

#### **DHB Board Office**

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www.waitematadhb.govt.nz

12 November 2020



Dear

Re: OIA request – Visitor policies during COVID-19 Alert Levels 2 and 3

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received 20 October seeking information from Waitematā District Health Board (DHB) about our visitor policies during Alert Levels 2 and 3.

Before responding to your specific questions, it may be useful to provide some context about our services.

Waitematā DHB serves a population of more than 630,000 across the North Shore, Waitakere and Rodney areas, the largest and one of the most rapidly growing DHBs in the country. We are the largest employer in the district, employing around 8,500 people across more than 80 locations.

In addition to providing services to our own population, we are also the metropolitan Auckland provider of forensic psychiatry, child disability services, child community dental services and community alcohol and drug services.

In response to your request, we are able to provide the following information:

I am emailing to enquire about your Level 3 and Level 2 COVID-19 policy around visitors during August 2020. I am doing an assignment on these for university and am unable to find the policies online. I was working in North Shore hospital during this time and am trying to use this as a reference.

Regardless of which Alert Level we are at, we ask that our visitors observe the following practices:

- good hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette at all times
- do not visit patients, or attend appointments with patients, if unwell
- follow the contact-tracing option that best suits them, e.g., using the NZ COVID Tracer app to scan QR codes using smartphones at our main entrances, or registering on arrival.

For information on recent Alert Level 2 and 3 policies, please refer to the following:

Attachment 1 - COVID-19 - Visitor Guidance Level 2, August 2020. Attachment 2 - COVID-19 - Visitor Guidance Level 3, August 2020.

I trust that this information is helpful.

Waitematā DHB supports the open disclosure of information to assist community understanding of how we are delivering publicly funded healthcare. This includes the proactive publication of anonymised Official Information Act responses on our website from 10 working days after they have been released.

If you consider there are good reasons why this response should not be made publicly available, we will be happy to consider your views.

Yours sincerely

**Tamzin Brott** 

**COVID-19 Executive Lead** 

Waitematā District Health Board



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### 1. Purpose

These guidelines seek to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 whilst New Zealand is in Level-2 COVID-19 through limiting visitors to patients in our hospitals. This policy provides direction on access by the public to our DHB hospital campuses during this response in order to:

- support patients to remain connected with their whanau and loved-ones; and
- facilitate whānau as partners in patient care

These measures, as with all current COVID-19-related measures, seek to ensure the safety of patients and staff by minimising avoidable contact and the potential for spread.

### 2. Definitions

Visitor	A key support person over the age of 15	
Carer	The person who will be most involved in supporting the patient at home and over the age of 15	

### 3. General Principles

This policy outlines our visiting restrictions for inpatients who are **not** COVID-19 probable or confirmed. It ensures we stand by Waitematā DHB's core values. In particular, it:

- prioritises the safety of visitors, our patients and staff on site;
- recognises the importance of whānau as partners in patient care;
- seeks solutions that keep patients connected with whānau; and
- strives to provide staff and visitors with clear information and explanations that they can relate to their own circumstances.

There is the expectation that staff use clinical judgement including an assessment of patient status, situation, consistency, and clinical environment situation for all decisions regarding visiting.

**Note:** Visitors for patients with a probable or confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis please see the below policy: COVID -19 Compassionate Approach to Visitors of Probable or Confirmed COVID-19 Patient

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### 4. Visitor Restrictions

Special rules are in place for people wishing to visit Waitematā DHB facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. These rules are consistent with Government measures that are in place to restrict contact between people and reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading. Access points to facilities will continue to be minimised to allow health screening and visitor register processes to remain robust.

The rules also reflect the vulnerable nature of many of the individuals who access our services and are at high risk of the impacts of COVID-19. They consider the well-being of individual patients alongside the wellbeing and safety of the Waitematā DHB community and workforce as a whole.

We continue to monitor developments regarding COVID-19. Restrictions outlined in this policy will be regularly updated to reflect any changes in prevalence, risk and impact on hospital services.

