

09/08/2022

Dear Requester,

FOI 1440

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request which was received within the Trust.
Please note, this is a cross-site response for Bedford site and Luton site.

You asked:

- The general Bedford Hospital guidance relating to the rules for those visiting in-patients between 14 March and 12 April 2022. This includes guidance/rules made available to the public (which I believe differs from what is online now) and any internal guidance to staff on how to implement those rules;
- Any specific guidance relating to the rules for those visiting in-patients in both Shuttleworth and Shand wards between 14 March and 12 April 2022. This includes guidance/rules made available to the public and any internal guidance to staff on how to implement those rules;
- Confirmation as to who was responsible for ensuring the guidance is implemented and rules followed in Shuttleworth and Shand wards between 14 March and 12 April 2022 and any specific guidance (if not covered in response to the above) as to the level of discretion they could exercise. I am not looking for the individual's name, rather the position, i.e Matron, Sister, etc.; and
- Any emails, notes or other correspondence between 1 January and 12 April 2022 providing additional steers, guidance or instructions on the rules for those visiting in-patients in both Shuttleworth and Shand wards.

Please see attached the Trust-wide visitor guidance that was in place in March 2022. Please be aware this was applied to all adult inpatient wards across the Trust so there was no ward specific guidance developed. I have also included emails, detailing decisions made with visiting restrictions. I think it is clear that this was reviewed on a regular basis and when there were changes there was a method to cascade to senior members of the nursing teams. It was the responsibility of ward managers to implement the guidance and in discussion with the Infection Control and Prevention Team, Matrons and other Senior Nurses, decisions could be made about interpretation of the guidance. The link below covers the national guidance. The newest update is highlighted in yellow, so the guidance without highlights will be the national guidance in place in March. It should also be noted that whilst there was national guidance, it was only guidance, as it was dependent on local infection rates, which were also under constant review.

[Coronavirus » Living with COVID-19: Visiting healthcare inpatient settings principles \(england.nhs.uk\)](https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/living-with-covid-19/visiting-healthcare-inpatient-settings-principles/)

Copies of emails are below:

12/01/22

“Good afternoon everyone

Standard Visiting will remain suspended until Wednesday 17/01/2022.

The trust will review this early next week and provide you an update early next week. When the standard visiting is reintroduced there will be updated standard visiting guidance

Exceptional visiting

Please can you ensure your teams are aware of this guidance and ensuring visiting is permitted where possible within this guidance

Thanks

Kind Regards”

19/01/22

“Morning All

Please be advised that **Standard visiting remains suspended until next week.** Those of you who attended the trust briefing yesterday will be aware of this

The trust wishes to reintroduce this at the earliest opportunity and is reviewing this situation frequently

Please be advised revised standard visiting guidance will be circulated when this visiting is reinstated.

Kind Regards”

02/02/22

“Good afternoon

Wonderful news

As of tomorrow standard visiting at Bedford may be reinstated

Please see revised guidance for staff and patient leaflet. Please can you ensure your patients get a copy of this guidance

Kind Regards”

29/03/22

"Good afternoon everyone

I hope you are well

Standard visiting

The decision has been made to extend standard visiting access **from Monday 04/04/2022.**

Please see amended and updated guidance for your reference.

Please can you ensure that **all ward staff are provided the new guidance.**

Please ensure that all in patients are given the guidance sheet attached above

There are key changes with which wards are included and the cessation of lateral flow testing or visitors

Exceptional Visiting

Please see updated guidance, which also includes the cessation of lateral flow testing for visitors

OPD ED and diagnostic services

The national guidance is advising allowing increased access for those patients who wish to be accompanied. Our trust is final stages for agreeing new access process and will communicate this next week

Kind Regards"

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Please note that the Trust has a formal internal review and complaints process which is managed by the Information Governance Manager/Data Protection Officer. Should you have any concerns with our response, you can make a formal request for an internal review. Requests *for internal review* should be submitted within three months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter, and should be addressed to: dataprotectionofficer@ldh.nhs.uk. This option is available to you for up to three calendar months from the date your response was issued.

If you are not satisfied with the Trust review under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may apply directly to the Information Commissioners Officer (ICO) for a review of your appeal decision. The ICO can be contacted at: ICO, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF www.ico.org.uk

Yours sincerely,

FOI Officer

Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust