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Area **Safety and  
Security**  
  
Locations **AOMC, IDMH,  
SJH**

## Patient Visitation

### PURPOSE:

Arnot Health is committed to providing patient and family centered healthcare services. Visitors can be helpful to patient morale and therefore we respect that all patients have the right to choose who may visit them without restriction based on race, color, marital status, citizenship, national origin, socio-economic status, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, or any other legally protected class. However, in the interest of the care and safety of all patients, Arnot Health has an obligation to control the number of visitors, the hours of visitation, and the areas within Arnot Health where visitation may occur.

### STATEMENT:

#### I. POLICIES RELATING TO PATIENT VISITATION:

##### A. General Policies:

1. Arnot Health is following New York State Department of Health (DOH) guidelines for visitation.
2. All visitors must undergo symptom and temperature checks upon entering the facility and shall be denied entry if they report significant COVID-19 exposure or symptoms during the prior 10 days or have a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.
3. Visitors who do not have a surgical mask will be provided one before being allowed to enter the facility. Visitors will be expected to continue to wear this mask at all times while within the facility. Those who fail to comply will be asked to leave. If a visitor is wearing a gaiter, bandana, or other face covering that does not meet our requirements, they will be provided a surgical mask.

4. Visitors are expected to perform meticulous hand hygiene upon entry to the facility and upon entering and exiting patient room.
5. All visitors will be provided a temporary badge
6. Once in the facility, visitors should generally remain in the patient's room throughout the visit, except when directed to leave by hospital staff. When in other areas of the facility outside the patient's room (e.g., cafeteria, waiting area, rest room), visitors must be appropriately distanced from other patients or staff.
7. Only those individuals selected by the patient, and/or their representative where appropriate, shall be allowed to visit patients in the medical center.
8. Visitors will be limited to two people per day (visitors DO NOT have to be the same two people each day), unless a limited number of additional persons is determined to be appropriate to allow at the bedside (i.e., end-of-life situations).
9. Members of the clergy are welcome at any time if patient or family has requested.
10. Visitors must comply with all smoking regulations established by Arnot Health.
11. In outpatient departments, one visitor (or parent(s) of a minor) shall be permitted to accompany the patient to the department. All other visitors will be directed to the nearest waiting room.
12. All visitors must be 12 years of age or older except in rare circumstances as determined by the hospital nursing supervisor. Visitors less than 18 must be accompanied by an adult.
13. Visitors are required to remain in the patient room or designated waiting area. Visitors should not congregate in hallways, outside of patient rooms or near nursing stations or other patient care areas unless being assisted by staff.
14. Visitors are expected to respect the privacy and personal property of all patients at all times. Visitors may not photograph patients, other than the specific patient they are here to visit, and that may only be with the consent of the patient and the staff caring for that patient.
15. All visitors must use appropriate hand hygiene and wear appropriate PPE. Persons who have symptoms of communicable disease (fever, cough, congestion, etc.) will not be permitted in the medical center.
16. The hospital will inform each patient, or his or her representative when appropriate, of visitation rights including any clinical or other reasonable limitation on those rights.
17. Visitors to any patients may be restricted at the discretion of Arnot Health personnel for clinical, safety, legal or other reasonable limitations.
18. Visitors may be required by staff members to step out of the patient room/ patient care area at various times when treatments are taking place or at

any time that staff determines, using their professional judgment, that it is necessary for patient care, comfort, safety, and/or hospital operations.

19. Employees are expected to comply with all visitation guidelines when visiting patients.
20. Inmates or patients who are in custody of law enforcement may not have visitors unless approved by the law enforcement agency. For additional information, refer to Policy AD.910 Guidance for Dealing with Inmates.
21. Visitors are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is conducive to the hospital environment. Visitors exhibiting disruptive, suspicious, or illegal behavior that interferes with the care, safety, or comfort of patients, staff, or other visitors may be asked by staff to leave the hospital premises and/or be reported to the Department of Public Safety (DPS).
22. Certain circumstances (i.e., imminent death, change in patient's condition, etc.) may require compassionate exceptions to this policy. The patient's health care team may waive these guidelines in certain situations to allow visitation by family members/friends as appropriate.
23. Support persons are permitted at the bedside for the following patients (outside the normal visitation hours):
  - Patients in labor and delivery
  - Pediatric patients
  - Patients for whom a support person has been determined to be essential to the care of the patient (medically necessary) including patients with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and patients with cognitive impairments including dementia
  - Patients in imminent end-of-life situations, where death is anticipated within less than 24 hours

