

# SANTIAM HOSPITAL

## PATIENT VISITORS

**STANDARD:** The Hospital supports patient welfare through espousal of patient visitation preferences and consistent observation of Hospital rules pertinent to patient visitors.

### DEFINITIONS

family: one or more people who play a significant role in the life of a given patient; family members may identify as any gender and may include a spouse, domestic partner, significant other, or other people not biologically or legally related to the patient. The breadth of this definition is applicable for use of the word “family” throughout Hospital policy, documentation, and patient care.

### POLICY:

#### I. Visitation Rights

- A. A given Hospital patient will be permitted to receive any visitors designated by the patient, including a spouse or domestic partner (of any gender identification), other family members, or friends; the patient will also be permitted to nullify any such designation at any time.
- B. Visitor prerogatives will not be restricted on basis of visitor age, culture, ethnicity, gender expression, gender identity, language, mental disability, physical disability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status; however, prerogatives of a given Hospital patient visitor may be restricted in accord with patient preference.
- C. A given Hospital patient will be notified of patient visitation rights, as well as limitation on such rights due to patient condition; such notification will take place during patient notification of other rights described in the document CM / Patient Rights / “Patient Rights and Responsibilities”.
- D. With exception described in E, a given Hospital patient may designate any single given person to be patient support person; such a person will be permitted at all times to be present with the patient to provide emotional support, provided that such presence both does not interfere with care or rights of any patient, and the person observes all rules described in II.
- E. Support People for Disabled Patients
  1. A given disabled Hospital patient may designate three support people, provided that such disability indicates patient need for assistance with any of the following activities:
    - a. communication with Hospital staff or Medical Staff members
    - b. decision about matters related to healthcare
    - c. engagement in activities of daily living
  2. A given support person described in 1 will be permitted at all times to be present with the patient, provided that such presence both does not interfere with care or rights of any patient, and the person observes all rules described in II.
  3. At least one given support person designated as described in 1 will be present for any discussion that relates to determination about any of the following topics that relate to patient end of life care:
    - a. hospice care
    - b. provision or withdrawal of life-sustaining treatment

#### II. Rules Pertinent to Patient Visitors

- A. Visiting Hours
  1. Hospital hours for most patient visitors will be 1100-2000.
  2. For a given patient, family members and support people described in I.D-E may be present at all hours, provided that patient condition and safety considerations permit such presence.
  3. Overnight accommodations may be made available for family members of very young patients, critically ill patients, laboring patients, or hospice patients; decision to provide such accommodations will be made at Hospital staff discretion and informed by patient preference.

- B. Privacy
  - 1. For a given patient, every visitor, family member, and support person will respect privacy of all Hospital patients; any such person may be asked to leave the patient room at times during which patient privacy might be compromised.
  - 2. For a given patient, every visitor, family member, and support person will be permitted to lounge only in the patient room or in designated Hospital waiting areas; such people may use a cellular phone in such areas, provided that such use involves sensible discretion and silenced ringers.
- C. Infection Control
  - 1. For a given patient, every visitor, family member, and support person will observe Hospital policy germane to infection control and will take sensible measures to minimize spread of communicable disease.
  - 2. Unless food and drink brought by a visitor, family member, or support person of a given patient are approved by a Nursing Service staff member or a Medical Staff member, such food and drink will be prohibited in the patient room and other patient care areas.
  - 3. If visitation restriction for a given patient is warranted because of epidemiologic conditions, Hospital staff will collaborate with the patient and family members to determine the most appropriate means by which both optimal safety and patient support might be achieved.
- D. Limitations on Visitor Number
  - 1. Limitations on the number of simultaneous visitors for a given patient will depend partially on patient location and will include the following maximums and restrictions:
    - a. Emergency Department: one or two visitors maximum
    - b. Family Birth Unit: two visitors maximum in Labor and Delivery rooms; one visitor maximum in Operating Room or Nursery
    - c. Intensive Care Unit: four visitors maximum; visitors younger than ten years are not permitted without Shift Supervisor approval
    - d. Medical-Surgical Unit: four visitors maximum
    - e. Surgery: two visitors maximum in "Pre-Op, Post-Op" patient rooms
  - 2. Hospital staff will reserve right to place further limitation on number described in 1, based on patient condition and other applicable safety considerations.

**PROCEDURE:**

- I. **Designation of Patient Family**
  - A. As soon after Hospital admission as is possible, Hospital staff will seek designation by given patient of family members and support people; such designation will include identification of people who possess applicable durable power of attorney for healthcare.
  - B. If a given patient is unable to execute designation described in A, Hospital staff involved in admission will attempt such designation based on available data and the above Definition of "family".
- II. Designation by a given patient of visitor preferences, family members, and support person will be recorded in the health information record and will be consistently and comprehensively communicated to Hospital staff involved in patient care.
- III. **Visitor Access**
  - A. Hours for Hospital entrances will include those that follow:
    - 1. Emergency Department entrance: open at all times
    - 2. Front and North Hospital entrances: open 0600-2000
  - B. Checking in prior to Visit
    - 1. A given patient visitor, family member, or support person will check in at the appropriate nurses station prior to visiting a patient in any of the following locations:
      - a. Emergency Department
      - b. Family Birth Unit
      - c. Intensive Care Unit

2. The Hospital staff member who receives the person listed in 1 will contact the nurse who is caring for the patient to ensure that visitation is appropriate.

#### **IV. Visitor Restriction**

- A. A given patient visitor, family member, or support person who engages in abusive, disruptive, or unsafe practice will be addressed by appropriate Hospital staff in a prompt and direct manner.
- B. Restriction of a given patient visitor, family member, or support person will be justified under any of the following conditions:
  1. legal justification is documented in the health information record
  2. behavior of such a person poses direct risk to anyone
  3. behavior of such a person disrupts patient care or Hospital operation
  4. such a person has contracted or has been exposed to communicable disease that could compromise patient health
  5. epidemiologic conditions warrant visitation restriction
  6. the patient has requested limitation on visitor number