the number of nominated visitors. Chaplains will visit a patient once throughout the duration of their stay in hospital and for all other contact they will use the mobile devices that have been provided to them at individual wards/facilities. Chaplains will continue to adhere to the Trust IP&C and PPE guidance at all times.

During Visiting

- Visitors will be required to leave their personal contact details with Ward/facility staff, including name, address, telephone number to facilitate easy trace and contact if required. This information will be collected on admission.
- Visitors are asked to remain at the bedside at a distance of two meters from the patient/resident throughout the visit, at all times wearing their face covering, unless directed by your clinical team. A chair will be provided and visitors are not permitted to sit on the bed.
- Visitors are discouraged from bringing anything, other than essential items, for the patient/resident, flowers are not permitted.
- Visitors who do not follow the hospital visiting Guidance will not be permitted to remain in the Ward/facility, as the arrangements put in place by the Trust are to protect patients/visitors/health care workers and the wider public. Failure to follow this Guidance may result in the Trust reviewing a person's right to visit.
- The Trust recognises its responsibilities to provide a secure environment that protects patients, clients, staff and visitors and their property. This Guidance should be read in conjunction with the Trust's 'ZERO TOLERANCE AND SECURITY POLICY', January 2018.

APPENDIX ONE

Template for Recording Visitor contact Details:



Template for
recording visitor cor

APPENDIX TWO

Trust Facility Entrance – New Visiting Guidelines Poster



Hospital Entrances
- New Visiting Guide

APPENDIX THREE

Wearing a Face Covering (including poster)



Wearing a face
covering.docx

Visitors Advice – for your information:

When your family member/partner is admitted to hospital. The ward sister/charge nurse will advise you of the visiting arrangements for your loved one please firstly

Don't visit if you are unwell

Anyone showing or experiencing the symptoms of coronavirus must 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.

- <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-home-and-self-isolation>

When you do visit, follow the simple rules:

Do

- Wear a face covering if you visit hospital.
- Prior to visiting wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Use hand sanitiser as supplied at hospital /ward/ residential homes /community facilities at the entrance and also on exiting facilities.
- Wear appropriate PPE if asked.
- Follow Social distancing rules when you visit with respect to other patients/ residents/visitors/staff. The Trust's Hospitals have adopted a 'keep left' policy and visitors will be asked to follow signage and adhere to it.
- Decontaminate your personal devices like phones with wipes before and after ward/community care facility visit.
- Stay at patient's/resident's room or at their bedside at all times unless otherwise directed by clinical staff/care staff
- Provide your contact details to ward staff and adhere to all guidelines that are there to protect you, your loved one and staff.
- Adhere to the allocated visiting time to ensure that other relatives can visit their loved ones also. This allows Health Care staff to plan visiting times to suit as many people as possible.
- Advise staff of the most appropriate visiting time that suits you.
- Be mindful of social distancing when queueing at entrances to the hospital/ward or other care setting.
- Please respect our staff who are here to assist you and we appreciate your co-operation with these processes that are in place to protect you, your loved ones and staff

Don't

- Do not visit any other care area in the ward, hospital or care facility.
- Do not use any toilet facility other than the one designated to you by the ward. Visitors are usually directed to the Public toilets which are not in the ward facilities
- Do not access food area's which are currently closed to anyone except staff
- If visitors do not follow the hospital protocol they will not be permitted to visit as the arrangements put in place by the Trust is to protect patients/visitors/health care workers and the wider public. Failure to follow the Hospital Protocol may result in the Trust reviewing you right to visit.

THANK YOU