



## Presence of Family or Care Partner

### Frequently asked questions – visitors

#### What is Vitalité Health Network's policy on visiting hours?

- Since September 1, 2017, patients can have family or their care partner with them at any time of the day or night. They can have other hospital visitors at any time. However, visitors are encouraged to respect the patients' rest time, which runs from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m.
- The Network recognizes that the family or care partner is an integral part of patients' healing process.
- The goal is to promote a patient- and family-centred approach to care and to encourage the family to be present and involved. The key is to meet patients' needs and accommodate their preferences.

#### Why does the Network allow visiting at any time?

- Research has shown that family and friends provide inpatients with important support. Having family or a care partner present makes it easier to deliver care, improves communication and has many positive effects.
- It has been proven that having loved ones present helps calm patients. They also recover better and feel less isolated. Flexible visiting hours reduce the rates of falls, medication errors and readmissions. Loved ones also better understand what needs to be done after discharge if they have been present for the discharge instructions.

#### What is the difference between a care partner and a visitor?

##### **Care partner:**

This is someone the patient wants to include in their health care (a family member, loved one, friend, caregiver, etc.). This is the person who has the privilege of remaining at the patient's bedside 24 hours a day.

##### **Visitor:**

This is someone (a friend, co-worker or family member) who only wants to visit the patient (occasional visits of short duration outside the rest time).

Are there areas where visits are limited or not allowed?

- Visits are not allowed in the operating room. Exception: the patient's partner may attend a caesarean birth.
- Staff may limit the length of visits or the number of visitors to protect patients with a weakened immune system and prevent infections from spreading between units.

### Can having more visitors present increase the infection rate?

- Studies have shown that the number of infections is not higher in hospitals with flexible visiting hours if hand hygiene and infection control measures are followed.
- Staff can tell visitors who have symptoms of an infection or cold that they could harm the patients by being present. These people should leave the hospital and only come back after their symptoms have ended.
- Collaboration with the Infection Prevention and Control Department is required.

### Are children allowed to visit patients at any time?

- Children under age 14 are welcome but must always be accompanied by an adult other than the patient.

### Can anyone visit a patient late in the evening or at night?

- No. The Network expects that only the family member or care partner chosen by the patient will be present late in the evening or at night.
- Visitors must respect patients' rest time.

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