When staff speak with patients and whānau we will inform them of the restricted visiting rules. Alternative means of keeping in touch via phone or zoom for virtual visiting are to still to be encouraged and enabled. Inpatient areas will continue best practice of keeping in contact with a key family member daily to update on a patient's care.

### 5. Visitors for inpatients who are not COVID-19 positive

On Monday, 31 August 2020 New Zealand will enter Level 2 restrictions. Effective Monday, 31 August 2020 inpatients at Waitematā DHB facilities, who are **not** COVID-19 probable or confirmed, will be able to have one visit per day. Usual visiting times of 8am - 8pm are adhered to, with the exception of birthing or labour. Consideration should be given to the length of the visit and as a guide it should not exceed 2 hours.

**Visitors to high risk areas ED & ADU/ICU/SCBU** will be <u>restricted</u> to a maximum of <u>one</u> nominated visitor and <u>one</u> visit per day.

**SCBU**: in the case of neonates, a mother and her baby are considered to be "the patient". The visiting policy of one nominated visitors applies, however, please note that there should be flexibility to allow mothers to visit their baby in SCBU at any time day or night with their nominated visitor (partner or support person).

**For all other areas** visits will be restricted to two nominated visitors, however, patients can have just one visitor at a time and only one visit per day will be permitted.

#### Maternity:

Birthing Suite: 2 hour maximum visiting rule does not apply for a support person of a pregnant woman for labour and birth, including induction of birth.

#### Post-Natal Ward:

- 2 nominated people for labour and birth (including for induction of labour)
- 2 nominated people for the postnatal ward but cannot visit together, one visit each per day
- No overnight visitors unless on compassionate grounds

Haematology Day Stay (NSH) and Medical Day Stay (WTH) will retain a No visitor policy – due to physical distancing requirements. The exception is when a patient is visiting for the first time and undergoing education they may bring a support person as this education session is completed in the sole single room on the unit.

**Mental Health inpatient units:** KMU (ward 12) will support 2 nominated visitors, one per day, as above. He Puna Waiora, Waiatarau will monitor their visiting policy day to day during the first week of Level 2 and most up to date policy will be available within this policy and published via Controlled Documents. Mason Clinic have their specific policy and procedure for visiting:

#### COVID-19 - Visitors and Leave for Adult Mental Health Inpatient Units

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### COVID-19 - Leave and Visiting Guide - CADS

#### COVID-19 - Visitors Policy for Mason Clinic

The ward staff should use discretion in the management of visitor numbers and if they feel that safe physical distancing is at risk they should direct visitors to wait in an alternative area or visit at another time. For example, if the patient requires a procedure which increases the number of people around the bed space, or, if there are already other visitors in a 4 bed bay that could cause the area to become congested.

#### **Compassionate Grounds**

Exemptions may be made on compassionate grounds at the discretion of the nurse in charge or clinical nurse managers to enable:

- More than one visitor at a time
- More than two nominated visitors
- Visits longer than 2 hours
- Visits outside standard visiting hours
- Visits for people under 15 years of age

The decision regarding visitation on compassionate grounds will be communicated to both the patient and visitor by a senior staff member as soon as possible. If there is a disagreement between staff members, the case will be referred, for an immediate, third party decision, to:

- Charge Nurse Manager, Clinical Charge Midwife or Clinical Nurse Director (during working hours)
- Waitematā Central Operations Manager or Executive Manager on call (after hours)

#### 6. Nominated visitors

A nominated visitor is a person who has been identified by a patient/parent/caregiver or guardian as their visitor. Nominated visitors need to be aged 15 years or over. There can only be two nominated visitors assigned to any inpatient at a given time and they must be from the same extended 'bubble'. Only one of the nominated visitors can visit each day, unless approval has been granted under compassionate grounds.

On admission (or during their stay) ward patients will be informed that they can nominate visitors from their 'extended bubble'. If the patient is unable to nominate visitors, then appropriate parents, carers, or guardians will do so

The name and contact details of nominated visitors will be recorded for individual inpatients in the - <u>Visitor</u> <u>Management App: Link</u> by the ward/unit clerk or other delegated person. This information will be accessible to all screeners at all entrances. They can look up by area, check they are nominated and thus allow visitors to be checked at the entrance they use and directed to the ward/service of the patient they are nominated to visit/support.

