

COVID-19 Hospital & Clinic Patient Visitors Policy

Title: COVID-19 Hospital & Clinic Patient Visitors Policy	
Type: Policy	HDSS Certification Standard
Issued by: Hutt and Capital & Coast DHB Incident Management Team	Version: 3.8
Applicable to: : 2DHB HVDHB/CCDHB Organisation wide	Contact person: Jenny Keane HVDHB Kaye Hudson CCDHB

Purpose

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The purpose of this policy guidance is to provide advice on access by members of the family/whānau, carers and support person/people who are visiting patients, or providing support to patients, on all DHB hospital campuses during the COVID-19 pandemic response.

The purpose of whānau as partners in care is to ensure that whānau journeys through Hospitals are well guided, safe, respectful and mana enhancing.

We recognise whānau are essential to patient’s lives and an important part of a patient’s care, treatment and recovery. They provide support, care and help in decision-making.

As we manage COVID-19 in our community we are committed to enabling access to whānau for patients in our care and to support outpatients, whilst balancing risk of COVID-19 and the risk of harm of not having whānau visit.

This kaupapa will help us to provide an enduring strategy to promote whānau as partners in care that can respond to the changing risk levels of COVID-19 that meets the needs of our patients and safe whilst balancing the safety and wellbeing risks of us all.

Policy Statement

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, visiting will be restricted at Capital & Coast DHB and Hutt Valley DHB facilities. We remain committed to enabling access to whānau for patients in our care and to support outpatients, whilst balancing risk of COVID-19 and the risk of harm of not having whānau visit.

This is to ensure the safety of patients and staff by minimising avoidable contact and the potential for spread of the virus.

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Scope

It is important to note that the Government’s COVID-19 Protection Framework serves a different purpose which enables as much care as possible to be delivered safely under all traffic light colours.

This guidance applies to all DHB facilities.

This guidance is active for as long as an Epidemic Notice under the Epidemic

This guidance applies to all DHB facilities.

This guidance is active for as long as an Epidemic Notice under the Epidemic Preparedness Act 2006 remains in force.

This guidance does not extend to visitors to DHB hospital campuses who are on site to provide essential services e.g. interpreters for patients with no or limited English. Please refer to separate advice on essential services.

This guidance references the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 by providing guidance to support the mitigation of any risk to staff while visitors who meet the criteria visit all work place facilities.

This guidance references the COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control - Interim Guidance for DHB Acute Care Hospitals

Includes:

- Public visiting patients within inpatient units
- Public accompanying people to community clinics
- Public accompanying people to any outpatient or ambulatory area/clinic
- Public accompanying people presenting at the Emergency Department
- Public accompanying people requiring maternity services
- Non-essential visitors.

Excludes:

- This policy does not apply to patients.
- This policy excludes on duty staff, volunteers and contracted workers performing or providing essential services.

Exceptions to this will be managed on a case-by-case basis and are agreed by the Senior Medical Officer managing the patient in partnership with the Clinical Nurse /Midwife Manager / Delegate on shift can assess requests on a case by case basis. For example, exceptions will be considered on compassionate grounds for end of life care.

- The management plan will include the name of the SMO and Clinical Nurse /Midwife Manager / Delegate who approved the exception, numbers of visitors permitted, name and contact details of key whānau liaison, how physical distancing will be maintained and plan on where visitors will wait. Ward family rooms and meeting rooms can be used, at the discretion of the CNM/CMM. The atrium / foyer is not suitable for grieving families, so please use other spaces first.
- Visitors need to be managed within their own bubbles, if possible.

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- Whānau Care services can help with large groups and other support. They can be contacted on ext. 04 3855999 x 80948 or by emailing wcs@ccdhb.org.nz.

Definitions

High risk area - Emergency Departments (ED), Intensive Care Units (ICU), High Dependency Units (HDU), Health of the Older Persons, Kenepuru Hospital, Maternity wards, Birthing Suites, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU), Wellington Blood and Cancer Centre (WBCC) and Ward 5 North, Renal Outpatient and Inpatient areas, Immunology, or other Outpatient areas that have at risk patients. Also any ward with COVID-19 patients.

Kaumātua - For the purposes of this policy Kaumātua refers to an elder (either male or female) from any ethnicity who holds a revered position in a family or community.

Non-essential visitors - e.g. company representatives, external people attending meetings, people not visiting family / whanau, off-duty staff.

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-response-planning/covid-19-essential-services-health-and-disability-system#hospital>

Patient - Member of the public receiving / seeking treatment, this includes mental health service users. This includes inpatients and outpatients.

