

# Being an Essential Visitor

## *A guide for patients, families, & support persons*

### What is an Essential Visitor?

Essential visitors (EV) are family or support persons who are important to the health, healing and comfort of a patient in hospital during COVID-19 Response. We have new guidelines for our EVs at this time:

- Each patient is asked by hospital staff to name one (1) Essential Visitor.
- We welcome an EV for two (2) hours per day - this time frame can be adjusted in conversation with health care team and based on patient care needs.
- When a patient is unable to name an EV then the Substitute Decision Maker (SDM) will name the EV. SDMs are people who have permission to make decisions for another person.
- The names of the EV will be noted in the patient plan of care and at a check-in point on the unit.
- EVs will be required to wear an identification wrist band for all visits.
- EVs can participate in providing care in collaboration with hospital staff.
- EVs must be committed to a safe and respectful hospital environment at all times.

### When an EV Arrives for a visit

- The EV must complete a screening at the hospital entrance. An EV with signs and symptoms of any communicable disease must leave immediately without entering the hospital.
- Follow hand hygiene by using hand sanitizer.
- Tell the screener where they will visit in the hospital.
- Practice safe social distance by keeping 2 meters apart from other people.
- Wear a face cover or mask when unable to keep 2 meters apart from others.
- Travel directly to the patient area.
- When an EV arrives at the patient area they must check in at the reception desk.
- If it is the first visit since the patient was admitted, then the EV receives and attaches an identification wrist band to be worn for the duration of the patient's hospital stay.

EV and staff member review together:

- Importance of performing frequent hand hygiene.
- Importance of staying at bedside/patient care area.
- Maintaining safe social distance in shared rooms.
- Importance of travelling directly to and from patient care area.
- Importance of not congregating in hallways or common spaces.
- Correct use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) if required.



How you want to be treated.