



## **Hospital Patient Visitor Policy (S-FW-EC-2020)**

### **I. PURPOSE**

Visitors are important for the patient's well being and assist in their recovery. The purpose of the Visitor Policy is to provide guidance to:

- A. Reduce disease transmission by avoiding crowded situations and by asking ill visitors not to visit.
- B. Provide restful, non-disruptive nursing care.
- C. Promote family/ patient-centered care.
- D. Control appropriate access to hospitals.

It is believed that adherence to this policy along with education to patients will contribute to a safe and restful healthcare environment.

### **II. POLICY**

- A. Scripps Health embraces a system approach relative to the inpatient visitation policy. Policy and guidance reflect recommendations from the system-wide Patient Rights Committee and Infectious Disease Council. Final approval of the policy rests with the Executive Cabinet.
- B. Corporate Communications will lead system communications and marketing advertisement (brochures, posters) relative to the content of this policy. All marketing tools will be developed and approved by Corporate Communications in collaboration with the System-wide Infectious Disease Council and Executive Cabinet.
- C. During the flu season and public health situations/emergencies such as a pandemic these practices may be amended to reflect infection control safety concerns. When time permits a consensus statement will be issued from the Infectious Disease Council. Emergent situations will be handled by each site's Infection Control Department and administrative leaders
- D. Scripps staff will inform the patient or their support person where appropriate, of their visitation rights including any clinical restrictions or limitations. Scripps will not restrict or limit or otherwise deny visitation privileges on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, same sex caretakers, parents or a disability. If the patient is incompetent, a support person (who may or may not be the healthcare decision maker), can make decisions for the patient as to who may visit. Visitors will be informed of Scripps Visitation Practices through the following communication mechanisms:
  - 1. The Visitor Practices will be posted at hospital entrances in both English and Spanish.
  - 2. A Guidance for Visitors brochure will be given to all visitors explaining visitor practices, parking, refreshments, the smoke free environment, and the importance of hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette.

3. Provision of Patient Rights and Responsibilities as described in Scripps policy:  
Patient Rights: Access To Scripps Care and Services, Patient Rights and Responsibilities, S-FW-RI-0010.
- E. Patients and the visitors of their choosing have the responsibility to follow hospital policy and are expected to:
  1. Show respect and consideration of the hospital's staff and property as well as other patients and their property.
  2. Respect the need for noise control and the number of visitors.
  3. Acknowledge that the Charge Nurse or RN designee has the authority to remove visitors that impact the health and safety of the patient or unit.
- F. Each Scripps Health facility will determine the appropriate controlled access strategy based on security concerns and the resources necessary to manage access.
- G. Visitors, family or friends will not be allowed to observe or accompany patients in a restricted surgical or procedure area. Exception: a C-section patient is allowed one support person. Visitors will be directed to designated waiting areas: the lobby, cafeteria or waiting rooms. Visitors may not stay or congregate in the hallways or the patient units.
- H. Staff at Scripps Health will respect and promote the patient's right to designate visitors of their choosing and to accommodate visitation whenever possible. There are certain circumstances for health and safety reasons that visitation may not be allowed, and/or the hours and number of visitors may be restricted. Such circumstances include:
  1. Patient requests for no visitors or not to have certain visitors.
  2. Infection Control issues.
  3. Patient is undergoing care interventions.
  4. Visitors may be interfering with other patient's care.
  5. The healthcare team has determined the presence of a particular visitor may endanger the health or safety of a patient, a staff member or significantly disrupt the operations of the facility.
  6. The patient is in custody of law enforcement.
- I. General Visitation Practices
  1. Visiting times are 8:00 AM – 8:30 PM but may vary on specialized units. If patients desire visitors at other times, arrangements can be made with the Charge Nurse. The patient or their support person will be made aware of any specific circumstance limiting visiting.
  2. Visitors who are ill (have an infection, fever, cold, diarrhea or vomiting) or do not feel well should refrain from visiting.
  3. In order to provide patients with adequate rest, visitors are restricted to two (2) people at a time at the bedside. Visitor limitations in Maternal Child Health are based on unit and patient criteria. Children (age 12 and under) may visit the inpatient units but not the intensive care units.
  4. Children must be accompanied by an adult and must be directly supervised at all times. The patient cannot be considered the designee supervising the child.
  5. Visitors including children accompanied by employees or physicians who are not designated patient visitors, must comply with the visitor guidelines and remain in areas designated as public.