

**EFFECTIVE September 21, 2022**  
**HOSPITAL VISITING HOURS UPDATE**

**POLICY**

1. Lake of the Woods District Hospital staff will support virtual family presence to ensure the emotional wellbeing of our patients.
2. Hospital staff will provide alternative options to in-person visitation. Staff will facilitate the use of technology (iPad) for patients to communicate/visit with family.
3. Effective **Wednesday, September 21, 2022**, there will be any 2 visitors allowed per hospital admission at Lake of the Woods District Hospital. **The total number of ECP/visitors at one time will not exceed two (2) people.**
4. Effective **Wednesday, September 21, 2022**, there will be one (1) ECP **or** one (1) visitor allowed in every outpatient department per visit. **The total number of ECP/visitors at one time will not exceed one (1) person.**
5. Essential Care Partners (ECP) are always welcome if they meet the criteria. See below for guidance on Essential Care Partners (ECP). An Essential Care Partner is not a visitor.
6. See DEFINITIONS for examples of when an ECP may be required.
7. COVID-19 vaccination is required and will continue to be tracked for all visitors and all Essential Care Partner's (ECP); however visible proof of vaccination will not be required.
8. An Essential Care Partner (ECP) who is **not fully vaccinated** may be exempt from this policy if they are **previously approved and meet the criteria** defined under Extenuating Circumstances/Exceptions. Pre-authorization is obtained from Infection Control/Occupational Health, the Unit Manager, and the Nursing Supervisor.
9. Lake of the Woods District Hospital will **not** accept a negative PCR or rapid antigen test in place of COVID-19 vaccination for entry to our hospital.
10. All Visitors and Essential Care Partners:
  - will be screened at the entrance
  - will perform hand hygiene when exiting and re-entering the hospital
  - will declare truthfully if they have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19
  - will always wear a **hospital-issued mask** (a mask will be provided at the screening desk)
  - will practice physical distancing (six feet distance from others whenever possible)
  - will follow instructions from staff on the unit

- will comply with current eating and drinking restrictions
- will remain in the area/department they are visiting

11. Visitors and Essential Care Partners will **not be permitted** to enter or remain within the facilities if they:

- fail the screening
- are in self-isolation and/or quarantine (as per public health)
- **express any verbal abuse, harassment, or violence towards our staff**
- **refuse to wear a mask while visiting/accompanying**
- are non-compliant with policies

12. Guidance on Visitor and Essential Care partners (ECP) for specific departments is outlined below in Visitor and Essential Care Partners (ECP) Guidelines.

### **VISITOR and ESSENTIAL CARE PARTNERS (ECP) GUIDELINES**

We recognize that limiting visitor access for some patients may have a greater impact to their safety and well-being than others. The following restrictions are in place to allow for appropriate physical distancing to keep all staff, patients, and visitors safe.

<b>Emergency Department</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b><u>One (1) ECP or one (1) visitor for each ED patient per ED visit.</u></b></li> <li>2. <b>The total number of ECP/visitors at one time will not exceed one (1) person.</b></li> <li>3. Both parents/guardians of a minor child will <u>always be allowed.</u></li> <li>4. The ECP will be provided a visitor information card by ED staff, and then directed to the main lobby for COVID screening.</li> </ol>
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<b>Outpatient visits, day surgery and procedures</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All Outpatient Departments will be allowed one (1) Essential Care Partner (ECP) or one (1) visitor per visit.</li> <li>2. <b><u>Diagnostic Imaging</u></b> - one (1) Essential Care Partner (ECP) or one (1) visitor for <u>obstetrical appointments only.</u></li> <li>3. Both parents/guardians of a minor child will <u>always be allowed</u> in any outpatient department.</li> </ol>
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<b>Inpatients</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b><u>Any two (2) fully vaccinated visitors</u></b> allowed for any inpatient at Lake of the Woods District Hospital between the hours of 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.</li> <li>2. Both parents/guardians of a minor child will <u>always be</u></li> </ol>
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	<p><u>allowed.</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Staff will facilitate the use of technology (iPad) for patients to communicate/visit with family as able.</li> <li>4. Decisions regarding extenuating circumstances/exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis, in collaboration with Infection Control/Occupational Health and Safety, the Unit Manager, and the Nursing Supervisor.</li> </ol>
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<b>Inpatients, COVID positive</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b><u>No visitors</u> allowed for COVID-positive inpatients at Lake of the Woods District Hospital.</b></li> <li>2. Staff will facilitate the use of technology (iPad) for patients to communicate/visit with family as able.</li> <li>3. Decisions regarding extenuating circumstances/exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis, in collaboration with Infection Control/Occupational Health and Safety, the Unit Manager, and the Nursing Supervisor.</li> </ol>
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<b>Outdoor Visits</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Outdoor Visiting is allowed at this time.</li> </ol>
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<b>Maternity Inpatients</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b><u>Any two (2) fully vaccinated visitors</u> allowed in the Maternity Unit between the hours of 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.</b></li> <li>2. <b>Maternity inpatients are also permitted two (2) <u>ECP/labour partners.</u> Having full COVID-19 vaccination will be preferred but is not required for the ECP/labour partners.</b></li> <li>3. <b>The total number of ECP/labour partners/visitors at one time will not exceed two (2) people. (including children of laboring patient)</b></li> <li>4. The labouring patient will choose their ECP/labour partners <u>in advance</u> of the delivery.</li> <li>5. Decisions regarding extenuating circumstances/exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis, in collaboration with Infection Control/Occupational Health and Safety, the Unit Manager, and the Nursing Supervisor.</li> </ol>
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<p><b>Extenuating Circumstances/ Exceptions</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All extenuating circumstances and exceptions are considered, discussed, and approved by the Team Lead, in collaboration with the Unit Manager and/or Nursing Supervisor.</li> <li>2. Exceptions can only be authorized by Unit Manager and/or Nursing Supervisor.</li> <li>3. Visitors may be re-evaluated for extenuating circumstances/exceptions, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>critical illness</i></li> <li>• <i>pediatrics</i></li> <li>• <i>palliative care</i></li> <li>• <i>hospice care</i></li> <li>• <i>end-of-life</i> <i>(for whom imminent death is anticipated or possible in the next 7 days)</i></li> <li>• <i>Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD)</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>4. If requested by the patient, a religious leader or traditional healer may be permitted, if the religious leader or traditional healer is fully vaccinated, and if the room is large enough to accommodate physical distancing.</li> </ol>
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## DEFINITIONS

### 1. General Visitor (Visitor)

- a) A visitor is defined as someone whose time with the patient is **discretionary** and **short-term/temporary**. This can include:
  - visits that occur for purposes that are social in nature.
  - individuals who are not involved in the direct care of the patient.
- b) A visitor is not considered an Essential Care Partner.

### 2. Essential Care Partner

- a) An Essential Care Partner (ECP) is defined as a person who will provide physical and/or psychological support, **which is deemed important to the patient's care**. Essential Care Partners directly impact the physical, emotional, and psychological well-being and safety of patients.
- b) ECP presence improves patient safety, reduces harm, improves the quality of care, patient outcomes, and patient care experiences, as well as contributes to better staff morale and communication between health care teams and patients. ECP care can include support in decision-making, care coordination, and continuity of care.
- c) An Essential Care Partner (ECP) is **identified by the patient and/or substitute decision-maker, and/or the care team**.

d) Essential Care Partners are an integral and essential part of care provision. **An Essential Care Partner is not considered a visitor.**