Please see Appendix 1 (Front of House) and Appendix 2 (Wards) for instructions for the Visitor Management App.

## 7. Support People for Radiology and Outpatient Appointments

Patients coming to a Waitematā DHB facility for an outpatient appointment, or visiting Radiology, are able to bring a support person with them if required. Radiology and Outpatient teams should engage in a process to assist the patient to identify an appropriate support person if required.

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## 8. Protocol for Screening and Tracking of Visitors

All nominated visitors to the hospital will undertake a health screening at point of entry, prior to being given access to the ward or service. A central register will be maintained at the entrance, documenting the visitor's name and phone number, the patient they are visiting, the ward visited and the health screening outcome. This screening will be repeated every time a visitor presents at a Waitematā DHB facility.

Security guards will greet visitors on arrival and communicate the visitor policy.

Health screening will be carried out by nursing or HCA staff located at entrances to facilities.

#### Screening will consist of the following questions:

Name	:		Date:		
	number:				
Sectio	on 2- Reason for Visit.				
1)	Are you visiting a par	tient?		Yes □	No □
2)	Are you a named visi	itor? (only name	ed/nominated visitors allowed)	Yes □	No □
3)	Name of the patient	:			
4)	Are you attending ar	appointment t	coday?	Yes □	No □
5)	Please specify where	e/what:		_	
Sectio	on 3- COVID-19 Screen				
6)	Have you had contac	t with a confirn	ned or probable case?	Yes □	No □
7)	Have you had any in	Yes □	No □		
8)	Have you had direct overseas? (e.g. Cust isolation facilities)	Yes □	No □		
9)	Have you worked on	an internation	al aircraft or shipping vessel?	Yes □	No □
10)	Have you cleaned at areas/conveniences	Yes □	No 🗆		
Sectio	on 4- Wellness Screen				
11)	Do you have ANY (ne	ew, less than or	ne week) of the following symptom	s?	
	Fever			Yes □	No □
	Shortness of breath			Yes □	No □
	Cough	Yes □	No □		
	Sore throat	Yes □	No □		
	Nasal congestion, ru	Yes □	No □		
	Loss of sense of sme			Yes □	No □
	Have you seen a doc	tor for these sy	mptoms yet?	Yes □	No □
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If a visitor passes the health screening they will be given access to the facility and provided guidance on visiting restrictions and protocol. They will be reminded of the importance of hand hygiene when entering and exiting patient care areas and making contact with the environment. If visitors do not have a face covering they will be provided with a level 2/surgical mask by screening staff.

Visitors will only be allowed to visit the patient in their immediate area and not permitted to visit in other areas around the hospital.

**Outpatients** will be issued with a dated white wrist band which identifies them as a having been screened before entering outpatient area.

Ward/unit visitors or support persons accompanying an Outpatients' appointment will be issued with a dated white visitor sticker.

If a visitor does not pass the health screening, the nurse/HCA will provide appropriate health advice and information and explain why they are not able to visit a patient.

We recognise that some patients who are in hospital for extended periods of time often require food and other amenities that are routinely provided by whānau and friends. We will allow this to continue, however the nominated visitors must be the persons bringing in the food and other amenities.

### 9. Precautions for visitors to observe

While on site, visitors will be required to:

- ensure that they carry out appropriate hand hygiene measures;
- maintain safe distancing from staff and other patients;
- only visit the patient they have been nominated for;
- only visit the ward/area they are nominated for (no other areas of facility)
- be aware of the posters and signage throughout the campuses advising of above
- Wear a face covering at all times.

They may visit cafeteria facilities if necessary where there will be limited beverage and food options, and registers will be required to be completed at all cafeteria facilities or scanning of QR codes for the NZ COVID Tracer App.

