



## **Western Memorial Regional Hospital & Sir Thomas Roddick Hospital**

### **Family Presence**

### **Family and Visitor Questions and Answers**

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#### **1. Why does Western Health have flexible visiting hours?**

Research shows that visits from family and friends are important supports to patients during their hospital stay; they help to reduce anxiety and isolation and to improve healing and recovery.

Encouraging family presence means that we want to invite patients and families to be more engaged in care, and we ask that you discuss your visiting plans when possible with your loved one's care team to determine what times will work best for everyone.

#### **2. How does visiting at night work?**

If you are planning to visit between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m., please discuss in advance with the care team what time will work best with your loved one's care plan.

There is a security desk at the entrance of WMRH and STRH; please sign in there so that you can be issued a temporary form of identification and security will escort you to the unit as available.

If you are already on a unit and are staying through these hours, a nurse can issue temporary identification so that you can be easily identified as a visitor elsewhere in the hospital. Overnight guests are requested to stay on the unit if at all possible.

Visitors may be unable to stay at the patient's bed side overnight and may be requested to stay in the unit lounge. Nursing staff will alert the family member if the patient requires any assistance overnight if that is what the patient and visitors request. Any request to stay at night may need to be coordinated as there may be more than one request for a particular evening.

#### **3. How many visitors are allowed?**

We must balance the wishes and needs of all patients and families in each room, and allow for patient care. The appropriate number of visitors at any time for each patient can be determined with the care team. If a room is overcrowded (this is determined by the care team caring for the patient(s)), we must consider the safety of our patients and staff and some family members may be asked to wait in the unit lounge, hallway or common spaces in the hospital (i.e. family lounge, cafeteria or chapel).

#### **4. What about children?**

Children less than 14 years old are welcome in most areas of the hospital but must be directly supervised by an adult who is not the patient. Units with immunocompromised patients might need to restrict visits by children in order to protect and the child's health. Please check with your care team if unsure.

#### **5. What if the care team needs to provide care?**

Family may be asked to wait in the waiting area while the care team provides care. However, sometimes family may ask or be asked to stay so they can better understand the care needed for their loved one after discharge.

#### **6. Are any areas of the hospital exempt from this policy?**

Providing care for your loved one is our top priority so that we can support them in healing and recovery. Often, this means encouraging family presence. Sometimes, it means we may need to restrict the length of visits or the number of visitors. This will be determined through discussion between the care team, the patient, and the family.

#### **7. What about visitors in rooms where there are multiple beds?**

We must balance the wishes and needs of all patients in the room. Visiting may be interrupted to provide patient care, to protect the privacy rights of other patients or to maintain safety and security decisions. If a room is overcrowded, some family members may be asked to wait in the waiting area or outside the unit.

#### **8. Are there any other reasons a family or visitor may be asked to leave?**

Family and partners in care who have a negative impact on the patient's or other patients' health and well-being may be asked to postpone their visit or leave the room/area. This occurs in discussion with the patient, their family/partners in care and the care team.

Disruptive behavior or unsafe practices are not tolerated. This includes but is not limited to: alcohol or illicit drug use; foul language; aggressive or disrespectful behavior to the patient care team, patients or other family members; or property etc.

#### **9. Can my pet visit?**

Personal dog and cat visitation can be arranged through discussion with the care team and family. The potential risks and advantages must be considered when allowing animals into the healthcare setting including: space limitations, infectious risk, allergies, phobias, and animal caused injuries.

Based on these risks, pet visitation may need to occur in an alternate location or be denied. If accommodations are unable to be made at a given time, it can be revisited at a later time.