

WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH PROGRAM MANUAL

Title: Family Presence Guidelines for the Women and Children's Health Unit Policy Number

PURPOSE:

Chatham-Kent Health Alliance (CKHA) is committed to working with patients and families to advance compassionate, high quality care. We believe it is important for patients to experience the support of family and friends, and to be treated as an individual with unique needs. We are committed to providing a respectful, compassionate, and trusting care environment for our patients and team. Patients and families are welcomed as essential members of our care team.

GUIDELINES:

A patient has the right to identify individuals whom they view as family and choose to be partners in their care, but have the right to limit or deny visitation.

Families and other partners in care are welcome 24 hours a day according to patient preference. The number of people welcome at the bedside at any one time will be determined in collaborating with the patient and family. In situations where there are shared rooms, the rights and needs of the other patient(s) will be taken into consideration.

Visiting is based on the condition, care needs, and expressed wishes of each patient. The patient's need may change throughout their stay.

Patients and families will be advised upon admission that visiting may be interrupted to provide appropriate patient care. Visiting may also be interrupted to ensure the privacy rights of other patients are respected.

The Women and Children's unit will create an environment for the patient that promotes optimal healing. To the best of our ability, cultural diversity, rituals, traditions, and the expressed wishes of the patient will be respected.

Children supervised by an adult are welcomed. Children are not restricted by age. They are expected to remain in the presence of the supervising adult while on the hospital premises. Children's behaviour will be monitored by the responsible adult and the care team to ensure a safe and restful environment is maintained.

To protect the health of our patients and staff, do not visit if you are sick, including but not limited to the following signs and symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough or Influenza-like symptoms

- Runny nose
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Rash
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)
- Known exposure to a communicable disease (i.e.: Chicken Pox)

Family who are supporting a patient between the hours of 9 p.m. and 6 a.m. are to remain in the patient's room advising staff when leaving the unit. These individuals are responsible for his/her own personal needs.

Patients and families are asked to communicate if their needs are not being met.

During a declared infection control outbreak (i.e.: influenza outbreak) or other hospital emergency, visiting may be restricted or cancelled to ensure patient and staff safety.

PROCEDURE:

Patients will define who their "family" members are and how they would like them to be involved in their care. The hospital will honour patients' choices, unless they are harmful or threatening to patients, families, staff, or there is a legal restriction.

Designated family members may visit patients at their discretion. All other visitors are to check in at the nurse's station prior to entering the patient's room.

The Emergency Entrance is to be used between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. daily. Individuals will be screened by security to obtain access. Security will notify the unit using the individual's name. Staff on the unit will notify security if the family member/visitor does not arrive.

Handwashing is important to prevent the spread of infection. All family and visitors are encouraged to use the alcohol hand rub on entry and exit from the hospital, on entry and exit of the patient's room, and after assisting with patient care. Some patients will require additional precautionary measures to prevent the spread of infection. All family, visitors and staff are to follow the direction on the isolation 'STOP' sign posted outside the patient room.

Family and visitors are welcome to attend to the family member but please refrain from assisting other patients.

Any decisions to restrict or limit the presence of family or other visitors will be discussed with the patient and documented in the medical record.

RESTRICTIONS:

- The patient may choose to restrict visitors at any time.
- Legal reasons documented in the chart (i.e.: restraining order or family court order).
- Behaviour that creates a direct risk or threat to patients, families, staff and others.

- A contagious illness, or exposure to a communicable disease
- An infectious outbreak in the community or hospital
- A patient in a shared room requires immediate lifesaving measures or a sensitive/private discussion needs to occur. Visitors of the patient sharing the room may be asked to go to the family space, room A302.

DEFINITIONS:

Family - The Women and Children's Unit uses a broad definition of "family" as defined by each patient. Family is a group of individuals with a continuing legal, genetic, and/or emotional relationship

Cultural Diversity - Societies that emerge around the globe differ from each other and many of these differences persist. Cultural differences exist between people, such as language, dress, and traditions, there are also variations in the way societies organize themselves morally.

REFERENCES:

Adapted from the "St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital Family Presence Guidelines"

PIDAC. (2015). Best practices for infection prevention and control in perinatology. Retrieved from [https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/IPC%20in%20Perinatology_ENGLISH_Final_2012-05-25\[1\].pdf](https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/IPC%20in%20Perinatology_ENGLISH_Final_2012-05-25[1].pdf)