### 10. Associated Documents

COVID -19 Compassionate Approach to Visitors of Probable or Confirmed COVID-19 Patient

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## 11. Appendix 1 - Visitor Management App Instructions (Front Entrance)

The visitor Management App is designed to maintain the nominated visitor information for patients. It helps the Front of house staff to follow the visitor policy under covid-19 alert levels. This app can be accessed via the below link:

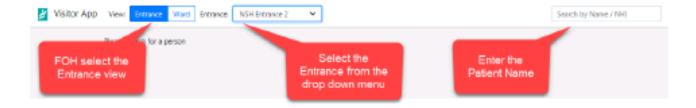
### https://wdhb-web-apps.healthcare.huarahi.health.govt.nz/visitor/

The visitor app has got 2 different views; Entrance view is to be used by Front of House staff to check for nominated visitor information. And Ward view is intended for ward staff to enter the nominated visitor information.



#### Entrance View: This view is to be used by Front of House

- 1: FOH need to select the Entrance view and then select their entrance from the drop down menu.
- 2: Enter the patient Name (it can be first name or last name) and select the patient from the list.



The Patient name with the nominated visitor will be displayed on the front page. If the Nominated visitor is not showing, it means the information has not been entered.

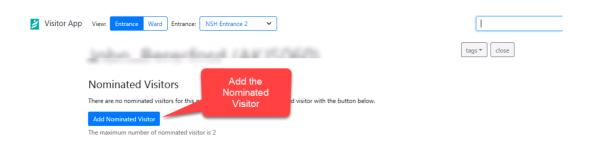
In such cases FOH can contact the Ward to check if the current visitor is the Nominated Visitor. And choose to update the nominated visitor themselves by clicking on the button Add Nominated Visitor.

If nominated visitor is already entered, jump to step 6 else go to step 3.

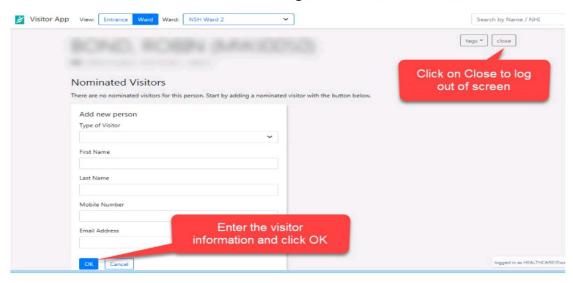
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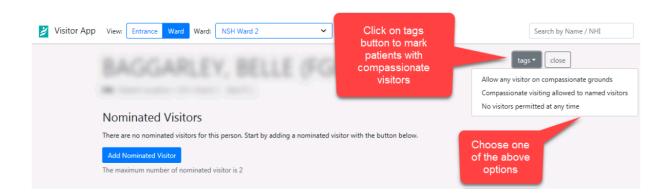
3: Click on the button Add Nominated Visitor.



4: Enter the visitor Details and click OK to save. To log out of this screen click on close button.



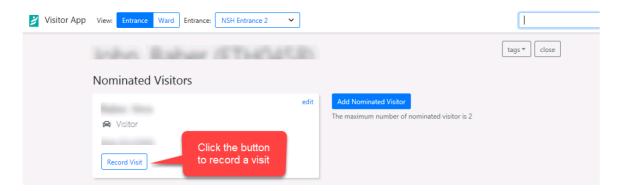
5: To flag a patient with Compassionate grounds, click on the **tags** button and choose one of the options. Please check with Ward staff for Compassionate visitors.



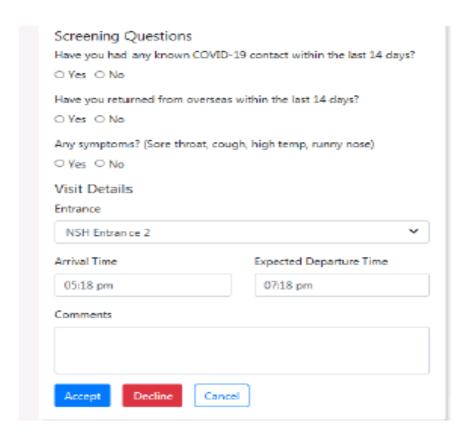
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6: To Record a visit, click on the button Record Visit.