Support person(s) for Disabled People - People who provide services that should they be interrupted are liable to endanger the life, health, wellbeing or security of people using services in any community we support.

Support person(s) - Required for the purposes of the clinic or hospital visit i.e. Dependent person, people with disabilities, needing to deliver bad news. An interpreter is not a support person.

Visitor - Member of the public not receiving assessment, diagnostics or treatment

Whānau spokesperson - The single point of contact for Whānau

Guiding Principles

There is an expectation that Staff will adhere to the vision and values of their respective organisations. This will include:

- Consideration of respect, partnership, cultural sensitivity and equity, and effective communication.
- All staff will maintain respectful communication with family/whānau, carers and support person/people, treating each person with dignity and respect
- That staff will be treated with respect and that abuse and aggression toward staff will not be tolerated
- All staff will partner with family/whānau, carers and support person/people regarding this guidance
- All staff will work with Māori and Pacific health teams/leaders to ensure cultural supports and aspects of care are considered and actioned

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- Whānau liaison increases as the response level increases
- Alternative means of communication between patients and whānau/ families are encouraged and enabled.
- DHBs will ensure visibility of the expectations on visitors within the facility.
- DHBs will ensure the visitor guidance is not taken in isolation - it is part of a much wider risk assessment associated with the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the organisation and community
- This guidance provides advice for visitor policies to be implemented at DHBs in accordance with their established and agreed incident management team framework and union or health and safety representative engagement forums.
- Changes to this guidance will occur as the environment and science identifies change needed. Any substantial change in direction will follow the usual national engagement process with sign off process via Health System Readiness and Reponses Clinical Oversight Group.

Guideline Content

The COVID-19 Protection Framework is determined by the Government and introduces a new flexible 3 level approach to managing COVID-19 in the community. The framework specifies the public health and social measures to break the transmission of COVID-19 across New Zealand. These measures are informed by scientific knowledge about COVID-19 and information about the effectiveness of control measures.

It is appropriate that DHBs continue to operate services as per national guidance e.g. planned care, community framework etc. This enables DHBs to continue to deliver as much clinical care and surgery as possible whilst responding quickly and appropriately to COVID 19.

DHBs will ensure the visitor guidance is not taken in isolation - it is part of a much wider risk assessment e.g. Vaccination/ testing/ staffing MIQFs/workforce levels.

DHBs will set visiting hours and the appropriate number of visitors allowed per patient at any one time. These may differ from DHB to DHB to reflect the community and hospital needs.

Risk assessment

DHBs cannot eliminate the risk of introduction and spread of COVID-19 in hospital without removing and restricting all people from the hospital. This is not practical nor is it in the public or patient interest. DHBs have introduced several controls which enable decisions of risk-based trade-offs to maintain patient, worker and visitor safety to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 spread by visitors to hospital facilities. The COVID-19 Hospital & Clinic Patient Visiting Guidance is one of the ways that DHBs are minimising the risk of COVID-19 to patients, staff and the wider community.

Visitors with symptoms

Visitors with acute respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, sore throat, flu like symptoms) or abdominal pain and diarrhoea, or those who have been at a local area of interest or with a

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household contact to current COVID-19 case must not attend unless prior arrangements are made.

Public information including signage should be in place at all entrances to reflect this. A process should be in place to manage unwell visitors

While visiting any DHB facility, visitors will:

- Maintain the appropriate and effective wearing of masks in all public and patient areas
- Maintain physical distancing

Patients admitted with COVID-19

Visiting patients who have been admitted with COVID-19 during the active (infective) period of their infection will be more restrictive and managed on a case by case basis. The reason for this is to ensure that infection prevention and control processes are adhered to, and to minimise risk of avoidable transmission events. Other methods of communicating with a patient with COVID-19 should be facilitated as appropriate, such as video conference, FaceTime Zoom, Skype etc.

It is recommended that family/whānau, carers and support person/people must designate a whānau spokesperson who will be the point of contact for the whānau regarding the visiting guidance and any changes to it. Before any visitor can enter an area where there are COVID-19 positive patients, they must be met by an appropriate staff member who will ensure and advise visitors on what infection prevention measures are needed, and how to put on and safely take off the appropriate personal protective equipment.

Visitors in self-isolation

Anyone that is under self-isolation (due to close contact with a confirmed case or due to recent overseas travel) will not be able to visit in the usual way and will require specific visiting arrangements to be negotiated.

