

Core brief

Daily update

(31 December 2021, 3.05pm)

Topics in this Core Brief:

- Visiting update – Essential Visiting only from Wednesday 5 January 2022

Visiting update – Essential Visiting Only from Wednesday 5 January 2022

With the increasing rate of transmission of the Omicron variant and impact this is having on increasing hospital admissions, hospital acquired transmission, ward closures and staff absence visiting arrangements were reviewed and risk assessed yesterday by the Visiting Review Team (VRT).

To ensure the safety of patients, their family and staff, the difficult decision was taken to temporarily limit hospital visits to **essential visiting only from Wednesday 5 January 2022 in all our adult hospital wards**. This decision was approved by the Strategic Executive Group today and will be kept under close review.

This change will include maternity services meaning only one essential visitor will be permitted in all parts of the maternity pathway.

Exceptions to this are **paediatrics and neonates** where a maximum of two visitors per day is recommended.

Current visiting arrangements will remain in place until Tuesday 4 January 2022. These are as follows:

- Patients in **shared accommodation** such as nightingale type wards and 4 and 6 bedded bays will be able to have [essential visits only](#)
- Patients in **single room** accommodation will be able to benefit from the support of **one visitor. This visitor can change each day.**
- **Two visitors per day** is 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](#).

From Wednesday 5 January 2022 Essential Visits will be in place as follows:

All staff are asked to familiarise themselves with the new extended **essential visiting** criteria which includes the following illustrative examples (these examples are not exhaustive):

- A birth partner supporting a woman during hospital visits and throughout the maternity pathway
- A person receiving end-of-life care – we expect this to be defined as flexibly and compassionately as possible, to support patients at the end of life spending meaningful time with their loved ones in their final days, weeks or months
- To support someone with a mental health issue, or dementia, or a learning disability or autism, where not being present would cause the patient to be distressed
- To accompany a child in hospital
- In general situations when someone is receiving information about life-changing illness or treatments.
- In these and other similar situations where support from another person is essential for advocacy and wellbeing, family support should be facilitated.

Essential visiting arrangements should be applied flexibly and compassionately, and each patient's needs considered on their own merits. Carers, those providing essential care or emotional support, or spiritual care are not considered to be visitors and should continue to be permitted to attend a patient in hospital.

Communications with family will be underpinned with strong internal and external communication to include the following:

1. **Virtual visits** will continue to be supported where possible however family should be advised these may be subject to limitations due to reduced staffing levels and pressures of clinical workload. No guarantees will be given for calls to be supported at specific times or days. Where possible family are requested to make contact with patients themselves. Support should be offered to patients when possible who do not have their own mobile device to use the hospital iPad or ward phone. Further information about Person Centred Virtual Visiting is available on the [NHSGGC website](#).
2. Before you visit use of a **LFD test and a negative result ahead of every visit**.
3. Wear a **FRSM** from arrival at the hospital entrance and throughout the hospital visit.
4. Use **hand gel** at arrival, on departure and when you come into contact with surfaces during the visit.
5. Maintain **physical distancing** measures of 2m.
6. Do not visit if you have **symptoms of COVID-19**, or isolating because they have had contact with a person with COVID-19 or for some other reason unless in specific and limited scenarios such as end of life care.

The successful '**Give and Go Service**' available earlier in the pandemic will be remobilised for family to drop-off essential personal items for patients and to pick up laundry etc.

The service will be available from **Wednesday 5 January 2022, and thereafter Monday – Friday** as follows:

1. Queen Elizabeth University Hospital (main atrium) - items should also be dropped off here for patients in the INS - **available between 12pm – 4pm**
2. Glasgow Royal Infirmary (medical block entrance) - **available between 12pm – 5pm**
3. Royal Alexandra Hospital (main hospital foyer) - **available between 12pm – 5pm**
4. Beatson West of Scotland Cancer Centre (main entrance), **available between 8.30am – 3.30pm**, and
5. Local arrangements will be in operation in all other sites.

Further information can be found on the [Give and Go Webpage](#).

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.

Are your contact details up-to-date? [Click here](#) to check