

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to the Manager of the unit or to the **Director of Patient Relations and Patient Safety** at: **519-376-2121** ext. 2311.



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# Visitor Guidelines

## Information for Patients & Their Support People



### Family members are part of the health care team

At Grey Bruce Health Services, we promote and support a patient and family-centered approach to care. Families, friends and other caregivers are respected as essential members of the health care team, and are important to your safety, comfort, physical and emotional well-being, and your recovery.

The following information is intended to help patients and support people understand the Visitor Guidelines and to know what to expect when in hospital.

### Information for Patients

#### Identifying your support person

At the start of any hospital admission, we will ask you to identify one person who will be your support person. This is a person of your choosing, and can be a family member or other individual. You may change your support person at any time during your hospital stay.

#### How will the hospital staff work with my support person?

Nurses and others on the health team provide guidance in many ways, including:

- Identifying how your support person can be part of care, care planning, and decision making
- Identifying how your support person and/or family members can help you during your hospital stay, during your move back home or to community care

- Ensuring privacy and respect for other patients and families who might share the same room or area

#### How long can my support person be with me?

You are welcome to have your support person with you at ANY time you wish during your hospital stay.

#### What about other family/visitors?

All other visitors are welcome from 2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. However, patients who are critically ill, receiving end of life care and/or parents who have experienced a loss related to pregnancy or childbirth are welcome to have unlimited family/visitors with them in hospital.

#### Are there times when visitors may be limited?

You or anyone else involved in your care may wish, or request, a change in the presence and participation of visitors at the bedside. In cases where there are shared rooms, this change may involve the other patient, their families, and other partners in care.

You or anyone involved in your care may request a change in order to promote rest and healing, or to ensure privacy during the delivery of personal care such as bathing.

Disruptive visitor behavior will not be tolerated, and these situations will be addressed directly and promptly.

## Are there specific guidelines for visiting children?

- Children of all ages supervised by an adult are welcome
- Although younger children may only be able to stay with you for short periods of time, visits with these children may be very important to your well being
- Children should be told about the hospital environment and your illness as appropriate
- Children are expected to remain with the adult who is in charge of them
- Children who are disruptive may be asked to leave. This is to allow a safe and restful environment for you and other patients and a positive and age appropriate experience for the children
- Proof of vaccination status must be provided for siblings under the age of 18 intending to visit the Neo-natal Intensive Care Unit

## How can I keep my family informed about my hospital stay?

Your designated support person is in the best position to be the spokesperson and to share information with other family members at your request. You are encouraged to ask your support person to be the family spokesperson.

## Are there any other restrictions that may impact my family/visitors?

Persons feeling unwell (fever, cough, runny nose, sore throat, skin rash, vomiting and/or diarrhea within the last 48 hours) are asked not to visit the hospital.

If an infectious disease outbreak requires some visitor restrictions, the staff will work with you and your family to make sure that selected family members and your designated support person are still welcome. We recognize the value of the emotional support provided by visitors, and we will work with you to ensure this support can continue.

To help prevent the spread of infection in hospitals, all visitors are asked to use the available hand sanitizers when they enter and leave the hospital, and regularly during their visit. Other infection control measures may apply.

## Information for the Support People

Grey Bruce Health Services respects the rights of our patients to have a support person with them whenever they wish. You have been identified as the support person. You will be allowed to be with the patient

whenever the patient wants/needs you to be, up to and including 24 hours/day.

You will also be encouraged to be the family spokesperson (giving updates to the family, asking questions of the staff about care, etc.).

### Here are some helpful hints for being an effective support person:

1. Ask questions of staff and physicians and provide your own viewpoint as to the patient's previous health and health habits.
2. Speak for the patient if they need care they are not getting.
3. Be part of discussions around ongoing care particularly with respect to discharge plans.
4. If you are the home support person for the patient, spend time getting to know the patient's daily routines and care needs. His or her needs may be different in the morning than the evening, and the patient's physical abilities may also vary depending on the time of day. It is important to know the level of care the patient will need throughout the day.
5. Understand that staff or physicians may ask you to leave the room during personal care.
6. Be aware that the patients in other beds in the room have a right to privacy and quiet. It may be necessary to ask you to leave the room for either of those reasons.
7. Be available to sit with the patient if their condition worsens. This could be at night.
8. Take part in discussions about post-discharge appointments, particularly if you will be the driver for the patient.
9. Explain your role to the rest of the patient's family. Invite them to come during visiting hours.