7: Ask the screening questions, fill all the details and click on Accept.



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## 12. Appendix 2 - Visitor Management App Instructions (Wards)

The visitor Management App is designed to maintain the nominated visitor information for patients. It helps the Front of house staff to follow the visitor policy under covid-19 alert levels. This app can be accessed via the below link.

### https://wdhb-web-apps.healthcare.huarahi.health.govt.nz/visitor/

The visitor app has got 2 different views; Entrance view is to be used by Front of House staff to check for nominated visitor information. And Ward view is intended for ward staff to enter the nominated visitor information.



Ward View: This view is for Ward Staff to enter Visitor Information in the system.

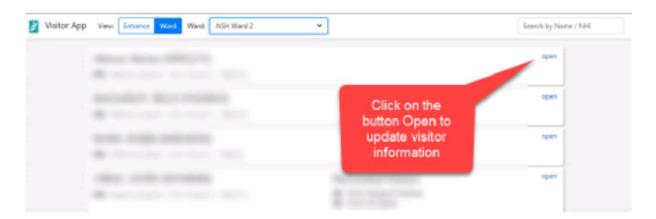
Click on the Ward View Button and Select your ward from the drop down Menu.
 You will see the list of Patients in your ward.



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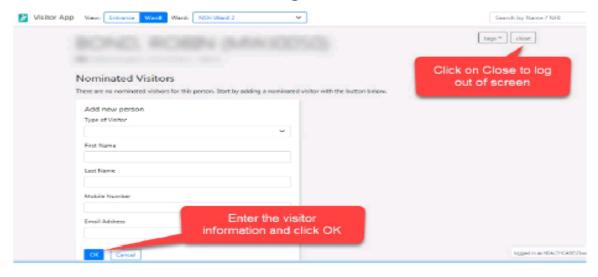
2: To update the Nominated visitor for a patient, click on the button open.



3: Click on the button Add Nominated Visitor to add visitor information.

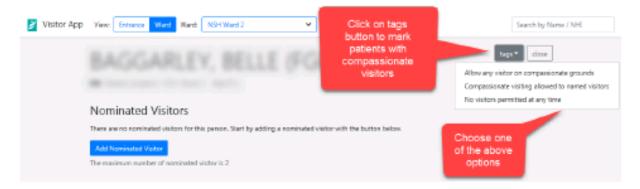


Enter the visitor Details and click OK to save. To log out of this screen click on close button.





4: To flag a patient with Compassionate grounds click on the tags button and choose one of the options.



## 13. Appendix 3 - Patient/Visitor Screening Tool - Multi-lingual

Patient-Visitor Screen (Chinese-Simplified)

Patient-Visitor Screen (Chinese-Traditional)

Patient-Visitor Screen (English)

Patient-Visitor Screen (Hindi)

Patient-Visitor Screen (Japanese)

Patient-Visitor Screen (Korean)

Patient-Visitor Screen (Samoan)

Patient-Visitor Screen (Tongan)

Patient-Visitor Screen (Urdu)

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# Covid-19 Patient Visitor Policy Patient Visitor Guidance

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### 1. Purpose

These guidelines seek to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 whilst New Zealand is in Level-3 COVID-19 response where only essential work and travel is permitted and physical distancing is required. At a time when we have a no visitors policy, it explains the exceptional circumstances and compassionate grounds under which current inpatients can receive visitors/outpatients can have a support companion in order to:

- support patients to remain connected with their whānau and loved-ones; and
- facilitate whānau as partners in patient care.

These measures, as with all current COVID-19-related measures, seek to ensure the safety of patients and staff by minimising avoidable contact and the potential for spread.

#### 2. Definitions

Visitors	A key support person who must be from the same 'bubble' as the patient and not a child under 15
Carer	The person who will be most involved in supporting the patient at home. They must be from the same 'bubble' as the inpatient and not a child under 15

### 3. General Principles

This policy adopts a compassionate approach during a time when there are stringent visiting restrictions and ensures we stand by Waitematā DHB's core values. In particular, it:

- prioritises the safety of visitors, our patients and staff on site;
- recognises the importance of whānau as partners in patient care;
- protects the privacy and autonomy of patients and visitors;
- seeks solutions that keep patients connected with whānau; and

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 strives to provide visitors with clear information and explanations that they can relate to their own circumstances.

