

# **COVID-19 Visitor Guidelines for NCH Hospital Affiliates**



## **AVH Visitor Policy Update**

Effective on April 13, 2022, AVH is changing our visitor policy to accommodate more visitors. Improving access to visitors is intended to improve patient satisfaction and care. AVH reserves the right to revise the visitor policy if changes in community transmission of COVID-19 affect staff safety or patient care.

### **Important Information for All Visitors:**

- Anyone who is ill is asked to not visit or accompany patients.
- When rotating visitors for a patient, anyone not in the patient room is required to leave the facility.
- If a visitor displays unsafe, threatening or aggressive behavior, or impedes care, intentionally or not, appropriate measures will be taken to protect our patients and staff.

### **ASA/Doctors' Offices**

- Adults – one visitor per patient.
- The visitor must accompany the patient to the exam room.

### **Outpatient Departments and Surgery**

- One adult visitor is allowed per patient.

### **Emergency Department**

- One visitor per adult patient.
- Two visitors per pediatric patient.
- For patients in isolation:
  - One visitor for most isolation patients.
  - One visitor for COVID isolation after patient is confirmed positive.

- No visitor for patients with COVID-19 who are on “continuous” aerosolizing therapies, including BiPAP and Vapotherm.
  - All visitors must leave the room during any aerosolizing procedure.
  - All visitors must strictly follow PPE guidelines and must stay in the patient’s room throughout the visit.
- There may be times when our waiting area or department becomes too crowded to remain safe. When this occurs, visitors may be asked to wait in the department waiting area or their car until the patient gets to their room, or the ER is less crowded.

## **Adult Inpatient**

- All adult hospital inpatients, except those in isolation, may have one visitor at a time.
- During labor and delivery, maternity patients may have two support persons.
- Labor and delivery patients, outside the delivery, may have two visitors.
- For patients in isolation:
  - One **designated** visitor for most isolation patients, including those in COVID-19 isolation.
    - No visitor for patients with COVID-19 who are on “continuous” aerosolizing therapies, including BiPAP and Vapotherm.
  - All visitors must strictly follow personal protective equipment (PPE) guidelines and must stay in the patient’s room throughout the visit.
  - All visitors must leave the room during any aerosolizing procedures.
- Hospice or Comfort Measures Only (CMO) patients may have two visitors at a time unless previous arrangements are made with the care team and house coordinator.

## **Pastoral Care**

- Patients may have Pastoral Care visitation to attend to spiritual needs.

## **Cafeteria and Gift Shop**

- Both are open to visitors and any individual(s) who have been screened and enter the Hospital.

**Revised 04/12/2022**



## UCVH Visitor Guidelines: Moderate Community Transmission

Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital places the highest priority on the health and safety of our patients and staff. Visitor guidelines are continually evolving to protect our patients, caregivers, and employees while balancing the importance of being with friends and family.

These visitor guidelines apply to patients who are seen at UCVH. Guidelines will be reassessed and adjusted based upon the most up-to-date information and recommended best practices for limiting the spread of COVID-19. We appreciate your understanding as we work to keep our patients, their families, and our staff safe as the pandemic continues.

“Visitors” are considered those who seek to access at UCVH and who are not directly involved in the care of patients as outlined here but who wish to socialize with and support a patient. Visitors must be at least 12 years of age. Visitors are not allowed to visit any area in the hospital except the specific location in which they are seeing a patient - they may not access the gift shop, cafeteria, or other lobbies, but may use the UCVH chapel to seek solace and comfort.

### Important Note Regarding Exception for Patients with Disabilities

Patients with disabilities such as significant physical disabilities or intellectual or cognitive disabilities may require the presence of a family member, personal care assistant, or similar disability service provider who is knowledgeable about the management of the patient’s care and/or able to assist physically or emotionally during the patient’s hospitalization. This will be permitted and limited to one designated support person. Any restriction outlined below will not apply in this circumstance. The designated support person must comply with the requirements outlined below for all caregivers, all of which are aimed at containing the spread of COVID-19.

### Guidelines during Moderate Community spread.

It is important to note that individual departments, sections, or units may have additional constraints or requirements beyond these guidelines, based on the need to maintain patient and staff health and safety. Department-specific constraints or changes to this policy may occur at any time without advanced notice, driven by current patient volume and staffing resources. Patients and caregivers should contact the specific department or unit if there are questions.

- All visitors must be without any COVID-19 symptoms and successfully pass our symptom screening before entering a building. This screening will include a series of

questions and temperature check. Any visitor who has symptoms of COVID-19 will not be permitted in the building.

- Have not had a positive COVID-19 test in the past 10 days.
- Are not on quarantine due to travel or exposure to someone with COVID-19 per NH DHHS current guidelines.
- Visitors can expect to be screened every time they enter UCVH. They will be required to wear a surgical mask which will be provided. Which they may wear over their N95 mask. The mask must adequately cover the nose and mouth at all times while inside the facility.
- This includes wearing the mask in a patient's room.
- Follow staff instructions if you are asked to wear other protection in addition to a face mask.
- If you are not able to wear a mask, you must have a letter from a medical provider stating this. A face shield will be required.

