

# Frequently Asked Questions – Family and Visitor Policy

## **My family member, friend or loved one is in the hospital – can I come to visit?**

Bluewater Health currently has a Restricted Family Presence and Visitor Policy in effect during the pandemic. Family/Care Partners are being identified for visiting. **There continues to be no access for visitors or caregivers who have not been pre-approved by the care team at our hospitals or the general public.**

## **How do I become a designated care partner?**

The care team will identify patients who would most benefit from the presence of a family/care partner, as selected by the patient. To continue limiting the number of people in the hospital, and follow public health guidelines, priority is given to the following patients:

- Those undergoing urgent surgery, pre-and post-operatively on the day of the surgery;
- Those receiving difficult news or undergoing a test or procedure that may not have a positive outcome;
- Those in labour and childbirth;
- Those in the Paediatric unit;
- Those requiring assistance such as a translator for language barriers;
- Those with accessibility needs, such as adults with cognitive or mental disabilities;
- Those who are at end of life;
- Those with a critical illness or serious medical condition; and
- Those whose family requires support for discharge, and health teaching of hands-on skills is needed to help them take care of the patient at home.

ONE care partner may be approved if the patient meets criteria. This care partner must be consistent throughout the entire stay. Exceptions are made in certain circumstances such as a patient at end of life. The hospital will contact you if you have been named as a designated care partner for your loved one.

## **What if I want a visit but am not an approved care partner?**

Due to COVID-19, Bluewater Health has restrictions in place limiting family support and visiting in the hospital – but that doesn't mean you can't 'connect' with a friend or loved one. Please let us know if you would like to schedule a 15 to 30 minute virtual visit with a loved one in hospital, by completing an online [form](#) on the Bluewater Health website.

## **I have not been notified to be a care partner but feel that my loved one meets the criteria – what do I do?**

- Contact the patient's healthcare team and discuss this with them.
- If you need more information or still have a concern about the Family Presence and Visitor Policy call the Patient Experience Office at 519-464-4436 or email [patientexperience@bluewaterhealth.ca](mailto:patientexperience@bluewaterhealth.ca).

We recognize the effects isolation can have on patients and their families. We appreciate your patience as we explore ways to welcome family presence back to the hospital in the safest way possible.