LECOM HEALTH
MILLCREEK COMMUNITY HOSPITAL
Erie, Pennsylvania

HOSPITAL POLICY

Hospital Policy No. 012
Effective Date: 07/08/2021
Supersedes: 04/03/2020

CATEGORY: GENERAL OPERATIONS

APPROVAL: Mary L. Eckert, President/CEO

SUBJECT: **PATIENT VISITATION**

PURPOSE: To protect patient visitation rights and ensure that all visitors of patients of LECOM Health Millcreek Community Hospital enjoy equal visitation privileges consistent with patient preferences and subject to the hospitals' justified clinical restrictions.

POLICY: Each inpatient and outpatient has the right, subject to his/her consent, to receive visitors who he or she designates including but not limited to, a spouse, a domestic partner (including same sex domestic partner), another family member or a friend. The patient also has the right to withdraw or deny such consent at any time.

This information will be provided to each patient and/or patient representative prior to care being provided.

The hospital's general visiting hours are 9am to 8pm. Each patient is limited to two (2) visitors in the patient's room at a time. All visitors must sign in at the nurse's station and indicate whom they are visiting (the room number), the visitors address, and a contact phone number.

RESPONSIBILITY: It is the responsibility of all hospital personnel and medical staff to recognize and be responsive to the right of the patient to receive or deny visitors in this hospital as he/she designates.

PROCEDURE: At patient registration:

1) Every patient and/or patient representative will receive patient rights card that includes the patient's right regarding visitation.
2) The patient will be given the option of requesting a privacy flag be electronically placed on admission to prevent disclosure of patient's presence as an inpatient at the hospital if an inquiry call is received at the information desk.
3) The patient and/or patient representative will sign acknowledgement of receipt of rights on the bottom of *Consent for Treatment* form.

EXCEPTIONS: The hospital will respect the patients' rights and decisions regarding visitation, however the hospital may impose *justified clinical restrictions** on a patients visitation rights. The following visitation protocols are in place to protect patient safety and / or are a result of a treatment protocol for specialty care areas.

Emergency Department:

Medical

- One (1) support individual after the medical screening evaluation is complete

Behavioral Health

- Two (2) support individuals after the medical screening evaluation is complete

Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility:

- Visiting Hours: 11:30am to 1pm and 5:30pm to 7:30pmunless otherwise approved by case manager for hands on training
- Children will not be permitted to visit the therapy gym areas but may remain on the rehabilitation unit

Intensive Care Unit:

- Visitors under 14 years of age only by staff approval
  - For the protection of our patients from infection it is suggested that children do not visit in the Intensive Care Area.

Behavioral Health Units:

General

- Visiting hours are 10am-5pm
- Patient may receive one scheduled visit per day of up to- 2 visitors.
- Visitor must call and speak to the Ward Clerk, social services staff, or Charge Nurse to schedule visitation.
- Visitor must call more than 4 hours in advance before desired visitation time.
- Visitor must be listed on visitation list prior to visitation.
- Visitors will not be switched during a visitation.
- Visit is no longer than 30 minutes.
- Visitor must have appropriate identification to enter unit (Driver's license or other ID with photo).
- Only items allowed on the visitor during visitation are ID, car keys.
- Purses or other belongings will not be stored on the unit.
- NO: Cell phones, weapons, cigarettes/vape, medications, sharp objects.

- No personal belongings for the patient can be brought to the unit during visitation.
- No outside food can be brought to the unit during visitation.
- Units can only have two visitors at a time. Visitation times may be denied or approved accordingly.
- Visit will be monitored by staff and will be in public area on the unit.
- Visitation may be canceled, end early, or rescheduled if safety concerns arise on unit or visit deemed not therapeutic for treatment.

Child/Adolescent

- All visitors are subject to staff and guardian approval
- Only Parent(s), Legal Guardian, and Clergy are permitted to visit.
- Providers, child youth service workers, and probation officers may arrange through Social Services to call or visit the patient.
- Patient must be present on unit for 5 full days before visitors are permitted.

Adult and Older Adult Unit

- During admission, patient to fill out visitation form with two designated visitors
- Two visitors cannot be changed during inpatient stay
- Patient must be present on unit for 72 hours before visitors are permitted.
- All visitors must be at least 14 years old (unless otherwise ordered by physician)
- Clergy may visit ad lib (unless otherwise ordered by physician)

Detoxification Unit:

Visitation is arranged only for the following reasons:

- Significant adult family member / significant other / same sex partner/ friend for the purpose of a conjoint session on discharge planning
- Members from self help support groups (i.e. AA, NA, CA) to assist the patient in developing a greater understanding of their addiction problem
- Clergy, who offer spiritual support and guidance
- “Family” program participants may visit for 30 minutes after session attendance.

Cross reference: Detox. policy #021 Visitation

In addition to these protocols, visitors may be restricted or prohibited from time to time based on justifiable clinical restrictions*.

Visitors are not restricted, limited or otherwise denied visitation privileges on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability.

GRIEVANCE: If any patient of the hospital believes that his or her patient visitation rights have been violated, they may file a complaint using the hospital's grievance system.

DEFINITION: *__Justified Clinical Restrictions__: any clinically necessary or reasonable restriction or limitation imposed by the Hospital on a patient's visitation rights which restriction or limitation is necessary to provide safe care to patient or other patients. A justified clinical restriction may include, but need not be limited to one or more of the following:

- A court order limiting or restraining contact
- Behavior presenting a direct risk or threat to the patient, hospital staff or others in the immediate environment
- Behavior disruptive of the functioning of the patient care unit
- Reasonable limitations on the number of visitors at any one time
- Patient's risk of infection by the visitor
- Visitors risk of infection by the patient
- Extraordinary protections because of a pandemic or infectious disease outbreak
- Substance abuse treatment protocols requiring restricted visitation
- Patient's need for privacy or rest
- Need for privacy or rest by another individual in the patient's shared room
- Patient is undergoing a clinical intervention or procedure and the treating health care professional believes it is in the patient's best interest to limit visitation during the clinical intervention

REFERENCE: Federal regulation 42 CFR, part 482
482.13 (h)(2),(h)(3),(h)(4), 485.635 (f)(2), (f)(3)

Reviewed: 2/12
Revised: 6/13, 10/14, 5/17, 4/20, 7/21