

Visitation Changes November 2020

Information for employees

Updated 17 November 2020

Following the [easing of restrictions](#) announced by the Premier, we have made updates to our hospital visitor restrictions.

Restrictions vary by area. Detailed visitation guidelines can be found below. Please familiarise yourself with these guidelines.

Please note that physical distancing requirements and room limits apply.

Updated posters can be found on the COVID-19 site. These posters have been sent to DCOs and General Managers to replace previous signage.

Talking points

Visitor restrictions are in place due to COVID-19. These are a necessary step in keeping our patients and healthcare workers safe.

We recently updated our visitor restrictions to allow more visitors.

Due to physical distancing requirements, visitation is limited to two visitors, per patient, per visit in most areas.

However, in some areas we can only accommodate one visitor at a time due to the physical space available.

Our local care teams will provide advice about how many visitors we can safely admit to an area at a time.

If the patient is well enough, visitors may meet with patients outside, or in communal areas, but you must comply with physical distancing rules and room limits.

Outside of these requirements, we have also removed all time limits for partners visiting maternity wards, and people under 16 are now allowed to visit.

Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Visitor restrictions

Updated 18 November 2020

Limiting visitor numbers is a necessary step in protecting patients, healthcare workers and the community.

Room limits apply

Due to physical distancing requirements, visitor numbers are limited in most areas.

Please follow the advice of our local care teams regarding room limits in the area you are visiting.

As a condition of entry, visitors must:

- Not visit if you are unwell
- Be screened for signs of COVID-19 on entry
- Wear a surgical mask, which will be provided
- Maintain 1.5m physical distance from others
- Follow staff instructions at all times

Our team are working hard to help you, and deserve to feel respected and feel safe at work. Rudeness, bullying, threats, violence, racism, sexism or offensive language will not be tolerated.

General wards

Adults

- Two visitors from the same household, once per day, for a maximum of two hours.
- Visiting children must be under the direct supervision of an adult at all times.
- Visiting hours are between **1-3pm** and **5-7pm**.

Children (Under 18 years):

- Two parents or carers/guardians at any time. Visits are not time-limited.
- One parent, guardian or carer may stay overnight.
- Visiting siblings must be under the direct supervision of an adult at all times.

Outpatients / Appointments

- One support person may accompany an adult or child to most outpatient appointments. Note social distancing limits apply.

Emergency Departments

- **Adults:** One career or support person may accompany an adult to the Emergency Department. Visits are not time-limited.
- **Children:** Two parents or carers/guardians may accompany a child to the Emergency Department and stay with the child.

Intensive Care Unit

- Two visitors from the same household, per visiting session, for a maximum of one hour. Please note space limits may apply
- Visiting hours are between **1-3pm** and **5-7pm**.

Paediatric Intensive Care

- Two parents or carers/guardians at any time. Visits are not time-limited.
- Visiting siblings on a case by case basis

Births and Pregnancy Assessment

- One partner or support person may be present at any time.
- We are unable to support partners/support people at outpatient appointments and ultrasounds due to room size.

Maternity wards

- Subject to social distancing requirements, one partner or support person may visit once for an unlimited time. Shared rooms may require time-limited sessions. Please contact your Midwife for advice.
- No siblings are allowed.

Mental Health

Child (Oasis), Adolescent (Stepping Stones) and Perinatal and Infant Inpatient Unit

- Visitors (immediate family/carers) may attend at any time by appointment.

Youth and Adult Mental Health Inpatient Units:

- One **patient** nominated visitor per visit, by appointment only, once per day, for a maximum of two hours.
- Visiting hours are between **1–7.30pm** daily

Unit 4 Dandenong Hospital (SECU)

- One **patient** nominated visitor per visit, by appointment only, once per day, for a maximum of two hours.
- Visiting hours are between **1–5pm** daily

Aged Persons Mental Health Units (Unit 3 and Biala)

- One **patient** nominated visitor per visit, by appointment only, once per day, for a maximum of two hours.
- Visiting hours are between **1–5pm** daily

Community Residential Units (Community Care Units, Transitional Support Unit, Prevention & Recovery Care Services)

- One **consumer** nominated visitor per visit, by appointment only, once per day, for a maximum of two hours.
- Visiting hours are between **1–5pm** daily.

