

Health PEI Health Care Workers Frequently Asked Questions

HPEI Covid-19 Pandemic Visitors Partners in Care Compassionate Grounds Visitation Protocol

May 25, 2022

1. Q: Is visitation now open in all sites?

A:

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, general visitation is not permitted at this time. Patients and residents will be supported by Partners in Care (PICs) and designated visitors only at this time.

2. Q: Who is considered a Partner in care?

A:

- a) A person whom the patient/client/resident and/or substitute decision-maker identifies and designates as a Partner in Care. As a Partner in Care, they may support feeding, mobility, personal hygiene, cognitive stimulation, communication, meaningful connections, relational continuity, and assistance in decision-making. They may touch the patient or resident as part of their duties.
- b) Support personnel such as community spiritual care, hairstylists, hospice volunteers and facility volunteers will be permitted to provide service to residents and are **not** considered a partner in care. These personnel will be required to wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including a medical grade mask while providing service.

3. Q: How many partners in care and/or designated visitors can a patient have?

A:

- a) Patients in acute care facilities are permitted three (3) Partners in Care and Patients in hospital awaiting Long Term Care are permitted six (6) Partners in Care. Only two (2) PICs are permitted at the patient bedside any one time.
- b) Residents in Long Term Care and mental health and addictions transitions and recovery homes can have up to six (6) Partners in Care and 3 designated visitors with only two (2) permitted at the bedside at any one time when operationally safe to do so.

- c) The patient may designate different Partners in Care, if necessary, over time. Changes should be limited to weekly. If special circumstances exist that require an earlier change, facility leadership approval is required.
- (a) Partners in Care are welcomed 24 hours a day as essential members of the health care team and are not required to schedule their visit. **However, there may be times due to patient treatment schedules that Partners in care will be asked to defer visiting.**

4. Q: What public health measures exist for partners in care and designated visitors?

A:

- a) Anyone entering a facility, hospital or Long-Term Care home, must perform proper hand hygiene with or alcohol-based hand sanitizer before entering and exiting each patient room and patient care area.
- b) Medical grade masks must be worn properly over nose and mouth at all times within the facility.
- c) Those who do not mask will not be permitted to enter the facility.
- d) Eating and drinking at the bedside is not permitted except in exceptional circumstances such as when a Partner in Care is continuously at the bedside with a child, a newborn or palliative patient. These exceptional circumstances will be approved by facility leadership or designate.

5. Q: How are partners in care and designated visitors affected when an outbreak occurs?

A:

- a) If an outbreak is declared at a facility/unit, only three (3) Partners in Care will be permitted and only one (1) is allowed to visit at a time.
- b) In exceptional circumstances (i.e., end-of-life patients, patients with life threatening conditions or as determined by facility leadership) additional visitors may be permitted. IPAC may determine specific parameters around visitation based on the facility's ability to maintain IPAC practices in relation to outbreak situations in (h). The exceptions will be made at end of life etc. if needed and this was up to the facility. Partners in Care and the designated visitors who are currently not able to be in the room must wait outside the facility until they are able to visit.

6. Q: Are Partners in care or designated visitors who test positive for Covid or are on self-isolation but have not tested positive for Covid permitted to visit?

A:

- a) Partners in Care who have tested *positive for COVID-19* or who are in self-isolation will not be permitted to enter a Health PEI facility including Long-Term Care until they are deemed recovered and/or off isolation.
- b) Exception: *Under exceptional or compassionate circumstances at the discretion of the most responsible Physician/Nurse Practitioner and with approval of the Facility Administrator, a Partner in Care who is COVID-19 positive or potentially COVID-19 positive may visit the patient.*
- c) *Compassionate circumstances* are when a patient/resident is at end of life with a palliative performance scale score of 40% or less or when a patient has a critical illness/life threatening

condition where death may occur within 48-72 hours. Exceptions may also be made for children to have a parent/guardian with them during hospitalization.

- d) Visitation will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the most responsible Physician/Nurse Practitioner and must be approved by facility leadership. Once approved, Infection Control must be consulted to ensure a plan is in place for the visit to occur as safely as possible.
- e) Partners in Care who are COVID-19 positive or in self-isolation are required to be the sole person(s) visiting with the patient/resident for the duration of the visit. This visit must take place in a space that is separate from other patients/residents, other Partners in Care, visitors and staff.

7. Q: Are partners in care or designated visitors still permitted if a patient/resident tests positive for Covid-19?

A:

- (a) Patients/residents who are COVID-19 positive may have three (3) Partners in Care but only one (1) is permitted to visit at a time.
- (b) Additional Partners in Care or designated visitors may be permitted to visit positive patients/residents under compassionate and exceptional circumstances as determined by the most responsible provider and facility leadership.

Compassionate circumstances are when a patient/resident is end of life with a palliative performance scale score of 40% or less or when a patient has a critical illness/life threatening condition where death may occur within 48-72 hours. Exceptions may also be made for children to have a parent/guardian with them during hospitalization.

- (c) Partners in Care may visit with a COVID-19 positive or suspect positive patient/resident only if they wear full PPE during the visit. Full personal protective equipment (PPE) includes wearing medical masks, gowns, gloves, and visors/goggles.

8. Q: Under the new protocol are patient passes permitted?

A:

- a) Patients/residents in acute care facilities may leave the facility for reasons related to their treatment plan, for critical personal business, and for discharge planning.
- b) Residents in *Long-Term Care, Patients in Hospital awaiting Long Term Care, and patients in mental health and addictions transitions and recovery homes* may receive a pass for a predetermined amount of time.
 - All passes must be approved by the Most Responsible Physician/Nurse Practitioner;
 - Patients and their escort (if applicable) must adhere to infection control guidelines.