Visitors register

All visitors need to scan in or sign in on arrival and provide their contact details and confirm if they have visited any areas of interested or reside with any recently diagnosed COVID-19 whānau. If they are using the government's COVID-19 Tracer App, please encourage that Bluetooth tracing is turned on.

Vaccination status

Visitors to DHB facilities will not have to demonstrate vaccination status nor provide evidence of a negative swab or undertake a swab to enter. DHBs will take all practicable steps to ensure visitors register through their COVID-19 Tracer App when visiting and prominently display information for visitors while visiting.

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People with disabilities

Under any Alert Levels where visitor restrictions are in place, an exception will be made for people with disabilities who are in hospital or must attend an outpatient appointment where they need a support person.

For example, a sign language interpreter, support person for someone with a learning disability, visitors interpreting for elderly whānau/family members with no/limited English or someone to assist with mobility is allowed in addition to that person’s permitted visitor/s. Consideration to be given to those attending appointments for poor or pending prognosis e.g. Cancer.

Outpatients

Children who attend an outpatient appointment with the parent or sibling whose appointment it is, are permitted if there are no alternatives to childcare available.

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2DHB Hospital Response Framework

use hyperlink for latest version

[2DHB Hospital Response Framework](#)

capitalDocs ID 1.105618

The Hospital Response Level may not always align with the National COVID-19 Protection Framework (Traffic Light system). The decision to change the 2DHB Hospital Response Level will be based on consideration of all the factors within the above framework.

[HVDHB Covid 19 Bed Escalation Plan](#)

CCDHB [COVID Bed escalation plan adult wards WRH](#)



2DHB Hospital and Clinic Patients Visitors Policy

The Hospital Response Level may not always align with the National COVID-19 Protection Framework

<p>COVID Readiness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No local COVID patients hospitalised and any cases and contacts in the community are isolated and well contained Staffing and facilities only impacted by training and readiness preparations, or regional or national deployments Planned care unaffected 	<p>Visitors to the high-risk</p> <p>CCDHB visiting hours 10:00–13:00 and 15:00-20:00</p> <p>HVDHB visiting hours 08:00-20:00</p>	<p>High Risk Areas</p> <p>All visitors to scan in or sign in and provide contact details, If you’re using the government’s COVID-19 Tracer app, please encourage that Bluetooth tracing is turned on and all visitors are to be wearing a medical mask and practice good hand hygiene.</p> <p>Visitors with known COVID-19 contact or symptoms will not be granted access and will be directed to Community Based Assessment Centre (CBAC) or to contact Healthline or GP.</p> <p>No visitors under 12 years without prior approval from the CNN/CMM</p> <p>Birthing Suite and Maternity Wards (CCDHB includes 4 North Gynae) <i>For maternity services:</i> where there is no suspicion of COVID-19 contact or symptoms for either the patient or visitors, two people (birthing partner and one other support person or a doula) can accompany patients into the birthing suite.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once the baby is born, two people at a time can visit. The birth partner can stay overnight with agreement of the CMM. <p>NICU/SCBU</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both parents and OR legal guardians may visit. No siblings or other whanau are permitted without prior approval. <p>Oncology (Cancer) 5 North</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visiting is only allowed during visiting hours and is limited to 1 adult at a time All out of region visitors need to be discussed with and agreed by the patients SMO and ID SMO <p>Dialysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to space constraints no visiting or support people <p>Emergency Department and Kenepuru Accident and Medical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One visitor and one support person patient – not interchangeable – unless approval from CNM/SMO
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	<p>Visitors to all other areas</p>	<p>Visitors with no suspicion of COVID-19 will be able to enter. A maximum of two visitors at any one time may visit a patient at the hospital or clinic.</p> <p>When more visitors need to be approved this will be sat the discretion of the CNM/CMM and with admitting Doctor, Midwife or Nurse. Whanau will nominate a key contact person as liaison.</p> <p>Children under 12 years old may visit and are counted as one of the two visitors (children under 12months not counted in the numbers).</p> <p>All visitors to scan in or sign in and provide contact details. If you’re using the government’s COVID-19 Tracer app, please encourage that Bluetooth tracing is turned on and all visitors are to be wearing a medical mask and practice good hand hygiene.</p> <p>All visitors to practice safe social distancing and should remain two metres away from others as far as is practicable. Should this not be practical due to multi-bed rooms, the numbers of visitors in each multi-bed room should be limited at each time to maintain distancing.</p> <p>Visitors with known COVID-19 contact or symptoms will not be granted access and will be directed to Community Based Assessment Centre (CBAC) or to contact Healthline or GP.</p>

