

Policy: Patient's Right to Visitation	Originated Date: 09/06/23
Approved By: T. Nixon, Chief Compliance Officer	Reviewed Date: 11/14/23
Department: Compliance	Version: 2

Policy Title: Patient's Right to Visitation

Purpose:

To define the patient's right to visitation while receiving care, treatment, and service.

Scope:

This is an organization-wide policy. Responsible party: Chief Executive Officer

Policy:

The patient has the right to visitation while under the care, treatment, and service of the Hospital. The Hospital shall not restrict, limit, or otherwise deny visitation privileges on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, culture, language, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or socioeconomic status. Visitors shall enjoy full and equal visitation privileges consistent with patient preferences. This right must be balanced with the rights of all patients particularly each patient's rights of confidentiality, privacy, and security.

All hospital staff and clinicians encourage families and other partners in care to be involved and supportive of the patient according to patient preference. They recognize and reinforce that families are integral to patient safety, comfort, medical and psychological well-being, and the healing process. Cultural differences will be recognized and considered when making determinations.

The patient has the right to choose who may visit them during their stay, regardless of whether the visitor is a spouse, a domestic partner (including a same-sex domestic partner), another family member, a friend, guardian, or essential caregiver. Patients are provided a clear explanation of the right to consent to receive visitors who he or she designates through the patient rights and responsibilities information provided at registration. The patient acknowledges their understanding of the hospital's visitation policy, and it is documented in the medical record on the Conditions of Admission form signed by the patient or patient's representative at registration. The patient / family member / support person is given the opportunity to read and ask questions about their patient visitation rights. Visitation information is also included in the Patient Welcome Book.

The patient has the right to designate a visitor who is a family member, friend, guardian, or other individual as an essential caregiver. The hospital must allow in-person visitation by the essential caregiver for at least 2 hours daily in addition to any other visitation authorized by the hospital.

The patient also has the right to withdraw or deny such consent to visitation of an individual at any time. The facility allows for the presence of a support individual of the patient's choice, unless the individual's presence infringes on others' rights, safety, or is medically or

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therapeutically contraindicated, the hospital may not allow or limit the person from patient-directed visitation. After such notification to deny visitation, the patient would “opt-out” from appearing on the patient census and provide their code to persons whom they chose to have as visitors.

This policy will be made available on the homepage of the hospital's website and will be updated within 24 hours of any policy changes.

This policy is upheld by the Chief Executive Officer of the hospital, as the staff of the front desk report up to the CEO.

The following guidelines are intended to be flexible in order to respond to the diverse and individual needs and preferences of each patient and unanticipated and unique circumstances, as well as to assure the safety of patients, families, and staff.

1. Up to two (2) visitors are welcome during visiting hours in a patient's room according to patient preference with exceptions made during times of community infectious outbreak or extenuating circumstances. In these instances, caregivers will encourage virtual visitation via phone or video chat.
2. Families are encouraged to designate a family spokesperson to facilitate effective communication among extended family members and hospital staff.
3. In situations where the patient can't speak for him or herself, is otherwise incapacitated and cannot identify who should be present, or when there is no obvious significant other, hospital staff make the most appropriate decisions possible under the circumstances. Taking a broad definition of family and other partners in care into account, staff will welcome whoever has arrived with the patient.
4. Patients, families, nurses, and other members of the health care team can ask to reevaluate or modify the presence and participation of families at the bedside at any one time. All such collaborative decisions will be documented in the patient record. In situations where there are shared rooms (semi-private rooms, recovery areas), this negotiation will include the other patient, his or her family, and other partners in care.
5. Special visiting considerations are made on an individual basis, for those patients who are critically ill, end of life situations, and persons making major medical decisions regarding the patient; such determinations may be made by the Administration, Administrator on Call, or the Nurse Supervisor. This may include, but is not limited to, a spouse or child staying with an elderly, confused patient, patient experiencing emotional distress or grieving the loss of a friend or family member how recently died, a patient needing cueing or encouragement to eat or drink from a family member or caregiver, or accommodations for a physically or emotionally challenged patient.

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6. Visitor Identification

1. All hospital visitors shall check/sign in at the desk in the main lobby or at the nursing unit after hours.
2. Visitors will sign the sign in sheet and fill in all requested information on that sheet. Sign in sheet will be kept minimally for a rolling 12 months.
3. All visitors should have an ID badge which states the date of the visitation.

7. Visitors are asked to minimize noise and to remain in the patient's room or in public areas of the building. Any visitor found in areas where visitation is not permitted should be asked to leave the area. Visitors may be asked to step out of the patient's room in order to give the healthcare professionals caring for the patients enough room to do their work.

8. If an outbreak of infection requires some restriction for public health, the staff must educate the patient and family to ensure safety to the patient and visitor.

- a. Visiting may be limited or restricted during pandemics or other community outbreaks.
- b. Visitors should communicate with the nursing staff to receive instructions regarding the prevention of infection while visiting.
- c. Visitors who have signs of infectious disease (fever/chills, sore throat, cough, vomiting, or diarrhea) in the previous 48 hours are highly encouraged to refrain from visiting.
- d. Visitors are expected to conform to posted infection control precautions as well as any necessary screening, personal protective equipment and other infection control recommendations as instructed by the care team.
- e. Visitors will not be required to show proof of vaccination or immunization and may interact with patients if patient allows.

