



How you want to be treated.

Essential Visits During COVID-19 Recovery

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the definition of an essential visitor?

An essential visitor is a family or support person identified by the patient who is integral to the patient's life and healing, and may be involved in care to the extent the patient desires in collaboration with the care team.

What is the process to identify and document essential visitor information?

The admitting care team will ask the patient to identify their "essential" person. Once the person is identified the information is documented in CST Cerner Admission History Adult powerform.

Why can patients only have 1 Essential Visitor?

We ask that patients only identify one (1) Essential Visitor to ensure the visits can be accommodated both in terms of space and also resources. Social distancing rules need to still apply, and Essential Visitors will need to be trained in the proper use of PPE. This must be done with care, by individuals who are already tasked with providing patient care.

We understand that being in a hospital setting can be isolating and frightening and that some patients may want to have multiple visitors. In certain exceptional circumstances, exceptions may be made on a case by case basis in collaboration with the care team.

How long can an Essential Visitor visit a patient for?

An Essential Visitor is welcome to visit their patient for a maximum of 2 hours per day. This will provide the unit staff the ability to safely accommodate all visits in their space. In some cases, Essential Visitors help with the care of the patient, such as feeding, and are required to visit multiple times per day. If the family member needs to come back several times a day, a conversation should occur between the patient, Essential Visitor, and care team to determine how to best accommodate this request.

What do Essential Visitors need to know before visiting the hospital?

They will be screened for symptoms when they first arrive at the hospital for every visit. If they have any common symptoms for COVID-19 (cough, fever, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing) or have been in contact with someone known to be positive, they will not be allowed to attend.



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They should show their identification wrist band to the front door Screener to identify themselves as an Essential Visitor.

Can Essential Visitors visit if they're not feeling well?

No. If Essential Visitors have cold or flu-like symptoms, or have been near someone who is sick, they should not visit. Essential Visitors will be screened upon entry to the hospital for any signs and symptoms of communicable diseases that pose a risk of transmission. If an Essential Visitors shows signs and symptoms they will be asked to leave, postpone or reschedule their visit until they no longer have any symptoms.

What do Essential Visitors need to know before visiting the unit?

- Upon arrival at the unit, they must sign in at the Nursing Station with the Unit Coordinator or Registration Clerk. The Unit Coordinator or Registration Clerk will do a formal COVID-19 screening. If the Unit Coordinator has any question about the Essential Visitor they will contact the most responsible clinician on the unit.
- Essential Visitors must bring their own mask, and should perform Hand Hygiene before entering and exiting the unit and the hospital.
- Essential Visitors should stay at the bedside area.
- Essential Visitors must maintain appropriate physical distancing (2 metres) from other patients or other Essential Visitors.
- At the end of their visit, Essential Visitors must sign out with the Unit Coordinator or Registration Clerk. This is to ensure best practices for contact tracing should a COVID-19 exposure occur.

Why do Essential Visitors need to wear an identification wrist band?

Essential Visitors will be provided an identification wrist band upon their first visit to help the screeners and unit staff better identify the Essential Visitor and provide a smoother entry process to the hospital.

What happens if an EV loses or removes their identification wrist band?

If an Essential Visitor loses their identification wrist band, they must ask the unit to provide them with a new one.

Can a patient change their identified Essential Visitor?

Each Essential Visitor request is assessed on a case by case basis. An Essential Visitor is considered family as identified by the patient and as such can have their visitation privilege



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revoked by the patient or Substitute Decision Maker. We ask that patients do not frequently change their Essential Visitor in an effort to see as many people as possible as this increases the risk of exposure and transmission of communicable diseases, such as COVID-19.