

Visitor and Support Person's Policy

“Every consumer has the right to have one or more support persons of his or her choice present, except where safety may be compromised or another consumer's rights may be unreasonably infringed.”

- Right 8 of the Health and Disability Code of Rights.

About this policy

This policy outlines a considered approach to applying Right 8 within the context of South Canterbury District Health Board inpatient and outpatient settings.

It is the role of staff to balance this right with the patients' right to receive good care (including the ability for the person to rest and recover, receive health interventions and guidance, be kept safe through infection prevention and control measures) and the rights of others receiving care.

Purpose

In applying this policy, we look to:

- Support safe delivery of quality care and recovery
- Protect staff, public and patients by implementing infection prevention and control measures
- Provide a safe environment for patients, support persons, visitors and staff at all times
- Ensure the rights of other consumers are not unreasonably infringed.

Scope

All patients, support persons, parents/guardians, visitors and staff are responsible for enacting this policy within the South Canterbury DHB inpatient and outpatient settings.

Note: this policy is not intended to outline the approach for those visiting the DHB due to work purposes such as contractors as this is defined in the Contractor Management policy.

Definitions

- **Patient:** A person receiving care from South Canterbury DHB and includes the following terms: consumer, client, resident, customer and tangata whaiora.
- **Support Person:** A person/s who is nominated by the patient to be present.
- **Visitor:** Any person who attends the South Canterbury DHB sites for the purpose of visiting a patient.
- **Inpatient:** Inpatient settings are those where a patient lives in hospital while under treatment.
- **Outpatient:** Outpatient settings are those where a patient attends for treatment without staying overnight.

Considerations

When looking to apply the policy staff will consider:

- The patient's wishes
- Condition of the patient
- Safety/risk to patient, staff and working environment
- Potential for infringement of other patient's rights
- Ability for staff to provide good care

Policy Statement - Inpatient Setting

The following directions apply to support persons and visitors within the South Canterbury DHB inpatient setting:

- **Do not visit if unwell.** No support persons, visitors or staff member should enter the hospital if they have fever, diarrhoea, vomiting, cough, or flu-like illnesses within the last 48 hours.
- **Support Persons:** Patients may nominate one or more support persons who may be present between **8am – 8pm** except where safety may be compromised or another consumer's rights may be unreasonably infringed.
- **Visitors:** Visitors are welcome **between the hours of 2pm – 8pm** with a maximum of two visitors at a time (please refer to service specific advice below). Visitors are encouraged to catch up with friends and family outside of the ward environment, for example in the café, whānau room or chapel.
- **Parents/Guardians:** Parents/guardians of children are not considered to be visitors and have access to their children at any time. Provision for them to be admitted as “boarders” with their children will be arranged as appropriate.
- **Large Family/Whanau Groups:** Special arrangements with ward management will need to be made to accommodate large family/whanau groups.
- **After Hours visitors:** Overnight visiting for support person/s will be considered under compassionate grounds. Appropriate after-hours access will be facilitated by the duty nurse manager in conjunction with front office, ward staff and orderly service as per Security General AF18 policy.
- **No Gang Insignia** will be tolerated under the Prohibition of Gang Insignia in Government Premises Act (2013)

SERVICE SPECIFIC VISITING INCLUDES:

Jean Todd Maternity

- One support person may visit at any time.
- Two or more visitors may visit during visiting hours 2pm – 8pm.

Neo-Natal Unit

- In general, parents/guardians only.
- Following consideration of risk and in discussion with staff, children under 16 years by appointment.
- Following consideration of risk and in discussion with staff, family/whanau.

EXEMPTIONS:

- Any exemption to the above visitor policy will be made with compassionate consideration by the charge nurse/midwife manager and/or duty nurse manager (this may include collaboration with a Senior Medical Officer).

Policy Statement - Outpatient Setting

The following directions apply to patients and support persons within the South Canterbury DHB outpatient setting:

- **Do not attend if unwell.** No patients, support persons, visitors or staff member should enter the hospital if they have fever, diarrhoea, vomiting, cough, or flu-like illnesses within the last 48 hours.
- **Support Persons:** Patients may nominate **one or more support persons** who may be present at their appointment, except where safety may be compromised or another consumer's rights may be unreasonably infringed.
- **Chaperone:** Patients are able to have a chaperone attend the appointment who can be a family member, friend or a member of staff.

SERVICE SPECIFIC VISITING INCLUDES:

Oncology and Medical Day Unit

- One support person only due to space constraints and safety around chemotherapy administration.

Emergency Department

- One support person only due to space constraints and safety including infection prevention and control.

EXEMPTIONS:

- Any exemption to the above visitor policy will be made with compassionate consideration by the charge nurse/midwife manager and/or duty nurse manager (this may include collaboration with a Senior Medical Officer).

Expectations

The policy statement is supported by the following expectations:

Staff will	Support Persons / Visitors will
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect and support the patients right to have a support person/s present. Respect and support the patients desire to have visitors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect and support the staff obligation to observe the patient's rights and wishes, and ensure other patient's rights aren't infringed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate expectations for visitors including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> visiting hours adherence to infection prevention and control measures physical and verbal behaviour emergency protocol respecting privacy and patient care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comply with expectations including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> attending during appropriate times, not attending if unwell, refraining from any disruptive behaviours or verbal abuse, adhering to any emergency protocol as guided, Respect the health and privacy needs of all patients, including the need to enable patient care to occur acknowledging this may disrupt their visit, or require them to leave temporarily.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support IT initiatives that connect client/patients with their support systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where able bring in devices that enable connection between patients and their support systems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist patients in facilitating the visit of support agencies such as returned services association visitors, religious affiliations and other appropriate agencies as requested by the patient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support agencies comply with expectations including attending during visiting hours and not attending in unwell.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect and protect South Canterbury DHB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smoke-free Alcohol-free No illicit substances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect and protect South Canterbury DHB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smoke-free Alcohol-free No illicit substances

Associated Documents

Contracted Services Management HR33
Involving Families/Whanau CSPM I8
Security General AF18

References

Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights
Health and Safety in Employment Act
Prohibition of Gang Insignia in Government Premises Act (2013)