

<b>POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL</b>	NUMBER: B-506
	EFFECTIVE: December 2016
APPROVED BY: Senior Administration – December 16, 2016	REVISED:
	REVIEWED

## **CARE PARTNER AND VISITOR POLICY**

### **INTENT:**

To provide guidance to staff and patient's family/friends (care partners) to facilitate the presence of care partners at the bedside while continuing to ensure that patients receive ongoing therapeutic care in a healing environment at the Queensway Carleton Hospital.

To provide guidance to staff and patient's family and friends regarding social visits to the patient while at the Queensway Carleton Hospital

### **POLICY:**

Queensway Carleton Hospital (QCH) has recognized the need for a patient and family centered approach to health care and has prioritized the delivery of health care services around the needs of its patients and their families. QCH supports **Care Partner Presence** and participation at the bedside. Care partners are identified by the patient or Power of Attorney as individuals that will provide ongoing support and care for the patient during their hospital stay and after discharge. Two care partners are welcome at the bedside 24 hours a day, according to the patient's preference.

QCH recognizes the difference between care partners and visitors and has collaborated with the QCH Patient and Family Advisory Council regarding this policy. The QCH Patient and Family Advisory Council speak to the importance of having a Care Partner with them to provide support, learn and help them with physical care and to remember the information provided by the health care team and to share it with your family.

Queensway Carleton Hospital welcomes two care partners or visitors at any one time at the bedside, with the exception of Day Care Surgery Unit and Post Anesthesia Care Unit where space and the nature of the care limits this to one Care Partner. We request that visitors be respectful of patients needs for treatment, therapies and require periods of rest to recover from their illness. While there are no set times for visitors we are encouraging them to visit between 10am and 9pm and to check with the patients' care partner prior to visiting.

Care Partner presence and visitation polices are reviewed at times of increased risk. Patient access may be altered based on risk and patient needs (e.g. Outbreak situations).

### **DEFINITIONS:**

**Patient-** all individuals who receive health services across the continuum of care at QCH

**Family-** a relative of the patient or any person (significant other) with whom the patient shares an established relationship

**Care Partner-** an individual designated by the patient on admission or later during their hospital experience to support the patient during the hospital stay and during the discharge process

**Children-** anyone under 14 years of age

**Outbreak** – an increase in the number of cases (colonized and/or infected) above the number normally occurring in a particular health care setting over a defined period of time. The case definition of an outbreak is defined by Infection Prevention and Control consultation with Ottawa Public Health

**Attending Physician/Intensivist**- the physician who has the responsibility and accountability for the medical care of the patient

**Staff**- all employees (full, part time, casual), physicians, registered volunteers, students and affiliates

**Visitor**- any person with whom the patient has a relationship, that the patient would like to see

**Define Power of Attorney** - A Power of Attorney is a legal document that gives someone else the right to act on your behalf when you are unable

**PROCEDURE:**

1. Two Care Partners are welcome 24 hours a day according to patient's preference. We do encourage care partners to go home at night to rest and to take breaks both to eat and to refresh themselves.
2. The name of the Care Partners is obtained from the patient or power of attorney as early as possible in the admission and is noted in the chart and written on the patient care board at the patient's bedside. In situations where the patient cannot speak for him or herself, is otherwise incapacitated and cannot identify who should be present, or when there is no obvious significant other, such as a spouse or life partner or adult child or parent, hospital staff will make the most appropriate decision possible under the circumstance. Patients may modify their preferences during the hospital experience.
3. Visitors are encouraged to visit between 1000 and 2100.
4. Visitors are encouraged to contact the Care Partner prior to visiting to ensure that the patient is able to have visitors
5. As part of the admission process, the assigned nurse will ensure the patient and care partner(s) are informed of the policy. Care Partner presence and visitor information will be available in the Patient Handbook and on the QCH website.
6. All Care Partners/visitors must be free of communicable diseases (fever, cough, runny nose, sore throat, rash, vomiting diarrhea) for a minimum of 48hrs before visiting and must respect the hospital's infection control practices (hand washing, gowning and gloving and mask use).

7. Please note that QCH is a scent-free environment and that Care Partners and visitors should refrain from wearing scented products or bring scented products into the hospital.
8. Care Partners are welcome and encouraged to participate in providing personal care, as per their level of comfort (and ability to provide safe care), and as specified by the patient.
9. Nurses and other health care team members will provide guidance to patients and Care Partners during the hospital stay about how to care for the patient upon discharge. There may be times when the Care Partners may be asked to temporarily leave the room if their roommate requires immediate life saving measures or when a private/sensitive discussion needs to occur.
10. To facilitate communication, the Care Partners should be the point of contact with other family members and visitors for updates regarding the patient's condition, and the patient's wishes for visitors and the visiting hours.
11. Children under 14 years of age are welcome and must remain accompanied and supervised by an adult at all times. The patient or QCH staff will not be responsible for the supervision of children under 14 years of age. Younger children may be developmentally unable to remain with the patient for lengthy periods of time, shorter visits may be better for both parties. Please note that if the patient requires visitors to wear personal protective equipment (PPE), QCH does not have PPE for small children under 14 years of age. Alternative arrangements will be required.  
Please note that QCH is a scent-free environment and that Care Partners and visitors should refrain from wearing scented products or bring scented products into the hospital.
12. Disruptive behavior and unsafe practices are not acceptable and will be addressed directly and promptly. Any form of aggressive behavior (includes verbal abuse) will not be tolerated. Protection Services and/or Police will be called and the person(s) will be directed to leave.
13. Care partner/ visitor guidelines may be changed or suspended at any time according to the hospital's policies and procedures for addressing disease outbreak and other emergency situations in the hospital. In this event, the hospital will do its best to communicate the change to the patients and the community at large in a timely and effective manner.