There is the expectation that staff use clinical judgement including an assessment of patient status, situation, consistency, and clinical environment situation for all decisions regarding compassionate visiting.

### 4. Visitor Restrictions

Special rules are in place for people wishing to visit Waitematā DHB facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. These rules are consistent with Government measures that are in place to restrict contact between people and reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

The rules also reflect the vulnerable nature of many of the individuals who access our services and are at high risk of the impacts of COVID-19. They consider the well-being of individual patients alongside the wellbeing and safety of the Waitematā DHB community and workforce as a whole.

We continue to monitor developments regarding COVID-19. Restrictions outlined in this policy will be regularly updated to reflect any changes in prevalence, risk and impact on hospital services.

Speak to your patients; inform them of the overall **no visiting** rule and help them find alternative means of keeping in touch via phone or zoom etc. We should endeavour to support other ways of visiting such as virtual visiting through personal devices or supplied tablets. In addition, wards will keep in contact with a key family member daily to update on a patient's care.

## 5. Visitors for inpatients who are not COVID-19 positive

On **Wednesday 12 of August from noon** New Zealand entered Level 3 restrictions. During the previous lock down Waitematā DHB have had strict visiting guidance in place which will continue during level 3 restrictions. Options for compassionate grounds are available to support patients while an inpatient.

**PLEASE NOTE:** During level 3 for Mason Clinic, mental health inpatient units (He Puna and Waiatarau) and Ward 12 (KMU) no visiting will continue. This is to ensure that physical distancing can be managed in areas where clients are moving around their "bubble". The units will consider on a case by case basis visiting on compassionate grounds.

### **Compassionate Grounds**

In making exemptions on compassionate grounds, consideration will be given to factors including (but not limited to):

- Parent or guardian of a patient who is under 18 years of age
- Carer of a patient with a disability

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- Whānau member of patients whose condition has worsened and/or are about to receive a diagnosis that will be distressing
- Whānau member of patients at end of life
- Whānau who are unable to maintain contact using alternative modes, for example lack of access to technology.
- Whānau member or carer involved in carer education for discharge.

Further exemptions may be made on compassionate grounds at the discretion of the nurse in charge or clinical nurse managers to enable:

- more than one visitor at a time;
- more than one nominated visitor; and
- visits outside standard visiting hours.

### Maternity/Hine Ora/SCBU compassionate grounds

In the case of neonates, a mother and her baby are considered to be 'the patient'.

- A partner or support person of a pregnant woman for labour and birth, including for induction of birth
- A partner or support person for a woman experiencing perinatal loss and extreme distress.
- For babies in SCBU expected to stay over 48 hours a partner or support person for the mother can visit.

If there is a disagreement between staff members, the case will be referred, for an immediate, third party decision, to:

- Charge Nurse Manager, Clinical Charge Midwife or Clinical Nurse Director (during working hours)
- Waitematā Central Operations Manager or Executive Manager on call (after hours)

The decision regarding visitation on compassionate grounds will be communicated to both the patient and visitor by a senior staff member as soon as possible.

### 6. Nominated visitors

A nominated visitor is a person who has been identified by a patient/parent/caregiver or guardian as their visitor. Nominated visitors need to be aged 15 years or over and from the same bubble as the inpatient. There can only be one nominated visitor assigned to any inpatient or outpatient at a given time.

If appropriate, ward patients will nominate a visitor on admission or during their stay. If the patient is unable to nominate a visitor, appropriate parents, carers, or guardians will do so. Outpatient teams should follow a similar process to assist the patient to identify an appropriate support person in accordance with compassionate guidelines.

