





A guide to person centred visiting for patients and visitors in NHS Ayrshire & Arran

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Introduction

Work with us to support person centred visiting

After significant restrictions over the last two years, NHS Ayrshire & Arran is delighted to advise our patients and their loved ones that we are now able to move forward and adopt a more person centred approach to visiting.

NHS Ayrshire & Arran recognises the important part family and friends can play in a patient's healthcare journey and recovery. We believe that visiting should be considered a central part of patient care. Visits should be at a time that is convenient to both the patient and the visitor.

Our new person centred approach supports visiting from 8am until 10pm, seven days a week. We will also support individual visits out with these times where possible, with the consent of the patient.

In order to successfully support this, it is important that visitors work with staff to ensure we deliver the best visiting experience for all our patients and their visitors. It is essential that we maintain the safety, privacy and dignity of our patients at all times.

We ask that visitors are mindful of the following guidance;

- Whilst you may decide the timing of your visit, we ask that routine visits do not last longer than 60 minutes (unless prior arrangements have been made with staff).
- All visiting arrangements will be discussed with the patient and their wishes will be respected at all times.

- Only two visitors should attend at any given time to maintain a safe environment and to prevent overcrowding in shared patient areas.
- All children under ten must be accompanied by an adult.
- Please try to keep noise to a minimum, especially in shared patient areas where other patients may be resting.
- If you have a special request for visits out with the guidance, please contact the ward directly and staff will work with you and the patient to accommodate your requests where possible
- We ask that you avoid busier times where possible such as early morning and mealtimes (unless assisting your loved one). Visitor access may be restricted during ward rounds due to patient confidentiality. The ward staff will be able to advise you of when these are carried out as they differ in each ward.
- Whilst a full visit may be difficult in the early morning due to ward activity, family and friends are always welcome to pop in to say hello or perhaps drop off a newspaper at a time that suits their schedule.

There may be occasions when it is not possible to grant visitors immediate access to the ward or their loved one. Please be assured any delays to visits



will only happen when there is a valid reason. Staff do not want to keep you waiting unless it is unavoidable. We ask that visitors work with staff in these circumstances and are mindful that we are in a clinical environment. There will be times that emergency or person care must take priority over a visit.

Please note that there can be a variety of reasons why visitors may be asked to wait. These include;

- Clinical care being carried out, which may include the patient leaving the ward for investigations.
- A patient in the same room receiving clinical or personal care.
- Ward rounds. It may be necessary to limit visitors to maintain patient confidentiality.
- Room overcrowding. If a number of patients in the same room already have visitors present, it may be necessary to ask you to wait to ensure a safe environment is maintained.

When safe visits in shared rooms prove to be difficult, for example when many visitors arrive at the same time, staff and visitors are asked to consider suitable alternatives. For example;

- Consider taking your loved one out of the ward to the canteen or for a walk outside.
- Ask staff if there is a day room or alternative space that can be used for your visit.

Staff will be happy to discuss suitable options for individual patients.

We appreciate how frustrating it can be to have delayed access to a loved one. We ask that you do not take out this frustration on our staff, who are working hard to enable safe, person centred visiting. Let's work together with respect and kindness to ensure a positive visiting experience for all.

Visiting Ayrshire Maternity Unit

The importance of visiting within our maternity hospital cannot be overstated, bringing comfort to women receiving visitors and to those visiting. To accommodate visiting, the health, safety and wellbeing of pregnant women, their babies, the staff in maternity, neonatal unit and in the community is crucial. This remains our absolute priority.

Ayrshire Maternity Unit will also support person centred visiting. In some instances some restrictions may need to be applied due to space and clinical activity. In addition to inpatient visiting, the following applies;

- For labour and birth we are welcoming two birthing partners on the labour ward and midwifery suite.
- For an elective caesarean, only one birthing partner can be in maternity theatre.
- For induction of labour, women may be accompanied by one birthing partner on the inpatient ward.



- Women attending outpatient appointments or the assessment unit at Ayrshire Maternity Unit may bring one adult to accompany them. They may not be able to enter the treatment or investigation area with you due to space and the need to socially distance.

All other guidance aimed at maintaining the safety of all within the hospital setting applies as set out in this guidance. This includes wearing face coverings within the hospital and clinic settings.

Neonatal unit and paediatrics

Within this highly specialised environment, visiting is encouraged at what can often be a difficult time for families anxious to take their child home.

Within this area, a family centred approach is promoted so parents can spend valuable time with their child or baby. This can be arranged with the ward staff. No restrictions on time or appointments are required for parents.



Staff will assist you regarding the need for PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) or any other requirements to maintain the safety of the rest of the babies and children in the department.