		<p>Usual visiting hours are adhered to, unless by prior arrangement with the Charge Nurse/Midwife Manager or senior clinician/manager on shift. Whanau will nominate a key contact person.</p> <p>For children, parents/caregivers can visit at any time and both parents/caregivers can visit at the same time</p>
<p>Stage 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID patients in hospital and cases in the community are monitored, managed and under control • Isolation capacity manageable and ICU capacity manageable • Staffing and facilities minimally impacted • Planned care continues with minimal impacts 	<p>Visitors to the high-risk areas</p>	<p>High Risk Areas</p> <p>Visitors with known COVID-19 contact or symptoms will not be granted access and will be directed to Community Based Assessment Centre (CBAC) or to contact Healthline or GP.</p> <p>No visitors under 12 years without prior approval from the CNN/CMM</p> <p>Birthing Suite and Maternity Wards (CCDHB includes 4 North Gynae) <i>For maternity services:</i> where there is no suspicion of COVID-19 contact or symptoms for either the patient or visitors, two people (birthing partner and one other support person or a doula) can accompany patients into the birthing suite.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once the baby is born, two people at a time can visit. The birth partner can stay overnight with agreement of the CMM. <p>NICU/SCBU</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both parents and OR legal guardians may visit. No siblings or other whanau are permitted without prior approval. <p>Oncology (Cancer) 5 North</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visiting is only allowed during visiting hours and is limited to 1 adult at a time • All out of region visitors need to be discussed with and agreed by the patients SMO and ID SMO <p>Dialysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to space constraints no visiting or support people <p>Emergency Department and Kenepuru Accident and Medical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One visitor and one support person patient – not interchangeable – unless approval from CNM/SMO • If unable to maintain social distancing in waiting room and in department, will ask support people to leave

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimised movement around department • Parents/support people accompanying children should be well. If unable to provide a well parent, then must follow droplet precautions for both parent and child <p>COVID In patient wards Visiting as agreed by CNM/CMM and SMO</p> <p>Intensive Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICU will be allowing in a total of 2 into the ICU per patient at a time. <p>Health of The Older Person's including Kenepuru Hospital</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two visitors at a time.
	<p>Visitors to all other areas</p>	<p>Visitors to other areas</p> <p>Visitors with no suspicion of COVID-19 will be able to enter. A maximum of two visitors at any one time may visit a patient at the hospital or clinic.</p> <p>Children under 12 years old may visit and are counted as one of the two visitors (children under 12months not counted in the numbers)</p> <p>When more visitors need to be approved this will be at the discretion of the CNM/CMM and SMO. Whanau will nominate a key contact person.</p> <p>All visitors to scan in or sign in and provide contact details. If you're using the government's COVID-19 Tracer app, please encourage that Bluetooth tracing is turned on and all visitors are to be wearing a medical mask and practice good hand hygiene.</p> <p>All visitors to practice safe social distancing and should remain two metres away from others as far as is practicable. Should this not be practical due to multi-bed rooms, the numbers of visitors in each multi-bedroom should be limited at each time to maintain distancing.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Stage 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID patients in hospital and community transmission is increasing rapidly • Isolation capacity impacted or ICU capacity impacted • Significant staff absence, gaps not being covered (nursing absence 10 – 15%) • Planned care reduced due to staffing absence/redeployment or high hospital occupancy 	<p>Visitors to the high-risk areas identified</p>	<p>No visitors to be granted access unless approved by the Clinical Nurse/Midwife Manager or senior manager on shift and SMO. A maximum of one visitor or legal guardian that has been screened will be granted access if approved.</p> <p>All visitors to wear a medical mask and practice good hand hygiene. All visitors to wear PPE as required. Visitors with known COVID-19 contact or symptoms will not be granted access and will be directed to CBAC or to contact Health line or GP.</p> <p>Emergency Department and Kenepuru Accident and Medical: No visitors permitted. 1 parent/caregiver to attend with a child under 16. A support person may accompany a patient with disabilities or communication difficulty, or in the context of critical illness. Approval for any other support persons may be considered on a case by case basis by the Nurse in Charge or SMO.</p> <p><u>Maternity services:</u> Where there is no suspicion of COVID-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 support person can be with the labouring person and can stay postnatally until discharge – as long as they fulfil safety criteria • They need to stay in the room, and wear a medical mask in public spaces/if there is a staff member in attendance • Operating theatre attendance is on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the senior medical team <p>Following birth, one (1) nominated support person (for the duration of the stay) may visit and only once. Assessment Units/Outpatient clinics: 1 support person may attend sensitive appointments or scans.</p> <p><u>NICU/SCBU</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents or legal guardian and one support person may visit but one at a time. No siblings or other whanau are permitted. Birth parent and one support person to accompany any baby in Special care units. <p>No visitors to be granted access unless approved by the Charge Nurse/Midwife Manager or senior clinician/manager on shift. A maximum of one visitor with no suspicion of COVID-19 contact or</p>
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	Visiting all other areas	<p>No visitors to be granted access unless approved by the Clinical Nurse/Midwife Manager and SMO or senior manager on shift. A maximum of one visitor or legal guardian that has been screened will be granted access if approved.</p> <p>When more visitors need to be approved this will be at the discretion of the CNM/CMM and SMO and signed off the ID SMO on call. Whanau will nominate a key contact person.</p> <p>Formal visiting hours are adhered to, unless by prior arrangement with the ward. No non-essential visitors.</p> <p>Child Health Services including Inpatients, Outpatients and NICU: A maximum of one visitor or legal guardian that has been screened will be allowed to visit/accompany and can be swapped with another parent/guardian.</p>
<p>Stage 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID patients in hospital and community transmission is widespread and uncontrolled 		<p>No visitors to be granted access unless approved by the Clinical Nurse Manager or senior manager on shift. A maximum of one visitor or legal guardian that has been screened will be granted access if approved.</p> <p>Maternity Services: 1 support person can be with the labouring person and can stay postnatally until discharge - as long as they fulfil safety criteria.</p> <p>They need to stay in in the room, as much as possible and wear a medical mask in public spaces/if there is a staff member in attendance.</p> <p>Assessment Units/Outpatient clinics: 1 support person may attend sensitive appointments or scans.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Isolation at or near capacity or ICU at or near capacity• Significant staff absence/ redeployment (>15%). All available staff redeployed to support ICU/acute care• Planned care severely limited due to staffing absence/redeployment and high hospital occupancy		<p>Child Health Services including Inpatients, Outpatients and NICU: A maximum of one visitor or legal guardian that has been screened will be allowed to visit/accompany and cannot be swapped with another parent/guardian.</p> <p>Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and any special care units: Visitor numbers will be restricted to one at a time and must be a parent or legal guardian.</p>
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MHAIDs COVID Readiness and Stage One

