

**HACKENSACK UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER**  
**Administrative Policy Manual**

**Patient Visiting**

**Policy No. 521-4**

**Original Issue: July 1958**

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**GENERAL POLICY:**

Hackensack University Medical Center recognizes visitation as a fundamental component of the patient's healing and recovery. Maintaining relationships between patients, their family members, supportive others and care givers are cornerstones of family patient-centered care.

To continue the enhancement of a compassionate healing environment for our patients, we request that all visitors proceed to the Information Desk to receive information in regards to visitation, as well as visitation identification passes.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to define and establish the expectations regarding persons visiting hospitalized patients and to recognize our commitment to provide visitation in accordance with our Bill of Rights and Responsibility policy assuring that visitors will not be discriminated against because of their race, religion, creed, color, national origin, nationality, ancestry, marital status, domestic partnership status, sex, gender identification, affectional or sexual orientation, or disability and or other legally protected classification.

**SCOPE:**

This policy applies to physicians, clinical staff and non-clinical staff involved with respect to patient visitation. All employees of the medical center are responsible for the enforcement of this policy. Employees visiting patients are also subject to the adherence to the visiting policy.

**ADMINISTRATION:** The Executive Vice President, Chief Nursing and Patient Care Officer, Chief Strategy and Operations Officer are responsible for the administration and subsequent revisions to this policy.

**PROTOCOL:**

**I. Visiting Hours**

General Visiting: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with respect to sleeping hours (*Quiet Time is 9:00pm- 8:00am.*) This policy is subject to change for reasons such as direction of the nursing staff in accordance to the patient's condition, immediate care for patient needs and/or emergent situation declared by Medical Center.

**II. General Regulations**

All visitors must obtain passes from the appropriate building's Lobby Information Desk: The information desks are located in the following areas of the medical center complex:

- Main Lobby Link Pavilion
- The Joseph M. Sanzari Children's Hospital
- Donna A. Sanzari Women's Hospital

Visitor passes for the The Joseph M. Sanzari Children's Hospital and Donna A. Sanzari Women's Hospital are color-coded for ease of locating the respective nursing units or departments.

For the safety and respect for privacy of our patients, two guest passes per patient are provided for visitation. While on the medical center campus, we request that all passes be worn and visible at all times. At the information desk, a way-finding map is also provided, as well as, instructions to the designated location.

Family members exhibiting symptoms of illnesses that may include, but are not limited to, coughing, sneezing, runny nose, rash, fever or recent exposure to chicken pox or other communicable disease may not be permitted visitation to the Patient Care Units. During times of infectious outbreak of communicable diseases in the community (e.g. influenza, measles mumps, chicken pox etc.) visitation may be restricted.

Visitors to patients in isolation are subject to isolation guidelines. Upon arrival, staff is available to discuss any specific visiting guidelines based on the clinical condition and care needs of the patient. Based on the medical condition of our patients, two visitors per family, including the parents/legal guardians and siblings between 4–12 years of age, are welcome at the bedside at one time.

### **Visitor Conduct:**

Hospital and ambulatory services visitors are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate and courteous manner:

- Adhere to visiting hour restrictions
- Refrain from smoking. Smoking and tobacco use of any kind is prohibited in all areas of the Hackensack University Medical Center Campus, including the associated grounds, campus sidewalks, and driveways and parking structures that are owned, maintained or leased by the medical center, and all company owned and/or leased vehicles
- Not consume alcoholic beverages on campus
- Running, littering or loitering in the hallways is prohibited
- Refrain from loud conversations or from any behavior that may be disruptive to the patient care environment
- Limit cell phone usage in patient care areas especially during Quiet Time
- Children should be under the close supervision of an adult at all times and managed appropriately

- Dress in appropriate attire - shoes and shirts are required

In an effort to support patient-centered care, during visitation, when greater than two visitors are at a patient's bedside, the nursing staff in collaboration with the nurse manager/designee will determine if this situation is clinically advisable for the patient's well being and/or the residing roommate. Visitors who are unresponsive to requests or displaying inappropriate behavior will be referred to Guest Services at extension 61460. Guest Services is available from 05:00am - 11:00pm Please call Security after these hours for assistance.

Occasionally, circumstances occurring on the unit may temporarily warrant further limitations based on the patient's condition at discretion of the primary care physician and/or nurse manager/designee.

The number of visitors at the bedside may be modified by the nurse manager/designee based on the patient's medical condition.

If this request is determined not feasible, the nursing unit will call Guest Services.

#### **IV. General Children Visitation Regulations**

Children between 4 – 12 years of age are allowed in the general patient care areas. Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times.

#### **V. General Maintenance of a Quiet and Therapeutic Healing Environment**

Circumstances whereby the patients healing environment is compromised, will be assessed by the nurse manager/designee. Visitors will be requested to depart to ensure the healing and quiet environment is maintained.