9. Visiting Patient on Isolation Precautions:

- a. In the case of isolation patients, the nurse assigned to the patient is required to educate visitors to isolation protocols including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) for the safety of the patient, visitor, staff, and remaining hospital population. Education is also provided on the door to explain the appropriate PPE required for entry. Education will be documented in the electronic medical record.
- b. Visitors are asked to wash their hands before entering and leaving the patient room. Hand sanitizer is provided at the door of each room.

10. Children under 12 years of age shall not be admitted as visitors except in the company of a responsible adult.

11. It is the responsibility of all staff members to be aware of visitors in their areas and report suspicious or unauthorized visitors to their supervisor or security immediately.

12. The right of a patient to have visitors may be limited or restricted when visitation would interfere with the care of the patient and/or the care of other patients. Circumstances

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reasonably related to the care of the patient and/or the care of other patients that provide a basis to impose restrictions or limitations on visitors include (but are not limited to) when:

- At the patient's request, the patient becoming agitated during visitation and any circumstance that would not be in the best interest of the patient;
- There may be infection control issues;
- Visitation may interfere with the care of other patients;
- The Hospital is aware that there is an existing court order restricting contact;
- Visitors engage in disruptive, threatening, or violent behavior of any kind;
- There is suspicion that illicit drugs or paraphernalia is being provided to the patient;
- The patient needs rest or privacy;
- The patient is undergoing care interventions. However, while there may be valid reasons for limiting visitation during a care intervention, we to try to accommodate the needs of any patient who requests that at least one visitor be allowed to remain in the room to provide support and comfort at such times;
- Visitation is otherwise clinically contraindicated

The patient shall be informed of the reason for any restriction or limitation of visitors.

13. Food and drink may not be given to patients without the permission of the nursing staff.

14. Baker Act Patients: In compliance with Florida Mental Health Act, behavioral health patients have a right to communicate or to receive visitors.

- a. A patient's right to use the telephone or to receive visitors may be restricted by the healthcare team due to extenuating circumstances or possible disruption of the patient's treatment.
- b. All behavioral health visitors must be screened before seeing the patient. No personal belongings will be allowed in the hospital and must be stored or taken back to their vehicle before access is granted.
- c. Formal written notice of the restriction(s) and the reasons for the restriction will be provided to the patient, the patient's attorney, the patient's guardian, advocate or representative. Such restrictions and reason will be documented in the patient's medical record.
- d. Documentation of restrictions will be done on the Restriction of Communication of Visitor form. The original completed form must remain as a permanent part of the patient's record and copy given to the patient, their attorney, guardian, advocate or representative.

15. Disruptive behavior and unsafe practices by visitors, will be addressed directly and promptly. If the need is warranted, hospital staff may terminate visitation privileges of any visitor. Staff will notify Security and complete an incident report.

16. The hospital leadership has the right to modify the visitor policy in compliance with state and federal mandates and as needed for the safety of patients and staff. All changes to the visitor

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policy will be communicated and displayed for patients and visitors both on site and on the facility website for review.

Related Policies and Forms:

Patient Right to Notify Others of an Inpatient Admission, Patient Rights and Responsibilities, Patient Guidelines for Visitation, Letter to Visitor with Patient Privacy Code, Restriction of Communication or Visitors (Baker Act)

Keywords:

Visitation, Patient Rights

References:

CMS Conditions of Participation for Acute Care Hospitals, §482.12(h)

Center for Improvement in Healthcare Quality, Standard PR-12

F.S. 408.8235- No Patient Left Alone Act

CDC Guidelines for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Healthcare Settings

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Patient Guidelines for Visitation

Reunion Rehabilitation Hospital Jacksonville supports a patient and family-centered approach to care. As part of planning your care, we will ask you to tell us which people you would like with you while you are receiving care at our facility.

Please be aware of the guidelines listed below:

- It is the right of each patient to request privacy and not to have visitors.
- Please remain in the patient room or the waiting room.
- Please keep the patient room door/curtain closed while visiting
- Please keep noise levels low, including silencing cell phone.
- Please practice good hand hygiene by washing your hands before entering the room and before leaving a patient room.
- The healthcare team may ask visitors to exit the room during certain patient procedures for privacy.
- No photography or videography of the facility or workforce is allowed without facility authorization.
- Please have visitors follow the instructions at the entrance of the facility as it relates to infection prevention precautions. By following the instructions, you are attesting that you understand the requirements to enter the facility.
- Outside food deliveries are not allowed, unless authorized by your healthcare team.
- We are a smoke-free campus. The use of tobacco products is strictly prohibited. This includes smokeless tobacco, e-cigs, and vapor.
- Visitation may be limited when the healthcare team feels it is in the best interest of the patient's health.

There are times when people should not visit you while you are here. If a visitor has been recently exposed to an infection or illness, such as the flu, he or she should not visit you.

If at any time you decide you do not want visitation or you no longer wish to visit with a certain individual(s), please let your nurse know. Please speak with staff if you have any questions or concerns.

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WELCOME TO REUNION REHABILITATION HOSPITAL
JACKSONVILLE

Your family member/friend has been admitted to Reunion Rehabilitation Hospital Jacksonville. In compliance with national privacy laws they have been given a privacy code. This number will be required in order to receive any information regarding the patient.

Their Privacy Code is _____

Please contact the Nurse Supervisor if alternative visitation arrangements are needed. We may need to ask visitors to step out of the room at any time for patient care or treatments.

To ensure for continuity of care and the sharing of accurate private health information we respectfully request that your family choose one spokesperson with whom we will give information to.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation so we may provide the best possible care to your loved one. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call the nursing staff at _____.