## **Emergency Department**

Patients will be allowed TWO (2) visitors at a time while in the Emergency Department. Visitors will not be allowed for patients who present with COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19. Pediatric patients will be permitted to have two parents/caregivers present; any patient with a disability, as indicated above, will be permitted one visitor/caregiver. Any visitor will be required to pass entry screening and always wear a mask.

There may be times when the waiting area or department becomes too crowded to remain safe. When this occurs, visitors may be asked to wait in their car until the patient is ready for discharge or volume decreases. This will be determined by the manager, nursing staff or provider. It should only be used when the ED has patients in every room and the waiting room or a surge of infectious patients. The ED will contact the screener (ext. 4226) to let them know there are no visitors at this time and will remove the restriction when able. Pediatric patients will still be allowed to have one adult or guardian with them.

**Outpatient Appointments-** Including Laboratory, Imaging Services, Cardiopulmonary, Rehabilitation Services (PT, OT, ST), Cardiac Rehabilitation, Occupational Health, Ambulatory Nursing Services and Wound Care.

Adult patients who do not require a caregiver, as defined above, should attend their outpatient appointments alone. A parent/guardian will accompany a minor. An exception may be requested for one person to attend an appointment but must accompany patient into the exam room. If maximum seating in waiting room is met visitors and or patients will be asked to wait in vehicle to maintain safe distancing.

## **Outpatient Procedures**

One visitor will be allowed with independent adult patients if requested. For surgical procedures, visitors will be allowed to wait in the designated waiting area if there is no crowding. If maximum seating is met visitors and or patients will be asked to wait in vehicle to maintain safe distancing.

All patients receiving anesthesia will require a responsible adult driver. The driver will deliver the patient at the entrance prior to procedure and will be notified by phone when the patient is ready for discharge. At the time of discharge, instructions may be reviewed with the driver or visitor/caregiver, if requested. For minors and/or patients requiring a caregiver, a caregiver/parent/guardian (only one person) will be screened at entrance doors, will be required to stay in the patient room for the entire surgical visit and must wear an appropriate mask during his/her time in the building.

## **Adult Inpatients**

Inpatients will be allowed up to two (2) visitors at a time. Visitors 12-18 must be accompanied by an adult. Virtual visits are encouraged, and we are happy to assist with them.

## **Inpatients Receiving End-of-Life Care (e.g., Comfort Measures Only (CMO), at Risk of Imminent Death**

Assuming the patient is not COVID-19 positive or under investigation for COVID-19, two (2) family members/friends may visit at a time. The determination that a patient meets these criteria will be made by the provider or charge nurse and is subject to change based on the patient's clinical condition. As with any visitors, they must pass screening and wear a mask while in the building.

Patients who do have COVID-19 may have 2 people at a time and follow staff instructions to wear additional protection in addition to a face mask. We will inform those visitors of the risk of contracting COVID-19 and appropriate quarantine procedures.

## WMC Visitor Policy

Effective on March 15<sup>st</sup> WMC will be changing their visitor policy. Incident Command may need to revise this, or any policy quickly if changes in transmission affect staff safety or patient care.

This Policy is for Non-COVID cases, visitors must still pass current screening questions.

- Primary care/clinic
  - Adults- 1 visitor, the visitor may accompany the patient to the exam room. Visitors will still be encouraged to wait outside when possible.
  - Pediatric- 2 parents or guardians may accompany a minor (18 and under). They must follow patient to the exam room.
- Oncology
  - 1 visitor for appointment with provider.
  - No visitors allowed during treatment.
- Same Day Surgery
  - 1 visitor can accompany a patient during registration and then go to patient's room for pre op. Once patient has gone for procedure visitor must return to the car or wait outside the premises. When staff is ready for the visitor to return, staff will call visitor and let them know they are able to come to patient's room. Staff should call 5200 and let the screener know to expect the visitor.
- Med/Surge/ICU
  - Visiting hours are from 11:30-7pm, it will be two visitors per day. On the time of admission, the patient will give a name of a person that can visit and an alternate visitor.
  - Hospice patients or End of Life (EOL)- Can have two visitors at a time unless previous arrangements are made with the care team and House Coordinator.
  - Screener will call Med/Surge (5300) prior to visitor heading to unit.
- Emergency Department
  - All visitors once in the Emergency Department must stay in the patient's room, cannot "switch out."
  - If patient has COVID symptoms or says they have COVID, then the visitor will be asked to wait in their car or outside the premises, this only applies for adult patients. If COVID can be ruled out after testing, visitor will be called and let into the department, and call the screener (5200) to let them know visitor is coming in.
  - Adult- 1 Visitor
  - Pediatric (18 and under) 2 parents/guardians

- There may be times when our waiting area or department becomes too crowded to remain safe. When this occurs visitors may be asked to wait in their car until the patient gets to their room, or the ED is less crowded.
  - This will be determined by; ED Manager, Nursing Staff or MD. It should only be used when the ED has patients in every room and waiting room or a surge of infectious patients. The ED will contact switchboard and screener (5200) to let them know there are no visitors at this time and will remove the restriction when they are able to.
    - Pediatric pts will still be allowed to have 1 adult or guardian with them.
- End of Life or Critical patients- will be case by case decided by ED manager or available nursing staff and MD