Other visitors can arrange to attend the neonatal unit or paediatric ward following discussion with the nurse in charge.

Important safety measures for all visits

COVID-19 is still with us and can be transmitted easily. To reduce the risk, careful attention to Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) measures around visiting still need to be maintained.

The following measures should be employed for visiting to ensure the safety of all;

- Face masks must be worn at all times in the hospital setting.
- Visitors should follow all existing IPC measures as directed by the staff.
- It is very important for the health and wellbeing of patients and staff that people do not visit if they are feeling unwell in any way, or have symptoms of COVID-19. This includes;
 - Feeling generally unwell
 - New/continuous cough
 - Change in body temperature
 - Change in normal sense of taste or smell
 - If they are self-isolating because they have been in contact with someone suspected as having, or has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days.



However, please note that visitors are not required to take a Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test if they have no COVID-19 symptoms.

Circumstances when visiting may be restricted

In the event of an outbreak of COVID-19, the Local Incident Management Team (IMT) will reinstate some restrictions for short periods. This protects patients, visitors and staff, as is normal practice in an outbreak.

Similar restrictions will also be in place in all areas/wards with COVID-19 patients.

Where special restrictions are in place, staff will keep visitors updated on visiting arrangements but the following will apply in the circumstances stated.

Wards experiencing a COVID-19 outbreak/ COVID-19 designated wards

- Each patient will be permitted one designated visitor for the duration of the outbreak.
- There may be some flexibility to change the visitor, dependent on the patient and family circumstances. It is not appropriate to change the designated visitor on a regular basis.
- The designated visitor will be allowed one visit per day.
- Visits should be 45 to 60 minutes long.
- A surgical or FRSM face mask must be worn at all times. We would actively



discourage anyone with a mask exemption from visiting a COVID-19 area.

- Visitors must be compliant with all PPE requirements in accordance with the situation of the patient they are visiting and undertake all other hygiene requirements. Support will be provided to put on and take off PPE as necessary. Staff will provide all necessary guidance to enable a safe visit.
- Patients in these areas will not be able to leave the ward during a visit.

Visiting and accompanying patients in our emergency departments

Due to the layout of our Emergency Departments and the nature of the care carried out in this area, some restrictions will apply. When possible, our staff will work with patients and their families to ensure that patients have access to at least one visitor whilst in the department. This may include being accompanied during assessment where appropriate.

All visitors considering visiting a patient in this area are advised to contact the department first to discuss a visit.

Visiting patient in our mental health settings

In some of our mental health settings, there may be some requirements to restrict visiting or agree some pre visiting assessment. These arrangements will always be considered in the best interests of the patient and will be fully discussed with visitors prior to visits being arranged.

Please contact the ward directly if you are unsure of any visiting requirements or to discuss any aspect of visiting. Staff will do their best to help reach an agreeable arrangement whilst ensuring the safety and best care of the patient.

Spiritual care

As visiting is re-established we also reaffirm the significant role that faith, belief and culture play in our patient's lives. Our healthcare chaplains are available to visit and support patients spiritual needs and those of their families.

Spiritual care and connection is also available through the re-opening of the physical places (our hospital sanctuaries). These are available to attend to our human need for places to stop, breathe and reflect. Every hospital site has one of these spaces.

Patients with particular faith or belief needs are also reminded that faith or belief community representatives can also visit by following hospital safety procedures. In line with caring for our patients, we discourage faith representatives from arranging to visit more than two parishioners or patients on any one visit to reduce the risk of transmission.

These visits apply to COVID-19 and outbreak areas too with the same safety measures employed.

Virtual visiting

Virtual visiting is an important part of our person-centred approach to visiting. Where in-person support is not possible or to supplement in-person visits, a patient may use the hospital iPad/iPod or their own personal mobile or tablet to maintain contact with the people who matter to them.

It is important to remember that this virtual approach will not be appropriate for some people and it should not be used to replace in-person support. The virtual option is available for circumstances where in-person support is prevented either for clinical reasons or by geographical distance or because the visitor is isolating. Our first option should always be to aim to facilitate in-person support from family, carers or friends.

Further guidance on Virtual Visiting can be found in our Virtual Visiting Guidance document.

We are happy to consider requests for this publication in other languages or formats such as large print.



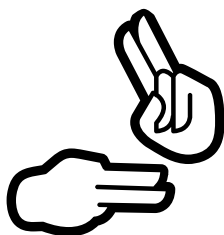
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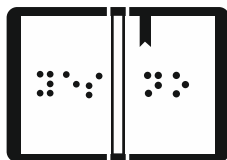
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