



SHHA Family & Caregiver Presence Guidelines

[Updated October 13, 2021 and subject to change.]

The South Huron Hospital Association's (SHHA) top priority is keeping our patients, families, caregivers, staff and physicians safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

To continue to provide the safest possible experience and to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, **effective November 1, 2021** all family and caregivers will be required to show government issued photo identification and proof of full COVID-19 vaccination before entering SHHA. Acceptable proof of vaccination is the Ontario Ministry of Health Vaccination Receipt (digital or a paper copy) or the Ontario Enhanced Vaccine Certificate.

** Full vaccination is achieved 14 days after last dose in a COVID-19 vaccination series.**

If you do not have a computer or printer, you can call the **Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre at [1-833-943-3900](tel:1-833-943-3900) to request a copy by mail.** You can also visit your local library to use computer and internet resources or ask a trusted friend or organization to help print a copy.

Family and caregivers who have a valid medical exemption, signed by a doctor or nurse practitioner will be required to contact the Corporate Office at 519-235-2700 Ext. 5169 to complete the Proof of Medical Exemption process prior to coming to the hospital.

Regardless of immunization status, all individuals entering the hospital are required to undergo screening for COVID-19 prior to accessing the facility.

Family/Caregivers 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 **Note: patients coming to the hospital for testing before a procedure will be permitted to come to the hospital.**
- Have had close contact with a confirmed or suspect case of COVID-19.

Family/caregivers 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.

Definitions (for the purpose of these guidelines)	
Full Vaccination	14 days after last dose given in a COVID-19 vaccination series.
Family	Includes a spouse/domestic partner, guardian, child, sibling, parent, grandparent, relative, neighbour and/or friend.
Caregiver	Is a family member, guardian, friend and/or neighbour who provides support, assistance and/or care for family members and friends in need, in any capacity or length of time.
Palliative Patient	Is a patient with a life threatening diagnosis who is receiving specialized medical care that focuses on providing relief from pain and other symptoms.

Note: individuals who do not meet the definition of Family or Caregiver may not visit an in-patient at this time.

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

In-patients: SHHA supports two fully vaccinated family/caregivers once per day and not at the same time during the hours of 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

- **Patients in Isolation (Droplet or Airborne):**
Family/Caregiver presence will not be permitted until isolation precautions have been cleared regardless of vaccination status.

Compassionate Presence:

- **Palliative Patient Imminently Approaching End-of-Life Care:**
Family/caregiver presence will be determined based on the patients' Palliative Performance Scale (PPS). The PPS scale is a validated and reliable tool used by healthcare providers to assess a patient's functional performance and to determine the gradual progression toward end-of-life.

Palliative Patients imminently progressing toward end-of-life who have a PPS scale assessment of equal to or less than 30%:

When physical distancing can be maintained, SHHA supports up to four fully vaccinated family/caregiver(s) to be present 24/7; as approved by the unit where the patient is receiving care in consultation with Infection Prevention and Control and family/caregiver(s).

- Patients receiving Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID):**
 When physical distancing can be maintained, SHHA supports up to four fully vaccinated family/caregiver(s) to be present as approved by the unit, where the patient is receiving care in consultation with Infection Prevention and Control and family/caregiver(s).

SHHA supports the presence of children accompanied by a fully immunized adult. Proof of vaccine will not be required for children not eligible for vaccine.

Note: A unit in COVID-19 outbreak requires additional safety precautions to be in place as directed by Public Health, which could result in the hospital limiting family/caregiver presence.

Emergency Department: SHHA supports one fully vaccinated family/caregiver to accompany patient.

Community Outpatient Clinic Appointments: SHHA supports one fully vaccinated family/caregiver to accompany patient.

Note: If the department is unable to maintain physical distancing, the family/caregiver may be required to wait outside the treatment area while the patient receives care.

SHHA recognizes the importance of family and caregiver presence for the health and well-being of our patients.

The following is a list of Clinical Exceptions that would permit patient support by non-vaccinated Family and Caregiver(s).

Reason for family and caregiver presence	Examples of Clinical Exceptions that would permit patient support by Non-vaccinated Family and Caregiver(s)
Safety	a) Children or infants (whether COVID-19 positive or not); b) Mental Health crisis – patients who are experiencing a mental health crisis that the care team believes could be improved by having family/caregiver presence may be permitted; and c) Cognitive Impairment – patients with dementia, delirium, or cognitive decline and who require family/caregiver to assist in wayfinding, retaining information, and following instructions - (as per Accessibility for Ontarians with a Disability – AODA).

Enabling Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Labouring mothers – support persons play a role as family/caregiver following delivery; b) Critical conversations – patients for whom the team determines important care conversations would be better understood or explained in person; c) Training to enable discharge – when family/caregivers require training on how to use medical equipment that will be used in the home to support recovery; d) Patients with Development or Intellectual Disability that requires support; and e) Interpretation/Translation – SHHA uses professionally trained healthcare interpreters; however, a family/caregiver may be permitted for patients who do not speak English when the team determines their presence may assist with care (e.g. during imaging to explain repositioning to the patient).
Compassionate Grounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Palliative / MAID (imminently approaching end of life) with the exception of COVID-19 positive patients; and b) Critical life-altering conversation.

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.

While in the Hospital:

- Please stay in your loved one's room until you are ready to leave;
- Please do not use the patient washroom. Public washrooms are available; inquire with the unit where the patient is receiving care for locations; and
- Family/caregivers may not leave the unit for smoking/vaping or other purpose. If you choose to leave the hospital grounds for this purpose, you will be unable to return until the following day.

In Common Areas or When Leaving the Hospital:

- Please do not linger in hallways or spend extended time in public areas such as, lobbies, waiting areas, cafeterias, and vending areas other than to make a quick food purchase or use the public washroom.

Staying Connected:

- SHHA is committed to patient-centered care, our staff will be happy to assist patients, families and caregivers to stay connected. Tablets can be made available for virtual connections through our Information Technology team.

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/plants are not permitted in patient rooms at this time.

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.

We thank you for your continued support with following these important guidelines and preventing the spread of COVID-19.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Manager where the patient is receiving care or the SHHA Corporate Office 519-235-2700 ext. 5169.

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***Please note these guidelines apply only to family and caregivers, not to patients.
Please do not delay seeking medical care if needed.***