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# Waitemata District Health Board Best Care for Everyone

# Covid-19 Patient Visitor Policy Patient Visitor Guidance

The name and contact details of nominated visitors will be recorded for individual inpatients. This information will be held centrally so that visitors can be checked at the entrance to ensure they are a nominated visitor. This will assist with the screening, monitoring and contact tracing of visitors into Waitematā DHB facilities.

For each shift the nominated visitor app should be updated by each ward: <a href="https://wdhb-web-apps.healthcare.huarahi.health.govt.nz/visitor/">https://wdhb-web-apps.healthcare.huarahi.health.govt.nz/visitor/</a>. If any further information is required for FOH staff please email the relevant area below:

NORTH SHORE HOSPITAL - <u>NSHFOH@waitematadhb.govt.nz</u>

WAITAKERE HOSPITAL - #AHSFOHAdminStaff@waitematadhb.govt.nz

All approved visitors and support people must be provided with a letter by email that identifies them to the front of house staff on arrival.

### 7. Visiting protocol

All nominated visitors to the hospital will undertake a health screening at point of entry, prior to being given access to the ward or service. A central register will be maintained at the entrance, documenting the visitor's name and phone number, the patient they are visiting, the ward visited and the health screening outcome. This screening will be repeated every time a visitor presents at a Waitematā DHB facility.

Health screening will be carried out by nursing staff located at entrances to facilities via the visitors app.

### Screening will consist of the following questions:

- Are you in self isolation due to recent overseas travel?
- Have you had any known COVID-19 contact?
- Have you had any of the following symptoms in the past seven (7) days:
  - o cough
  - fever/raised temperature
  - sneezing and runny nose
  - loss of sense of smell
  - o new shortness of breath?

If a visitor does not pass the health screening, the nurse will provide appropriate health advice and information and explain why they are not able to visit a patient.

Security guards will greet visitors on arrival and communicate the visitor policy. Visitors who have permission to visit patients on compassionate grounds will be emailed a letter by the ward to show security at the main entrance; all other visitors are not allowed.

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### 8. Visiting hours

To enable the safe management of visitors onto Waitematā DHB Inpatient facilities, visiting hours will be limited to 8.00 am to 8.00 pm, with the exception of labour or birth.

### 9. Precautions for visitors to observe

While on site, visitors will be required to:

- ensure that they carry out appropriate hand hygiene measures;
- maintain physical distancing of two (2) metres from staff and other patients;
- only visit the patient they have been nominated for;
- only visit the ward/area they are nominated for (no other areas of facility).

### 10. Picking up patients on discharge

All patients requiring pick up will be picked up outside of the hospital. Ward staff need to support patients to the front door and wait with patient until their transport arrives.

## 11. Key stakeholders and sign off

Operational plan development and		
sign off	Poobie Pillay	Team Leader IP&C
Senior Manager sign off	David Price	COVID-19 IMT Welfare Lead
Final sign off		COVID-19 IMT ELT

### 12. Distribution

In addition to personnel involved in the development and sign-off of this plan, the document is to be distributed by email to:

Recipient	Role	Email
NSH Duty nurse managers		# Duty Managers NSH (WDHB)
Waitematā central team		# Waitematā central (WDHB)
Waitematā DHB security team		# Security (WDHB)
Waitematā DHB traffic team		# Traffic (WDHB)
Charge Nurse Managers NSH and		# Charge Nurse Managers Med & Surg
WTH		(WDHB)
Acute and Emergency OM's NSH and	Operations Managers	# Acute & Emergency Operations
WTH		Managers(WDHB)
Surgical OM's	Operations Managers	# Surg Operations Managers (WDHB)
Pam Lightbown	GM MHS	Pam.Lightbown@waitematadhb.govt.nz
Specialist Medicine and Health of		# Specialist Med Operations
Older People Operations Managers		Managers(WDHB)
Clinical Directors		# Clinical Directors (WDHB)

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# Covid-19 Patient Visitor Policy Patient Visitor Guidance

### **13.** Associated Documents

COVID -19 Compassionate Approach to Visitors of COVID-19 Positive Patient

<u>Delivery and Collection of (Non-COVID) Patient Essential Packages</u>

## 14. Appendix

• Email for nominated visitors

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