Security may assist, if warranted, and can be contacted at extension 2525. Children under the age of 12 are discouraged but based on the discretion of the nurse manager/designee in collaboration with the family they may be permitted.

#### **VI. General Rooming-In Regulations**

Rooming-in is not encouraged as our patients require rest during their acute care admission. Rooming-In in a private room is under the discretion of the Nurse Manager/designee. The following conditions apply:

- Patient located in a private room
- Guest of patient is over the age of 18 years
- Limited to one guest
- Rooming in at the patient bedside for multiple days is not permitted

For patients, in a semi-private room, rooming-in is not permitted. We support a quiet, healing environment and respect the privacy of both

patients sharing the room. Exceptions can be made under extenuating circumstances at the discretion of the nurse manager/designee. The following conditions apply:

- Consent of the roommate
- Guest of patient is over the age of 18 years
- Limited to one guest
- Sleeping at the patient bedside is not permitted

*Two guests may stay in a patient lounge and have brief visits during the night if requested. Quiet time guidelines must be followed during night time hours.*

### **VII. General Patients' Right to Limit/Deny Visitation**

Patients have the right to deny consent to any or all visitation during their stay, as well as, the withdrawal and/or revision.

Guest Services is to be notified, in writing, of the specific request by the nursing unit. The notification must include the following information:

- Date/Time of Request
- Nursing Unit
- Patient Complete Name
- Patient Medical Record Number
- Patient Room/Bed
- Delineation of specific restrictions (i.e. No Visitors vs. Specific Visitor(s), Time(s)/Day(s) specific)

This written notification, for requests, revisions, or the discontinuation must be faxed to Guest Services at the following number:

- 551-968-0439

### **VIII. Visitation with Greater Two Visitors at Bedside (Exception: Refer to Post-Partum/Ante-Partum Requests, page 5)**

In effort to support patient-centered care, during visitation, when greater than two visitors are at a patient's bedside, the nursing staff will determine if this situation is clinically advisable for the patient and/or the residing roommate.

### **IX. Joseph M. Sanzari Children's Hospital Requests**

- **General Pediatrics/Pediatric Hematology/Oncology/Bone Marrow Transplant/Epilepsy Monitoring Unit (EMU)/ Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU)/Pediatric Emergency Department(PED)**
- General visiting is between the hours of 07:00 am and 10:00 pm
- Parents/legal guardians are permitted 24-hours visitation. One parent/legal guardian may spend the night at the bedside of their loved one
- While waiting, all visitors are to be directed to Patient Lounge The Joseph M. Sanzari Children's Hospital Lobby or Aquarium Café

#### **Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) Requests**

- Patients are allowed visitors at the bedside including parents/legal guardians

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### **Pediatric Emergency Department (PED) Requests**

- Patients are permitted two visitors including parents/legal guardians at the bedside. All other visitors are permitted at the discretion of the nurse manager/designee

[Pediatric S-1 Security Policy 2010](#)

### **Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) Requests**

- Parents/legal guardians and/or authorized representatives are welcome 24-hours a day, seven days a week
- For safety concerns, one parent must accompany family members and visitors at all times
- All parents/legal guardians and visitors must enter the unit via the NICU entrance
- Based on the medical condition of the baby, up to four visitors per family, including the parents/legal guardians and siblings between 4–12 years of age, are welcome at the bedside at one time
- Additional family members/visitors must wait in the family lounge.

[NICU Visiting Guidelines V-01](#)

[NICU S-8 Sibling Visitation Program](#)

## **X. Donna A. Sanzari Women's Hospital Requests**

### **Labor and Delivery Additional Requests**

- **Father/Significant Other and/or Coach:**
  - For safety and privacy of our patient, father/significant other and a coach are permitted in the labor room, delivery room and recovery. No other visitors are permitted.
- **Grandparents**
  - Grandparents are permitted a 30-minute visit in the immediate post- partum period

[Women's and Children's V-2 Patient Visiting](#)

### **Post-Partum/Ante-Partum Requests**

Father/significant other will be issued an identification bracelet by the Nursing Unit. A "Primary" color coded pass must also be obtained at the Donna A. Sanzari Women's Hospital Lobby Information Desk.

- Children must have a visitor pass and be accompanied by an adult at all times
- Children under the age of 18 will be permitted to visit the newly delivered mother and infant sibling for one hour after 10:00 am
- Children under the age of 18 are not permitted to stay overnight on the Post-Partum Units (Mother Baby East,

Mother Baby West or High Risk Ante-partum) under any circumstances

[Women's and Children's V-2 Patient Visiting](#)

**Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) Requests**

- Parents/legal guardians and and/or authorized representatives are welcome 24-hours a day, seven days a week
- For safety concerns, one parent must accompany family members and visitors at all times
- All parents/legal guardians and visitors must enter the unit via the NICU entrance
- Based on the medical condition of the baby, up to four visitors per family, including the parents/legal guardians and siblings between 4–12 years of age, are welcome at the bedside at one time
- Additional family members/visitors must wait in the family lounge. Staff will provide direction to the lounge.