Visiting policies across Mental Health Addictions and Intellectual Disability Services

Unit	Visiting Hours	Max # visitors per client	Age restriction?
Te Whare o Matairangi	10:00hrs-12:00hrs 14:00hrs-16:00hrs	No maximum	No persons under 16 years of age permitted on the unit – but visits can be facilitated outside the main unit negotiated via the Team Leader
Te Whare Ahuru	14:00hrs-20:30hrs	2	No persons under 16 years of age permitted on the unit – but visits can be facilitated outside the main unit negotiated via the Team Leader
Te Whare Ra Uta	No set visiting times – the unit is flexible depending on clinical situation.	No maximum	No restrictions on age
Purehurehu	Monday-Friday 15:00hrs-16:30hrs Saturday-Sunday flexible	2	No children under the age of 14 years – but this can be negotiated via the Team Leader
Rangipapa	Monday-Friday 14:30hrs-16:30hrs - 30 minute visits if whanau are local. Whanau outside the region have up to 1 hour per visit. Allowances can be made dependent on circumstances/rationale for visits. Saturday-Sunday	4	No children under the age of 14 years. – but this can be negotiated via the Team Leader

Unit	Visiting Hours	Max # visitors per client	Age restriction?
	10:00hrs-16:30hrs		
Tane Mahuta	15:00hrs-19:00hrs or by arrangement	By Arrangement	No restrictions on age
Tawhirimatea	15:00hrs-19:00hrs or by arrangement	By Arrangement	No restrictions on age
Haumietiketike	All visits by arrangement	Up to 6 (dependent on individual clients)	No restrictions on age
Hikitia Te Wairua	All visits by arrangement	Up to 6 (dependent on individual clients)	No restrictions on age
Rangatahi Unit	Monday-Friday 16:30hrs-20:00hrs. Saturday-Sunday 10:00hrs-20:00hrs	2	No restrictions on age – but visitors under the age of 8 need to be supervised at all times.
Nga Taiohi	Negotiable	2	No persons under 16 years of age permitted on the unit