



## Essential Visitors during COVID-19 – Resuming Restricted Visiting – DRAFT V2

### Resource for Patients and Visitors

We are pleased to share that visitor restrictions have lessened at Headwaters Health Care Centre as of July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

We are taking a phased approach and gradually increasing visiting, following guidance from the Ministry of Health. The return of visitors will be different from before the COVID-19 pandemic period. **There will not be a return to open visiting at this time.** We will review and revise the visitor restrictions on a regular basis.

Visitors at this time are deemed “essential visitors”. Meaning a person who provides personal, social, psychological, emotional and physical support, enable process of care and patient flow; and discharge from hospital. Each patient who is eligible, can identify two designated essential visitors.

The number of designated essential visitors is being restricted for the safety of all patients and staff, as COVID-19 continues to be present in our community. We have strict guidelines for the categories of patients who are eligible for essential visitors and/or require an essential visitor to accompany them to appointments.

#### Here are some of the important points you need to know about visiting at this time:

- Patients who are admitted, must have visits scheduled with the care team based on guidance for eligibility and frequency of visit.
- Patient who are attending outpatient appointments, will be asked if they require an essential visitor at the time of booking their appointment/treatment. Only 1 designated essential visitor can attend the appointment with the patient.
- Each inpatient can only have one essential visitor per one hour visiting block (scheduled by the care team).
- The essential visitor will be restricted from moving freely around the hospital. Public washrooms and cafeteria are available.
- All essential visitors will be screened at the entrances. If screening is not successful, the essential visitor will not be allowed to enter the hospital.
- Essential visitors are expected to wear a mask. If visitors do not have a mask, or face covering, we will provide a mask. If additional person protective equipment (PPE) is required, it will be provided.
- Essential visitors must follow good hand hygiene practices and are expected to use hand sanitizer when moving between areas of the hospital. The care team will provide support and guidance as required.
- Essential visitors must maintain social distancing when appropriate (unless the patient requires physical support for walking, transitioning).

We look forward to welcoming essential visitors. Thank you in advance for your support, understanding and patience as we resume visiting while preventing the spread of the virus.

#### We need your support to keep your loved ones safe:

- ✓ Clean your hands frequently with hand sanitizer or soap and water
- ✓ Stay home when sick
- ✓ Maintain social distancing of at least 2 m/6 feet
- ✓ Wear a mask at all times while visiting

Please visit our website for more information on visiting: [www.headwatershealth.ca](http://www.headwatershealth.ca) - review the COVID-19 section on the home screen.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### Q: Who can be a designated essential visitor?

A: The patient can decide. Visitor is defined broadly as any person who is entering the hospital to be physically present with a patient. An essential visitor is a person who provides personal, social, psychological, emotional and physical support, enable process of care and patient flow; and discharge from hospital.

### Q: Does my designated essential visitor have to be a family member?

A: No. You can decide who your essential visitor is. Visitors may include, but are not limited to, family members, care partners, caregivers, support persons and friends.

### Q: What if patients are unable to make decisions for themselves about who is the designated essential visitor?

A: If a patient is incapable of making a decision, the substitute decision-maker (SDM) of a patient can identify the designated essential visitor(s). SDMs will suggest designated essential visitor(s) based on knowing what the patient preferences may be and to the best of their knowledge.

### Q: Who cannot visit?

A: Anyone who has these signs or symptoms:

- Fever, cough, difficulty breathing, difficulty swallowing, sore throat, runny nose, loss of taste or smell, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea.

Anyone who is known or suspected COVID-19 positive **and** has not been cleared by Public Health.

Anyone who is a contact of known COVID-19 positive.

Anyone with a travel history anywhere in the world for the past 14 days.

Anyone less than 18 years of age (exceptions are considered on a case by case basis).

### Q: Can I visit an admitted patient anytime?

A: No. We do not have open visiting hours. Visiting is being restricted and each inpatient unit has a schedule for visiting times, see below. Please note this schedule is subject to change.

Area	Days of Week	Visiting Duration	Visiting Hours
D Wing	Monday, Wednesday, Saturday	1hr block	10:00am – 12:00pm 18:00pm – 20:00pm
E Wing	Tuesday, Thursday, Sunday	1 hr block	10:00am – 12:00pm 18:00pm – 20:00pm
F Wing	Monday, Wednesday, Saturday	1 hr block	10:00am – 12:00pm 18:00pm – 20:00pm
CCU/Stepdown	Daily	No restriction	24 hrs
Obstetrics	Daily	No restriction	24 hrs

### Q: Is there a way to appeal if someone is stopped from visiting?

A: Yes. We have an appeals process which is within our Patient Visitation Policy and Procedure available on our website ([www.headwatershealth.ca](http://www.headwatershealth.ca)). If you wish to discuss an appeal please direct your enquiry to the Patient Care Manager in the specific area (e.g. Emergency Department, D Wing etc.).

### Q: Could visiting be stopped again?

A: Yes. It can happen if:

- the number of COVID-19 cases in the community increases, we can put restrictions on all visiting,
- we have increased cases of COVID-19 or any other communicable illness, and the facility is deemed to be in “outbreak”,
- we have scarce resources to manage virus spread (e.g. hospital beds, staff, PPE).