



COVID-19

Patient Visitor Guidelines

Purpose

These guidelines seek to manage the risk of transmission of COVID-19 within the hospital environment whilst:

- supporting patients to remain connected with their whānau and loved ones; and
- facilitating whānau as partners in patient care.

General principles

This guideline adopts a values-based approach that reflects Auckland DHB's core values of Haere Mai, Manaaki, Tūhono and Angamua. In particular, it:

- prioritises the safety of visitors, our patients and staff on site;
- recognises the importance of whānau as partners in patient care;
- protects the privacy and autonomy of patients and visitors;
- seeks solutions that keep patients connected with whānau; and
- strives to provide visitors with clear information and explanations that they can relate to their own circumstances.

Visitor restrictions

We know our patients and whānau need support during this time. We are asking that each patient only has one visitor at a time in order to manage physical distancing on our sites. We can work together to keep each other safe.

These guidelines reflect the vulnerable nature of many of the individuals who access our services and are at high risk of the impacts of COVID-19. They consider the well-being of individual patients alongside the wellbeing and safety of the Auckland DHB community and workforce as a whole.

We are continuing to monitor developments regarding COVID-19. Advice outlined in this guide will be regularly updated to reflect any changes in prevalence, risk and impact on hospital services.

Visiting hours

To enable the safe management of visitors onto Auckland DHB inpatient facilities, visiting hours will be limited to 07.00 to 20.00 (with some limited exceptions outside of this time).

Communicating the visitor guidelines onsite and turning away visitors

Security officers are currently placed at entrances and will greet visitors asking them to sign-in using the COVID tracer app and to wear a face covering. A non-clinical mask will be provided if required.

Precautions for visitors to observe

Whilst on site, visitors will be required to:

- scan QR codes upon entry
- ensure that they carry out appropriate hand hygiene measures
- maintain physical distancing of 2 metres from staff and other patients wherever possible
- restrict their visit to the ward or service area that the patient they are visiting is located in, or to on-site retail areas, for example cafés and the pharmacy.

Support people for outpatient appointments

Patients coming to an Auckland DHB facility for an outpatient appointment are able to bring a support person with them if required.

Visitors for patients with a COVID-19 diagnosis

From **Monday, 15 February 2021**, a nominated visitor may be permitted for inpatients with a **COVID-19 positive** diagnosis on compassionate grounds, at the discretion of the DHB. Prior to admitting access, a risk assessment will be undertaken and the visitor will be informed of the risks of visitation.

Where access is permitted, the nominated visitor will be:

- supported in the donning and doffing and correct use of PPE
- accompanied at all times by a nurse to validate the appropriate use of PPE and ensure the safety of the visitor
- considered a casual contact following the visit; and
- agree that they do not visit other areas in hospital

The ward will advise ARPHS of the visitor's casual contact (including an email to ARPHS emergency operations team arphsops@ahdb.govt.nz) and advise the visitor that ARPHS will be in contact to follow-up. Visitors will be followed up by ARPHS in a way that is consistent with the existing algorithm for the management of casual contacts. The DHB will advise ARPHS of any PPE breaches that impact on risk profile of the visitor.

Exceptions to this guide

Mental Health

- Mental Health Inpatient areas will continue to closely monitor visiting in conjunction with this policy

Maternity Services

- Birthing or Assessment on WAU: One person can attend for assessment and during early induction in support of the woman. Up to two birth partners may attend throughout labour and birth until transfer to the postnatal ward.
- Antenatal clinic visits. One support person may attend.
- Post-natal Ward: 2 nominated visitors visiting one at a time. Able to visit from 7am to 8pm. All visitors must stay in the room (or bed space in shared rooms) allocated to the person they are visiting.
- Women who are able to be allocated a single room will be allowed a support person overnight. These are limited rooms and the Clinical Charge Midwife has the discretion of placement into a single room. Overnight support people will be required to sign an agreement outlining the expectations of their stay. If a single room is not available partners may stay for the full duration of the day from 7am to 8pm. Women in a shared room could have a support person stay but will need to have staff negotiate this with the woman in the other bed and senior staff on shift. That support person may need to be a woman.
- Request for discretionary consideration for changes to the above on compassionate grounds should be discussed with the midwife in charge.
- Ideally we would like children to stay home but please discuss with the midwife in charge if children need to attend for short visits or on compassionate grounds to enable partners to be in attendance during the day.

Cancer & Blood Directorate

- Restricted visiting will continue as due to this being a high risk service area. Patients to this outpatient area will continue to be screened on arrival.

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Document owner: Wendy Stanbrook-Mason, Deputy Chief Nurse

Document approved by: Alex Pimm, Incident Controller