



<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Visitors and Family Presence</b>		
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<b>Cross Reference(s)</b>	Infection Prevention and Control VIII – M-10: Outbreak Management Policy		

**1. POLICY STATEMENT:**

Almonte General Hospital (the Hospital) is committed to creating an environment supportive of patient and family-centred care. Family members of patients are an important part of the healthcare team and contribute to a caring and healing environment.

**1.1 Visiting Hours:**

Visitors are welcome at the Hospital **daily from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm.**

The number of visitors welcomed at the bedside at any one time will be determined in collaboration with the patient, the family and the healthcare team. In situations where there are shared rooms, this decision will take into account the care and personal needs of other patients and their families.

Visitors may be requested to leave the room temporarily in order to facilitate care of any patient in the room.

Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult (over age 18) at all times.

Visitors are expected to enter the hospital using the Main Entrance. Visitors are not permitted to enter the hospital from the Emergency Department, in order to protect the integrity of the surgical corridor.

Visiting hours will be restricted during infectious outbreaks to prevent illness from spreading.

- **Visitors should not visit if they are feeling unwell or have any know infectious illness, or are exhibiting any of the following symptoms:**
  - **Fever, cough, runny nose or sore throat**
  - **Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea**

**1.2 Exceptions to Regular Visiting Hours:**

- a) **Patients with Conditions Requiring Extended Family Support**
  - The healthcare team may authorize extended visiting hours to support the patient (e.g. patients requiring end-of-life support).
- b) **Emergency Department (ED)**
  - Patients are permitted to have their family with them in the ED at all times.
  - The ED staff may limit the number of family members permitted in the ED to facilitate patient care.

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c) **Obstetrics Department:**

- Visitors are welcome daily from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm only after the patient has completed their labour and delivery.
- Patients are permitted to have their identified labour support person(s) with them in their room at any time.
- In the event that the patient's labour support person wants to exit and re-enter the hospital after hours, when the main entrance is locked, they will be provided with a security swipe badge to facilitate their entry and exit through the main entrance.
- The Obstetrics Unit Operating Room is restricted to one labour support person of the patient's choice.

**2. SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all individuals who visit patients in the hospital.

**3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

Almonte General Hospital acknowledges that supports, in the form of visits from friends and family are important to patients during their hospital stay and help to reduce anxiety and isolation to improve healing and recovery.

Patient's access to visitors needs to be balanced with the health care team's need to provide timely and effective care to all patients in the hospital and the needs of other patients to rest and recover in a quiet and healing environment.

**4. DEFINITIONS:**

**Family:** Any individual with a continuing legal, genetic and/or emotional relationship to a patient. Patients define their "family" and how they will be involved in care, care planning and decision making.

**Visitor:** Guest of a patient.

**5. PROCEDURE:**

Not applicable.

**6. REFERENCES:**

Glengarry Memorial Hospital. *Visiting Hours at HGMH: An Open Door Approach*. Retrieved March 02, 2016 from: <http://www.hgmh.on.ca/english/news/visiting-hours-at-hgmh-an-open-door-approach.htm>

The Ottawa Hospital (September 9, 2015): *Visitors and Family Presence*. No. 00327.

**7. APPENDICES:**

None.