

## Guidance for SAH Enhanced Visitor Restrictions

**Effective November 12, 2021 – ONLY Vaccinated Essential Caregivers will be able to enter the facility.**

Exceptions to the **Essential Caregiver Requirement** may be considered in the following circumstances:

- Accompanying someone under 18
- Providing support for patients in labour
- End of life situations
- Trauma/critical illness
- Vulnerable individuals (e.g. cognitive impairment, significant developmental and/or intellectual disability, unable to effectively communicate, or mobility issue)
- Medical exemption from COVID-19 vaccination
- Children under 12 will be considered for visits on an individual basis in extenuating circumstances

\*NOTE: Support persons for Outpatients are considered **Essential Caregivers** and **MUST** be vaccinated to enter the facility. For an exception to be considered individuals must speak with the patient's Care Team.

Department-specific Sault Area Hospital (SAH) Visitor Guidance for Essential Caregivers (visitor) is provided in the following table. The acceptability of a visitor should be determined with the patient at admission based on the individual patient's needs.

This document recognizes the integral role that visitors play in providing physical, social, emotional and navigation of care. Visitor presence and participation has been shown to improve satisfaction and outcomes without additional risk. There is evidence to demonstrate that family presence improves the quality of life and results in better outcomes and the patient care experience.

SAH remains committed to the safety of our community, our patients, and our people by closely monitoring COVID-19 developments within our community and making decisions based on best practices.

Patient Type	Essential Caregivers - Visitor Guidance
COVID-19 Suspect or COVID-19 Confirmed Patients	<p><b>No Visitors</b></p> <p>Exceptions may be made if the person provides support for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a vulnerable patient (e.g. under the age of 18, cognitive impairment, significant developmental and/or intellectual disability, unable to effectively communicate)</li> <li>• a patient at the end of life</li> </ul>
Emergency Department	<p><b>No Visitors</b></p> <p>Exceptions may be made if the person provides support for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a vulnerable patient (e.g. under the age of 18, cognitive impairment, significant developmental and/or intellectual disability, unable to effectively communicate, or mobility issues)</li> <li>• a patient experiencing a life-altering event (end of life, critically ill, trauma)</li> </ul>
ICU	<p><b>Essential Caregiver ONLY</b></p> <p>Exceptions may be made if the person provides support for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a vulnerable patient (e.g. under the age of 18, cognitive impairment, significant developmental and/or intellectual disability, or unable to effectively communicate)</li> <li>• a patient experiencing a life-altering event (end of life, critically ill, trauma)</li> </ul>
Women & Children's Health Program	<p><b>Essential Caregiver ONLY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labour: 1 support person during labour and delivery</li> <li>• Post-partum: 1 person</li> <li>• Pediatrics and NICU: 1 parent at a time (Only 1 parent to stay overnight)</li> <li>• No other visitors allowed in the program</li> </ul>

General Medicine/ Surgical Departments / Post Acute / Mental Health	<b>Essential Caregiver ONLY</b>
Long-term Palliative (unable to go home)	<b>Essential Caregiver ONLY</b>
Palliative - End of Life	<b>Essential Caregiver ONLY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 visitors at a time (from list of 6 designated visitors) - if in a private room - the family will need to coordinate visits to ensure only 2 visitors are present at a time</li> <li>• May visit at any time and stay overnight</li> </ul>
Outpatient Clinics	<b>Essential Caregiver ONLY</b> <p>Each outpatient may bring one support person if the person provides support for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a vulnerable patient (e.g. under the age of 18, cognitive impairment, significant developmental and/or intellectual disability, unable to effectively communicate, mobility issues)</li> <li>• a patient at the end of life</li> </ul>

### Essential Caregivers - **MUST**:

- Be fully vaccinated (14-days post-second dose)
- Follow all travel restrictions and public health measures when coming to Ontario. [Canadian COVID-19 Travel Guidance](#)
- Be without illness symptoms will not be permitted to visit
- Be screened upon entry by the Door Screeners
- **Sign in** at the Nursing Station on the unit to support contact tracing
- Follow instructions given by staff; failure to follow instructions may result in a visitor being asked to leave the hospital
- Maintain 2 metres or 6 feet of physical distance with the patient and others at all times
- Not wander on the unit or leave the unit, including accessing common areas of the hospital
- Wear masks at all times while in hospital and must wash their hands when entering and leaving a patient's room
  - Please note, visitors who are exempt from wearing a mask will not be permitted for in-person visits. SAH will accommodate virtual visits in these circumstances. These visitors are asked to contact the appropriate department/area to arrange these virtual visits.

The care team will work with patients to establish an appropriate visiting schedule for the visitors for patients.

### Exceptions to SAH's Visitor Guidance:

**Please consult with the department leadership team from the specific department/area for any exceptions to the Visitor Guidance.**

**NOTE:** The list of reasons for support for a vulnerable patient (e.g. under the age of 18, cognitive impairment, significant developmental and/or intellectual disability, unable to effectively communicate, mobility issues) is not an exhaustive list; considerations beyond this list should be discussed with the Care Team.