**B. COVID-19 Positive Patients:**

- i. Visitors must be 18 or older
- ii. A waiver must be signed prior to visiting (see attached)
- iii. Med/Surg and ICU: one visitor between the hours of 8 am to 12 pm and 4 pm to 8 pm (visitor DOES NOT have to be the same each day).
- iv. Labor and Delivery and Maternity: one care partner is permitted (must be the same person throughout the stay). That person must remain in the patient's room throughout the entire stay.
- v. Prior to initial visit, visitors must be instructed that education by nursing staff is required prior to entering room.
- vi. Visits should allow enough time for screening, education, and training of visitors.
- vii. Facilities should provide education on appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE – N95, eye protection, gown, gloves) use, hand hygiene,

limiting surfaces touched, social distancing, and movement within the facility.

- viii. Training on PPE use should be conducted by a trained healthcare worker and include observations of the visitor to ensure correct donning and doffing of PPE and appropriate hand hygiene. Appropriate disposal of PPE should be ensured by facility staff.
- ix. Facilities should make sure that visitors understand the potential risks associated with providing care to patients with COVID-19, especially for visitors at high risk for serious illness from COVID-19 and those who are primary caregivers and have extended contact with patients (e.g., parents or guardians of children).
- x. Visitors should not be present during aerosol-generating procedures or during collection of respiratory specimens.

C. Any visitors such as insurance adjusters, compensation representatives, or law enforcement representatives conducting business shall be directed to the Department of Public Safety for proper authorization. A physician's permission shall be obtained before authorization to visit a patient is granted.

D. Designated Primary Caregivers (support person):

- 1. A patient may request that one designated caregiver stay overnight in the patient's room.
- 2. The medical center staff will make reasonable efforts to accommodate the patient's request if space is adequate and the caregiver's presence contributes to the well-being of the patient.
- 3. The primary caregiver must comply with all hospital security regarding after hours visitation. The caregiver must be able to safely stay alone and be able to take care of their own personal needs.
- 4. In private rooms, the primary caregiver will be given a cot or sleeper chair. For safety and infection control reasons, visitors are not allowed to share the patient's bed.
- 5. If the patient is in a semiprivate room, a private room will be requested; if unavailable the primary caregiver will be directed to the nearest waiting room. In order to provide patient privacy, a primary caregiver may not stay overnight in a semi private room.

## II. ENFORCEMENT:

- A. All employees have the responsibility for knowing and enforcing the general rules about visitors in the Medical Center. Employees must be aware of visitors in their area in the event of an emergency. Public Safety Officers may be called if a visitor is reluctant to cooperate.
- B. Visitors remaining in Arnot Health after hours must be directed to the Department of Public Safety for appropriate identification.
- C. **If known, sex offenders will be escorted to the Department of Public Safety to**

