

Purpose: To promote recovery by encouraging family and visitors' visitation.

Policy: Hood Memorial Hospital (HMH) focuses on a family-friendly environment to help make your loved one as comfortable and convenient as possible. Part of that comfort may include seeing friendly, familiar faces while staying in the hospital.

Procedures:

- Visiting hours are as follows:
 - Sunday - Saturday 8:00 am to 9:00 pm
- If a concern or problem arises with a family or friend in relation to visiting hours, it will be brought to the attention of the Charge Nurse and the Administrative Clinical Supervisor respectively. If the problem remains unsolved, the Director will be consulted.
- Patients at HMH have the right to receive visitors whom the patient verbally or in writing consents to have visit, including but not limited to a spouse, domestic partner (including same-sex partners), family members, and friends. HMH shall not restrict, limit, or otherwise deny visitation privileges on the basis of the patient's or visitor's race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or any other characteristic not based on a reasonable or necessary clinical rationale for limiting or denying visitation.

Patients, their legal representative, or designated support person, shall be provided written notice of their visitation rights and any clinically necessary or reasonable restriction/limitation placed on these rights, whenever possible, before the patient's care starts or stops.

- Staff who have a role in facilitating, controlling, or enforcing patient visitation will be educated and trained as follows to effect appropriate implementation of the patient's visitation rights.
- Persons seeking to visit a patient shall enjoy full and equal visitation privileges consistent with patient's preferences and instructions regarding visitation. Including the right to consensual nonsexual physical contact, such as hand holding or hugging between a patient and his/her visitor. It is permissible for a patient to limit, deny, or withdraw the visiting privileges of specific persons.
- **Visitation Limitations/Restrictions**
Respect of the rights and healthcare concerns of other patients; clinical judgment as to the appropriateness of visitation relative to the patient; unreasonable interference with and threat to the caregivers' ability to effectively protect patients' health and safety and

to deliver care; and legal mandates are among the considerations necessitating limiting or restricting patient visitation. Restrictions and limitations may differ according to the type of patientcare unit involved, whether the patient's room is private or semi-private, medical condition/status of the patient and other nondiscriminatory bases. Along with the other information contained herein, the written notice provided to patients regarding their visitation rights shall inform the patient of restrictions/limitations that apply with the clinical rationale for them and visitation hours. Limitation on visitation will be made as a joint provider and patient decision whenever possible.

HMH reserves the right to restrict/terminate visitation should visitors not comply with the rules and standards set forth for visitors or otherwise become disruptive to or interfere in the provision of care to a patient.

In order to effectively promote the patient's rehabilitation process, visiting hours are as follows: Sunday – Saturday 8:00 am – 9:00 pm, subject to situational modification based on patient needs or condition; consideration of other patients' needs or rights; and emergency or other unforeseen circumstances. General visitation is not allowed after 9:00pm in order to provide an environment for patients that best promotes quality rest and individual safety.

Visitors arriving after 9:00pm may be allowed to visit with the patient if the patient indicates that he/she would like to receive the visitor. Check in with the Administrative Nursing Supervisor or Unit Charge Nurse to determine if the patient is accepting visitors. If the visitor is not to be there as the overnight guest, HMH (with patient's input) will set the length of the after-hours visit.

- Rules

The following rules apply to patient visitation at HMH:

Except as set out for the departments listed below, patient visitation hours in all HMH departments shall be from 8:00am – 9:00 pm. Exceptions to visiting hours may be made based on patient needs or condition; consideration of other patients' needs or rights; and emergency or other unforeseen circumstances. General visitation is not allowed between 9:00 pm and 8:00am to allow patients to get the rest they need to recover well.

To help prevent infection, visitation will not be allowed for any visitor showing symptoms of a potentially infectious process; these symptoms may include but are not

limited to: vomiting/diarrhea within 48 hours of visit, rash, or skin lesions, upper respiratory infection, fever over 99.0 F, known exposure to communicable diseases, or other signs of infectious disease.

One overnight visitor for a patient in a private room is allowed. For the safety of our patients and visitors, no visitors under the age of 18 may spend the night. Reasonable attempts will be made to accommodate special requests.

Visitors arriving after 9:00 pm may be allowed to visit with the patient if the patient agrees to see the visitor and other visitation policy criteria are met. Visitors after 9:00 pm must check in with Security staff in the Emergency Department to determine if the patient is accepting visitors. For any approved visitation outside of normal visiting hours, proper identification must be provided and each visitor will be issued a temporary hospital identification which must be visible at all times. HMM strongly encourages visitors under the age of 18 to visit patients only during normal visiting hours.

To promote order in and optimal circumstances for the delivery of care to patients, HMM promotes a limit of two visitors at a time during general visiting hours for inpatient and outpatient areas. However, more visitors will be allowed if the patient's condition and needs, and the caregiver's delivery of care, are not compromised.

- Clergy Visitation during a Declared Public Health Emergency

Clergy is defined as: a minister, priest, preacher, rabbi, imam, Christian Science practitioner; or other similar functionary of a religious organization; or an individual reasonably believed so to be by the person consulting him.

Members of the clergy are allowed to visit patients of the hospital during a declared PHE when a patient, or his legal or designated representative, requests a visit with a member of the clergy, subject to the following conditions and requirements:

- Special consideration and priority for clergy visitation will be given to patients receiving end-of-life care;
- The clergy member may be screened for infectious agents or infectious diseases, utilizing at least the current screening or testing methods and protocols recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as applicable;
- The clergy member may not be allowed to visit a hospital patient if such clergy member has obvious signs or symptoms of an infectious agent or infectious disease, or if such clergy member tests positive for an infectious agent or infectious disease;

- The clergy member may not be allowed to visit a hospital patient if the clergy member refuses to comply with the provisions of the hospital's policy and procedure or refuses to comply with the hospital's reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions;
- The clergy member may be required to wear personal protective equipment as determined appropriate by the hospital, considering the patient's medical condition or clinical considerations. At the hospital's discretion, personal protective equipment may be made available by the hospital to clergy members;
- Clergy visitation will include provisions for compliance with a state health officer (SHO) order limiting visitation during a declared PHE;
- Clergy visitation will comply with any federal law, regulations, requirements, orders, or guidelines regarding visitation in hospitals during a declared public health emergency issued by any federal government agency that are more restrictive than current policy.
- The hospital may adopt reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions, provided that such restrictions are implemented by the hospital, in consultation with appropriate medical personnel, for the purpose of mitigating the possibility of transmission of any infectious agent or infectious disease or for the purpose of addressing the medical condition or clinical considerations of an individual patient.
- A copy of this policy and procedure shall be available without cost to the patient and his/her legal or designated representative, upon request.
- An electronic copy of this policy and procedure will be provided to a member of the clergy upon request.

**References: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) Hospital Conditions of Participation
Louisiana Department of Health Hospital Standards**