[Women's and Children's V-2 Patient Visiting](#)

**XI. Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU)**

- Two family members/visitors are permitted for medically cleared patients
- No food, beverages, or flowers are allowed into the PACU
- Upon the discretion of the nurse manager/designee, more than two visitors may be at the patient bedside in the Extended Care Area
- All family members/visitors are escorted by staff/volunteers from the Surgical Waiting Area to the PACU
- Staff will advise family members/visitors of the patients status

**Critical Care Units: Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU), Coronary Care Unit (CCU); Surgical Intensive Care Unit (SICU) Cardiac Surgery Intensive Care Unit Requests**

- Only two family members/visitors are permitted at patient's bedside
- When applicable, use designated phones in lounge to call unit prior to entry
- No food, beverages, or fresh flowers are allowed in patient rooms
- During 6:30 – 8:30 a.m. and 7 – 8:00 p.m., we kindly ask to restrict visiting at the bedside during shift-to-shift report in order to limit distractions to the staff and ensure a fluid transition. This includes on the unit and via telephone. Bedside visiting during shift report may be accommodated

- based on the patient's condition at the discretion of the nurse manager/designee
- For the privacy of all patients, staff may ask you to wait in the designated waiting area while we provide care; please do not stand outside of the room
  - Upon entering and exiting a patient's room, please wash your hands or use alcohol hand gel
  - Visitors who have a cough, fever, other form of a cold, or flu-like symptoms are strongly urged to postpone their visit
  - Telephone communication will be limited to one family member
  - No cell phone use in patient rooms
  - Children under 12 years of age are discouraged, although visitation may be granted at the discretion of the nurse manager/designee in collaboration with family members/visitors
  - To encourage rest and healing for patients in the Critical Care Units, visitors are asked to limit their visits during the overnight period and will not be allowed to sleep in the patient's rooms
  - If the patient's condition warrants a change in level of care, visitors may be respectfully asked to leave a patient's room to best care for the patient

### **Specific to Cardiac Surgery Intensive Care Unit:**

- Restricted visiting hours will be mandated on fresh post-operative patients under the nurse's clinical discretion for the safety of the patient
- Open visiting hours may be limited to shorter intervals to allow time for staff to provide safe clinical care to the patient and time for healing and rest

### **Oncology, 5 Pavilion West, Pavilion East, 8 Pavilion West, 8 and 9 Pavilion West**

- For safety, patients may not receive gifts in the form of live plants, flowers, fresh fruit or stuffed animals

### **Psychiatry Unit Requests**

- The interdisciplinary treatment team will consider special arrangements if regular visitation hours are not compatible with family responsibilities or work schedules
  - o 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday/Holiday
  - o 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Saturday/Sunday/Holiday
- Family members/visitors under the age of 16 years are not permitted or upon discretion of the nurse manager/designee in collaboration with family members/visitors visitation may be permitted

**Dialysis Unit Requests**

- Visitation is permitted in the Inpatient Dialysis Suite on 5 Conklin for 10 minutes per hour, at the discretion of the nurse manager/designee
- Visitation is not permitted during cannulation, access site preparation, treatment initiation, and treatment discontinuation which are times that sterile technique is observed
- All visitors will be requested to leave the treatment suite if a patient experiences an emergency requiring Rapid Response or Code Teams
- When Dialysis is provided in the patient's room or anywhere in the Medical Center, family/visitors will be asked to leave the room during cannulation, access site preparation, treatment initiation, treatment discontinuation, or in the case of the patient experiencing a medical emergency such as Rapid Response or Code Blue

[Dialysis Visitor Regulation and Traffic Control R-59](#)

**XII. Outpatient Requests**

- In consideration of our outpatients receiving therapy, one visitor will be permitted during the treatment session
- Exceptions to this policy can be assessed by the respective supervisor in the individual outpatient area

**XIII. Exceptions Requiring Documentation**

- Any exceptions to the general regulations must be authorized by the manager/designee and entered in the electronic medical record by nursing unit staff

All medical center colleagues are to adhere to the patient visiting policy and procedures.

**References:**

Hackensack University Medical Center Bill of Rights  
Institute for Patient- and Family-Centered Care  
Tobacco Free Policy, Procedure Number 1405-1

**Last Revised:** 8/05; 10/07, 04/09, 2/11, 9/11, 4/14