

Standard Visitors Guidance for adults within hospital sites - March 2022

Bedfordshire Hospitals Trust has considered recent changes to national covid guidance on 08/03/2022 and supported standard visiting since August 2021. In recent weeks, the infection prevalence has increased in both community and hospital setting. The trust recognises and values the contribution that visiting provides to our patients' wellbeing and recovery.

We have decided continue to permit access for standard visiting but apply restrictions for visitors. To ensure we protect vulnerable patients on site, visitors and staff we would ask you and your loved ones follow key principles below.

This guidance is only for general adult inpatient wards, there is separate guidance for emergency, elective pathway, paediatrics, maternity wards and end of life (exceptional) visiting.

The status of infection rates and impacts are being monitored daily and are subject to short notice change. **The Trust reserves the right to review restrictions at short notice should the local infection rates change.**

Key principles

Infection control principles and covid guidelines **must be** adhered to. We need to limit visitors to reduce the risk of crowding and maintaining social distancing at all times, but facilitate visiting. **The number of visitors at the bedside is limited to:**

- **Two close family contacts or people important to you. Visits each day from different people will not be permitted.**
- **You will be allowed one visit for one hour a day.**
- **If you have tested positive or come into contact with someone who has tested positive unfortunately you will not be able to have visitors except in special circumstances. Please discuss this further with ward staff**
- **If your visitor has a household contact that is positive they too will not be allowed to visit**

Children will not be able to accompany an adult visiting on the adult wards

Ward teams will support your visitors by providing instructions on PPE

On admission

If you are a patient, please discuss with the ward staff about the visiting arrangements for your ward. Please tell the staff whom you would like to be visited by.

Ward staff will communicate these arrangements with your Next of Kin if you are unable to tell them yourself. Please let them know if you need their help with this.

Visiting Appointments times

Visiting may be booked between these hours; **14:00 to 18:00**. Before visiting your visitor must contact the ward area to discuss appropriate arrangements.

Arranging a visit - for visitors

You **must** contact the ward and agree a time you can visit **prior to arrival**.

You can only book visiting appointments for the current and following alternate day (see times above). You will be asked to provide your name and contact details for track and trace recording purposes.

You will be informed in advance about what to expect when you see the patient and, be given practical advice about social distancing, the wearing of personal protective equipment, handwashing and the risks associated with the removal of gloves to hold hands. You should only go straight to the ward area and then leave directly after the visit.

On arrival to the ward area

You should use the doorbell and wait for staff to receive you. Ward staff will then:

- Provide instruction of what PPE requirements are necessary, you must wear surgical masks at all times (available at main entrances), whilst visiting, other face coverings are not permissible. Any visitor not able to wear a mask will not be permitted access to standard visiting
- Take you to the patient you are visiting.
- You will also be reminded of the time you will be required to leave

