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PURPOSE:

The purpose is to set forth reasonable expectations surrounding visitation in the ICU and to define guidelines for visitation that facilitate positive family interaction, support, and education while providing a safe and secure patient, family, and employee environment. The goals are to provide our patients with the environment to rest and recover in a comfortable, quiet, and safe surrounding while enabling family and friends to participate in the care.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to Intensive Care Unit

POLICY STATEMENTS:

- The patient has the right to designate **one chosen support person** (eg, family member, friend, or trusted individual) who is integral to the provision of emotional and social support 24 hours a day, according to the patient's preference, unless the support person infringes on the rights of others and their safety, or the support person's presence is medically or therapeutically contraindicated. The patient may designate a support person to exercise the patient visitation rights in the event the patient be unable to do so. In the event the patient is a minor the parent or legal guardian is that designee. It is the patient's right to withdraw or deny such consent at any time. The designated support person is encouraged to go home and get some rest at night. However, if the designated support person chooses to stay, they may sleep in the patient recliner provided the patient does not need its use. No mat, extra beds, cots or bedding on the floor will be allowed.
 - Support persons are asked to refrain from coming to the nurse's station or changing out during the hours of 6:30am-7:30am and 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm, to allow clinical staff time for shift handoff. The staff will be rounding in each patient room during this time to allow patients to participate in bedside shift report. If patient has not given permission for support person to be present you may be asked to step out during this time.
 - Frequent changing out of the support person may hinder the ability of clinical staff to render care to all patients.
- General visiting hours: See Patient Handbook for posted times/intervals. During this general visiting time, only a total of 2 persons may be present at a time.
 - Visitors are not permitted to wait or congregate in hallways as it can negatively impact the flow of the unit and the privacy of others. Visitors are asked to return to the waiting area upon leaving

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the patient room. Due to special limitations in the patient rooms, we request that the number of visitors be limited to 2 at a time, so as not to hinder the ability of clinical staff to render care to the patients.

- Children under the age of 12 are not routinely allowed to visit in the ICU. Visitation for children under 12 is considered at the request of the patient and coordinated with the charge or lead nurse and/or assistant director and are permitted with certain circumstances that may include, but are not limited to: Imminent death, emergency surgery, worsening of conditions, or the best interest of the patient, etc. Children will need to be accompanied by an adult when visiting the ICU. For their safety small children should not be left unattended in the waiting area.
- In order to respect the privacy of all patients and not hinder the ability of the clinical staff to render care to the patients, support persons/visitors are asked use the provided call light in the room at any time assistance is needed or questions arise.
- Cells phones are permitted for texting only and must be silenced. No photo / pictures or phone calls.
- No food or drinks allowed.
- Use of the patient restroom is not allowed.
- Support person/visitors are asked not to come to the hospital if they are feeling ill or they have signs of or have recently been exposed to communicable diseases or infections. Visitation may be restricted related to community outbreaks of communicable diseases as appropriate (influenza).
- Support person/visitors must be able and willing to adhere to hospital infection control guidelines and isolation precautions. Visitors are asked to use alcohol hand rub before entering and upon leaving patient rooms. If there is an Isolation sign posted, visitors are asked to check with the nurse prior to entering the patient room in order to receive special instructions about isolation precautions.
- Clergy are asked to adhere to all visiting guidelines, however, time intervals may be altered at the convenience of the clergy when the ICU atmosphere permits.
- Support persons/visitors may be asked to wait in the waiting area during times of emergency or critical situations in the ICU, sterile procedures, and other times deemed in the patient's best interest and / or for the safety and privacy of all patients in the ICU.

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- The hospital may place Justified Clinical Restrictions on a patient's visitation rights. In case of restrictions the hospital staff will explain the reasons for the restrictions or limitations and how the policy is aimed at protecting the health and safety of all patients. Any restrictions will be based on clinical reasoning and safety concerns and not on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or disability. A justified clinical restriction may include, but is not limited to one or more of the following:
 - Court order limiting or restraining contact
 - Behavior presenting a direct risk or threat to the patient, hospital staff, or others in the environment
 - Behavior disruptive to the functioning of the patient care unit° Risk of infection for the patient or risk of infection for the visitor° Substance abuse or Behavioral protocols that require the restriction of visitation° Clinical procedures or treatments as indicated by treatment type, risk for exposure to blood and/or bodily fluids, the location of treatment, or need for maintaining sterile fields.
 - Change in patients status such as overstimulation, agitation, or exhaustion
 - Reasonable limitations to the number of visitors at one time so as not to hinder the ability of clinical staff to render care to the patients

- NOTE: There may be unique and extenuating circumstances that may require compassionate exceptions to these guidelines. Your healthcare team, using professional judgement and in collaboration with the patient or their designated support person will consider any unique family circumstances and patient needs when applying these guidelines. In these circumstances and to the greatest extent feasible family will be allowed visitation.