Residential Aged Care

- **Visitors:** One household, once per day, for a maximum of two hours. Due to social distancing requirements, this will be limited to two people at any one time in most cases.
- Visiting hours are between **1–5pm** daily (please call to arrange a suitable time).
- **Visitors must have had an up-to-date flu vaccination** and produce a certificate or sign a declaration stating they have had the vaccination. Visitors without a current flu vaccination must contact the facility ahead of visiting to ensure local arrangements can be made.

Terminal Care or Life-threatening situations

- Two visitors can provide compassionate support for a patient at the late stages of a terminal illness or where there is a high risk of death in relation to impending treatment or surgery.
- Visits are not time-limited. (Maximum four groups in a 24-hour period).

Unstable or deteriorating situations

- Two visitors can provide support to a patient whose condition has been assessed as unstable or deteriorating. Visits are not time-limited.
- Visiting hours are between **8am-8pm** daily or as needed for acute deterioration.

Palliative care

- Two visitors can provide support for Palliative care patients whose condition is stable.
- Visiting hours are between **12-2pm** and **5-7pm**.

Caregivers

One caregiver is allowed in the following situations, where care cannot be reasonably be provided via electronic or other non-contact means.

- **Physical support:** To provide emotional, cultural, spiritual or social support necessary to the patient. One visitor per day, for a maximum of 2 hours.
- **Emotional support:** To provide essential care and support necessary for the patient's physical wellbeing that optimises the care and support delivered by workers of the hospital. One visitor at a time, visits are not time-limited.
- **Essential emotional, cultural or social support:** To provide essential care and support necessary for the patient's emotional, cultural or social wellbeing (including mental health supports) that optimises the care and support delivered by workers of the hospital. For example, the person's presence is required to support individual behaviours of concern such as dementia or is necessary to support decision making for a person with cognitive impairment or disability. One visitor at a time, visits are not time-limited.
- **Language support:** To provide interpreter or informal language support to enable the delivery of care. One visitor at a time, visits are not time-limited.
- **Patient care support:** To learn about supporting the patients care upon the patient's discharge. One visitor, once per day, for a maximum of 2 hours.

FAQs for employees

Updated 18 November 2020

Do I need to check identity to confirm that visitors are all from the same household?

No, but please ask. We will take people at their word.

The government guidance says that a household can attend. Why have we limited visitors to two per visit?

Physical distancing requirements mean that in the majority of our care locations, we are unable to accommodate more than two visitors per patient. In some areas, due to the physical space available, we can only accommodate one visitor at a time.

In the end, it is about maintaining a safe environment for our patients and employees.

What do I do if there are more visitors than the room limit allows?

Please advise visitors that we can only admit the number of visitors specified in the room limit at any one time. Physical distancing and room limit rules apply for the safety of all.

How do we manage multiple people arriving and queues?

Security guards will help to manage queues, advising large family groups on arrival that we are unlikely to be able to accommodate their visit.

If a patient is well enough, can they meet with visitors outside, or in a communal space?

Yes. If a patient is well enough, they can meet with visitors outside or a communal area, while observing physical distancing and room limits. This is at the discretion of the care team.

There are almost no cases left in the community. Why do we still have visitation restrictions in place?

The safety of our patients and employees is our highest priority. We care for some of the most vulnerable people in our community, and it is important that we take a safe and measured approach to easing restrictions.

Will these guidelines change with further easing of restrictions?

Physical distancing is an essential requirement to control the spread of COVID-19. While COVID-19 remains a potential hazard in the community, we must continue to take care in our physical spaces.

Should advice change significantly, these guidelines will be updated accordingly.

Do partners visiting maternity wards need to follow the 2-hour visitation rule?

No, any time limits for partners visiting the maternity ward have been removed.

What should I do when a visitor is escalating as they state its' their '*Constitutional right*' not to give their name and contact details for contract tracing in order to visit a patient.

It is not a person's constitutional right to refuse to give their name and address if they want to access Monash Health premises.

Monash Health has the right to request names and contact details of people visiting our premises and to refuse them access if those details are not provided.