**APPENDICES:**

- A. Appendix : Visiting at Queensway Carleton Hospital – fact sheet for website to guide visitors

**REFERENCES:**

Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvements (CRHI) campaign.(2016) Better Together. Retrieved from <http://www.cfhi-fcass.ca/WhatWeDo/better-together>

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Institute for Patient and Family –Centered Care. (2010). Changing hospital “visiting” policies and practices: Supporting family presence and participation. Retrieved from: <http://www.ipfcc.org/visiting.pdf>.

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Southlake Regional Health Center. Visiting Hours. Retrieved from <http://www.southlakeregional.org/Default.aspx?cid=245>

The Ottawa Hospital. Visiting Hours & Guidelines. Retrieved from <https://www.ottawahospital.on.ca/wps/portal/Base/TheHospital/PatientsAndVisitors/VisitingTheHospital/VisitingGuidelines>

## **APPENDIX A: Visiting at Queensway Carleton Hospital**

The Queensway Carleton Hospital is proud to be a patient and family centered hospital. The recovery of your family member or friend is our primary concern. Our visiting hours reflect the needs of our patients: to rest, to take part in care and treatment, and to have the support of family and friends.

Queensway Carleton Hospital welcomes two Care Partners or visitors at any one time at the bedside with the exception of Day Surgery Unit and Post Anesthesia Unit where space and the nature of the care limits this to one care partner

### **Types of Visitors**

- Care Partner- A visitor designated by the patient or substitute decision maker, as a person who is important to them. They should be someone who is deeply involved in the patient's health care journey and is integral to the overall well-being of the patient. The designated Care Partner is welcome to be at the bedside at all times.
- Visitor- A guest of the patient or family who wants to provide well wishes and social connections. He /she may be a friend or relative of the patient or family.

**Up to two Care Partners or visitors are welcome to stay at the patient's bedside at QCH 24 hours a day, however visitors are encouraged to visit between 1000 and 2100**

Patient/family spokesperson- To help with communication of information, Queensway Carleton Hospital recommends that the patient or substitute decision maker choose a family member or Care Partner to act as their spokesperson. The spokesperson's role includes telling friends and family about the visiting guidelines and serving as a first contact for any questions on the patient's condition.

**Please do not visit the patient if you feel, unwell or have:**

- Cough
- Fever
- Runny nose
- Sore throat
- Diarrhea
- Recent contact with chicken pox, or measles

**Clean your hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizer frequently to stop the spread of infectious. Clean your hands when:**

- Entering and exiting the hospital
- Entering and exiting the patient's room
- Touching the patient or his/her surroundings.

### **Visitor Etiquette**

1. Please keep your visits short to approximately 20 minutes.
2. Please be respectful of the patient's roommate's need for privacy, rest and recovery. You may be asked to leave the room while a healthcare provider is talking with the patient about their care.
3. Children under 14 years of age must be supervised by an adult (not the patient) at all times. Children should be prepared for the hospital environment and the patient's illness.

4. Please check with the patient or Care Partner prior to visiting to ensure that the patient is up to having visitors and that it does not conflict with the patient's times for therapy or tests.
5. Please follow the infection control guidelines post on the door. If you are unsure of what to do, talk to the Nurse prior to entering the room.
6. Please do not wear scented products or bring scented products to the hospital.

### **Care Partner Etiquette**

- Please use the public washrooms, not the washroom in the patient's room.
- Please keep noise to a minimum. Use headphones when listening to music or watching TV.
- During the night, use minimal lighting.
- It is important for Care Partners to be rested however, if you are staying the night, please provide your own blankets and pillows.
- Please do not wear scented products or bring scented products to the hospital.

Queensway Carleton Hospital endeavours to provide each patient with safe, high quality care and must ensure a safe environment for our patients, staff, volunteers and members of the public at all times. For everyone's safety and protection we have a Violence Prevention Program. The Queensway Carleton Hospital does not permit any kind of violent or aggressive behavior. If a Care Partner or visitor becomes aggressive or violent they may be asked to leave. Please note, that there may be times that we need to restrict visitors to the hospital, for example, when a patient's condition warrants, or when other factors such as an outbreak require that visitors be limited.