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<b>Visitor Policy</b>			
<b>Date Issued: October 2007</b> <b>Date Review/Revised: May 2023</b> <b>Next Review Date: June 2022</b>			
<b>Owner:</b> Chief Nursing Executive	<b>Reviewer(s):</b> Patient Care Manager Pandemic Response Committee		<b>Approver:</b> Chief Nursing Executive

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### **Policy**

The South Huron Hospital Association's (SHHA) top priority is keeping our patients, families, caregivers, staff and physicians safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. SHHA is taking a careful, regionally planned approach to family/caregiver presence in hospital.

To continue to provide the safest possible experience and to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, SHHA is temporarily limiting visitor presence, to only care partners (an individual who provides physical or emotional supports to the patient), as we respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

SHHA values the role of family and caregivers as essential partners in care delivery. Patients and their Substitute Decision Makers are best suited to determine who constitutes family or caregiver. SHHA 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.

**Effective June 6, 2022 SHHA will be following the department specific visiting guidelines below:**

#### **Department Specific Guidelines**

**Emergency Department:** One visitor per patient in the department unless the care team determines otherwise.

**Community Outpatient Clinic Appointments:** One visitor to accompany patient to their appointment.

**Inpatient Unit:** Each patient is allowed two visitors per day, one visitor at a time, for a single visit, maximum of two hours between the hours of 11a.m. and 8:30 p.m. unless otherwise specified by the care team.

### **Visiting Guidelines**

- Patients in droplet contact isolation, negative pressure, or confirmed/suspect COVID-19, are not permitted a visitor with the exception of pediatric patients under the age of 16. Visitation may be considered on an individual basis with IPAC consultation.

### **All Care Partners Entering the hospital**

- Must screen negative for COVID-19
- Must perform hand hygiene
- Must don a face mask issued by screener; face shields available upon request
- Must only go to their designated area (i.e., room of patient they are visiting, department of appointment) and keep mask on at all times

### **Care Partners should NOT come to the hospital if they:**

- Are feeling unwell;
- Have tested positive for COVID-19;
- Have been tested for COVID-19 with results pending (or unresolved); and
- Have had close contact with a confirmed or suspect case of COVID-19.

Care Partners must follow appropriate infection prevention and control guidelines at all times while at the hospital. Surgical grade facemasks are mandatory and provided by the hospital for the duration of time spent at the hospital.

**Children:** SHHA supports the presence of children for palliative or MAID patients.

<b>Reasons for Family Caregiver</b>	<b>Examples of Clinical Exceptions that would permit patient support by Non-vaccinated Family and Caregiver(s)</b>
<b>Compassionate Grounds</b>	<p><u>Palliative:</u> Patients identified as palliative by the physician (PPS 30% or less) will be allowed a designate in addition to two (2) family members total at a time (with the exception of COVID-19 positive patients);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Critical Illness:</u> patients in ER will be allowed up to two (2) family members total at a time.</li> <li>• <u>MAID Patients:</u> number of visitors is discussed with the manager at time of booking procedure</li> <li>• <u>Disclosure:</u> when disclosing life changing diagnosis/prognosis</li> </ul>

**Note: The manager or delegate of the unit or department where the patient is receiving care will review all clinical exceptions in consultation with the Infection Prevention and Control Team and the family/caregiver.**

### **Food and Personal Items for Patients:**

- Family/Caregivers may not bring food or beverages for personal consumption into a patient room or in patient care areas. Meals, snacks and beverages are available in designated areas;
- If family/caregiver bring food for their loved one, food containers must be disposed of or taken home with the family/caregiver when they leave; and
- Flowers are now being accepted for patients on our inpatient unit.

**To maintain Infection Prevention and Control standards and the safety of our staff and patients, please bring only the listed items below to the hospital for patients.**

- glasses, hearing aids and dentures;
- mobility items (canes, walkers, wheelchairs);
- new toiletries only;
- new grooming items – toothbrushes, combs and hair brushes;
- personal items- books, magazines, puzzle books, family photos etc.;
- mobile phone/tablet; and
- clean clothing and footwear.

Please direct requests for special items to the Manager of the Unit where the patient is receiving care.

\*Visitors should also consider their personal health and susceptibility in determining whether visiting in the hospital setting is appropriate. \*

### **Definitions**

**Care Partner:** An individual who provides physical or emotional supports to the patient.

**Family:** as identified by the patient. A person who is a spouse/domestic partner, family member, sibling, parent, grandparent, neighbour and/or friend.

Those whose visit is preferred by the patient and/or substitute decision-maker

**General Visitor:** An individual who has not been identified as an Care Partner, but still wishes to visit a patient. Those whose visits are exclusively social.

### **References**

- [http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/dir\\_mem\\_res.aspx](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/dir_mem_res.aspx).
- <https://www.cfhi-fcass.ca/docs/default-source/itr/tools-and-resources/bt-re-integration-of-family-caregivers-as-essential-partners-covid-19-e.pdf>
- <https://changeofoundation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/family-presence-open-visiting-policies-ontario-hospitals-report.pdf>