**obtain a visitor pass and will then be escorted to and from the designated unit by Public Safety personnel.**

**III. POLICIES FOR SPECIFIC AREAS OF THE HOSPITAL:**

- A. Medical-Surgical Units (AOMC/IDMH): Visiting hours are from 0800–2000 hours.
- B. Davenport and Taylor Skilled Nursing Facility as outlined in the Weekly COVID-19 Update.
- C. St. Joseph's Hospital Skilled Nursing Facility: No visitation restrictions.
- D. Addiction Rehabilitation Unit (ARU) – Sundays 1300-1500 hours, one visitor during this time. You must call the ARU by Saturday evening to visit. 607-733-6541
- E. Behavioral Science Unit (BSU) – visitation times: every day 1300-1400 and 1830-1930 hours. To be scheduled through the department by calling 607-737-7002 or 607-733-6541
- F. Critical Care Services:
  - 1. Visiting hours are open from 0800-1200 and 1600-2000 hours. Exceptions will be made at the discretion of the Unit Director/designee for the families of critically ill patients with unusual circumstances.
  - 2. Visitors are restricted to persons over the age of 12 unless approved by the Unit Director/ designee.
- G. Infusion Center: No visitation.
- H. Heart & Vascular Institute outpatient testing, and clinic patients may be accompanied by one person only for pediatric or if medical, physical, or cognitive support is required. Heart & Vascular Institute Invasive laboratories (Cardiac catheterization, electrophysiology, interventional radiology) patients undergoing same day procedures may be accompanied by a companion, who may remain with the patient through the initial intake process and then rejoin the patient for the discharge process.
- I. Perinatal Department:
  - 1. A Unique Photo Identification Badge shall be visibly worn, photo-side out, by all personnel assigned to the Perinatal/Neonatal Departments. Students (other than Arnot Health) and authorized social agency personnel (i.e.: IHAP, CIDS, etc.) shall wear a photo identification from their school or agency.
  - 2. Labor and Delivery: Limit two support person at the bedside with any laboring/delivered mother. Support persons must be the same two throughout the entire stay. Support persons may come and go throughout the stay.
  - 3. The doors at the end of the corridor are locked 24/7 and badge access is required. Staff will utilize Closed Circuit TV System to verify identity of person(s) requesting access onto the unit.
- J. Neonatal Intensive Care Unit:

1. Parents are permitted to visit at any time.
2. No sibling visitation.
3. Doors to the NICU will remain locked 24 hours a day with badge access only.

K. Pediatric Unit (4C):

1. Parents are welcome at any time and are encouraged to stay 24 hours. If a parent is not able to stay, a grandparent or designated guardian is encouraged to stay.
2. Doors will remain locked on pediatrics 24 hours a day with badge access only.

L. Hospice Patients:

1. Visiting hours for Hospice patients are unrestricted, although the rules regarding only two visitors in a room at one time is encouraged, unless approved by unit staff. Rules for "after hours" visiting apply.
2. The nursing staff is expected to be alert to the concerns of a non-Hospice roommate sharing a room with a Hospice patient.

M. Emergency Department:

1. In the Emergency Department, bedside visitation will remain at the discretion of the provider and/or nurse caring for the patient, and there is no specific visitation time. Visitors will also be restricted to one at a time, unless a limited number is appropriate, such as during end-of-life situations.
2. The visitors must remain in the room with the patient.
3. Visitors may not enter the nursing station without permission of the ED staff.
4. Visitors are required to respect the privacy of all patients in the ED.
5. Visitors are required to comply with AH staff directions. Visitors may be required by AH staff to leave the ED at any time for clinical, safety, or legal reasons concerning any patient in the ED.

IV. Restricted Visitation:

- A. When patients have restricted visitation for reasons which are clinically necessary directed by a physician, visitors are limited to one at a time for a period of not more than five minutes.

V. Process for Visiting After Hours:

- A. After 2000 hours, visitors are to enter through the Emergency Department entrance. This is the only entrance and exit to be used for after hours visiting.
- B. The visitors must check in at the ED Registration area. A Public Safety Officer, Customer Service Attendant, or a Patient Registration Clerk will complete the visitor log. Information on the visitor log will include visitor name, the room and unit to be

visited, and the time in. This ensures an accurate count of all people in the Medical Center in the event of a disaster or lock-down, as well as monitoring access for security reasons. (See Form #8430.26)

- C. The visitor will be issued a pass to wear, which will include his/her name and the floor and room number.
- D. The visitor is expected to remain in the patient's room during visitation. If the visitor leaves the room for any reason, he/she must wear the pass, in order to verify his/her purpose in the Medical Center.
- E. Visitors are directed to log out and leave the Medical Center through ED Registration area.

## **ATTACHMENT(S):**

NYSDOH Visitation Guidelines

## **REFERENCE(S):**

## **FORM(S):**

**POLICY#: SS.110**

COPY

Approval Signatures

Step Description

Approver

Date