

Core brief

Daily update

(23 December 2021, 2.25pm)

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- Active Staff

Visiting update – 25 and 26 December 2021

The importance of support from family members to people in hospital cannot be overstated, bringing comfort to family, patients and staff. However, we need to carefully balance this with the additional potential risks to patients, family members and staff that visiting brings, particularly with the increasing rate of transmission of the Omicron variant and potential impact this may have on hospital patients, who are particularly vulnerable. Christmas visiting arrangements were reviewed this week senior infection control, public health, clinical and operational teams, and approved by the Strategic Executive Group today.

Recognising what an important time this is for families, special visiting arrangements have been put in place, so that most inpatients are able to have one visitor on Christmas Day or Boxing Day.

The change to Christmas visiting applies to patients in **shared accommodation** such as nightingale type wards and four and six bedded bays. Patients in these areas will be able to have **one visitor, for one visit, on either the 25 or 26 December**. Before and after these dates, patients in shared accommodation are able to have [essential visits only](#).

Visiting arrangements should be underpinned with a **local risk assessment** to guide decision making, followed by **clear communication with patients and families of the risks** that may present and how they can **help to minimise these** as much as possible (see below). Additional risk assessments will be required to be in place for specific reasons e.g. for patients with very low immunity, and in such cases, **visits may not be possible**.

All other current visiting arrangements remain unchanged as follows:

- Patients in **single room** accommodation will still be able to benefit from the support of **one visitor**. Due to the level of protection a single room provides, this visitor can change each day.
- **Two visitors per day** are recommended for patients in **paediatrics, neonates and maternity** wards.
- **Mental Health, Addictions and Learning Disabilities** staff will make a visiting plan with each patient based on their individual needs and circumstance, and the local risks that present in each ward.
- In line with infection prevention and control practice, wards with **current active infection cases** are required to temporarily restrict visiting to [essential visits only](#).
- As always, there may be some **individual patients** who are particularly vulnerable to the risks of infection. For these patients, visiting will remain at [essential visits only](#).

Communication with patients and their family

Christmas can be particularly isolating for patients and those who matter to them. Now more than ever we need to be mindful of the risks which the new Omicron variant poses and its rapid transmissibility. Therefore, the need for strict infection prevention and control measures to be in place and adhered to at all times.

When discussing visiting with patients and their families please remind them of the following:

1. The **risks of visiting** on potential spread of COVID19 – to support patients and family members to weigh up the benefits of their visit against the potential risk that they may pose and consider if a virtual visit may be a safer alternative.
2. The expectation that family members or loved ones visiting are required to:
 - Have a **negative Lateral Flow Device** test result a maximum of 24 hours prior to their visit – the nearer to the visit the better.
 - Wear a **Fluid Resistant Surgical Mask** (not a face covering) for the duration of their visit in a hospital building, unless exempt.
 - **Two metres physical distancing** must be observed in all areas wherever possible, unless risk assessed to be otherwise.
 - **Hand hygiene** measures must be adhered to prior to entering the ward and during the visit if necessary
 - Not visit if they have symptoms of COVID-19 or are feeling unwell with other viral or infectious illness – unless **at end-of-life where this is an exception, following a risk assessment.**
3. The local arrangements for booking a visiting slot and if there are any time bound restrictions required for the length of the visit.

This guidance should be applied with as much flexibility and compassion as possible. Consideration should be given to the assessment of each patient's needs on an individual basis.

We should be mindful that carers, those providing essential care or emotional support, or spiritual care are not considered visitors for the purposes of this guidance, so should continue to be permitted to attend a patient in hospital, including in areas where essential-only visits are in place.

Person Centred Virtual Visiting

Where in-person support is not possible for any reason, a patient should be supported to use the hospital iPad or their own personal mobile or tablet to maintain contact with the people who matter to them.

It is important to bear in mind that the virtual option is available for circumstances where in-person support is not possible due to visiting restrictions, for clinical reasons, by geographical distance, or because the visitor is isolating.

Further information about Person Centred Virtual Visiting is available on the [NHSGGC website](#).

Further information and guidance

The [visiting webpages](#) and [guidance](#) will be updated accordingly, and communication extended to the public through local and social media.

Your support and efforts to ensure patients are kept safe and have the support from those who matter to them is greatly appreciated.

New Functionality in Near Me - 'Consult Now'

Near Me has new functionality - Consult Now. Consult Now allows providers to instantly start a single-use video call by entering the caller's mobile phone number or email address. The Consult Now tab is displayed in the Waiting Area page, allowing providers to start and manage Consult Now calls.

The new Consult Now feature has now been enabled on all existing NHSGGC Near Me waiting areas.

A short introductory video demonstrating the functionality is available at the link below:

[Consult Now Video](#)

For further information, please refer to The National Resource Centre [Click here](#), contact your waiting area administrator, or raise a call with the IT Service Desk.



We hope you will have a positive time over the festive period and are raring to go for your Active Staff activities in 2022, some of which are now available to book via our website by following this link: [ActiveStaff2022](#).

We are pleased to announce that we are able to offer outdoor Bootcamp sessions from Monday 10 January 2022. (Unfortunately indoor activities and classes are still suspended)

Available at Gartnavel, Leverndale, New Victoria, QEUH and Stobhill sites and open to all fitness levels, we hope you can come join the fun, get fitter and enjoy the fresh air with seven classes to choose from.

We look forward to welcoming you back and we've put together some helpful [guidance](#) on our website to read in advance of making any bookings for our outdoor classes, so you know what to expect.

Don't forget, Active Staff is also online. Currently you have access to eight live classes per week, Monday – Saturday.

With a mixture of live early morning and evening classes streamed by a team of instructors over [Microsoft Teams](#) in the comfort of your home we hope we have [something on offer](#) for all levels and for you to enjoy.

You can book all your fitness classes until the end of February via our website by clicking [here](#) it's all completely FREE!!

All you need is [Microsoft Teams](#) and your game face.

We hope to extend to other sites over the start of the year and also organise the first of our guided NHS Walking for Health walks in 2022.

Please keep up-to-date with the latest guidance on our dedicated web pages at: www.nhsggc.org.uk/covid19. If you have any questions about the current situation please check the FAQs first. If you have any further questions, please email: HR.Support@ggc.scot.nhs.uk.

***Staff are reminded to make sure their [personal contact details are up to date on eESS](#).

**It is important to share Core Brief with colleagues who do not have access to a computer.
A full archive of printable PDFs are available on [StaffNet](#)**