



**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) – Phase One NHH COVID-19 Visitor Policy
Updated December 24, 2021**

Q. 1 How many visitors are admitted patients allowed to have at NHH when Phase 1 of the COVID-19 Visitor Policy is in effect?

Due to the ongoing risk of COVID-19, NHH is limiting visiting to essential caregivers only to a maximum one essential caregiver per patient per day. The sole exception would be for patients who are palliative or end-of-life and, in these exceptional circumstances, the number of visitors may be increased at the discretion of the care team.

Q. 2 What is an ‘essential’ caregiver’?

Essential caregivers are important partners in care, supporting inpatients and outpatients alike in a variety of ways including:

- helping them eat, move around, bathe, communicate etc. as needed
- advocating for them
- supporting their decision making
- providing emotional and cognitive support
- being a part of planning their care while in the hospital and once they are discharged
- helping them use technology to connect with friends or loved ones
- participating in patient and family education
- letting the care team know when they see a change in the patient

Q. 3. What areas of the hospital are open to in-person visiting?

All inpatient and outpatient areas are open to essential caregivers within the restrictions set out in the COVID-19 Visitor Policy.

Visits are not permitted to patients in a hospital ‘hot zone’ (i.e. to patients presumed or confirmed positive for COVID-19).

Q. 4 What are the visiting hours?

There are no formal visiting hour restrictions.

Q. 5 Are visits permitted to patients receiving care within the Emergency Department?

Yes, one essential caregiver (16 years of age or older) per patient per day is permitted for Emergency Department patients, within the restrictions set out in the COVID-19 Visitor Policy.

Q. 6 Who designates the essential caregiver/visitor?

It is the responsibility of each patient (or their substitute decision maker) to select who they wish their essential caregiver to be, and communicate that wish to the rest of their family/social circle in advance of arrival to avoid people having to be turned away at the entrance—if a patient wishes to have different individuals visit them or support them during the course of their stay, then they should plan in advance the day that each will come in.

Q. 7 Will I need to wear a mask if I visit a patient at NHH?

Yes. Universal masking continues throughout NHH together with any additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) required by the care team. All PPE will be supplied by the hospital.

Q. 8 Is NHH requiring all essential caregivers to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19?

Vaccination, including the third booster dose, is strongly recommended for all who are eligible. At this time NHH has not made vaccination a requirement for essential caregivers. This is subject to change.

Q. 9 What infection control measures have you put in place to reduce the risk of visitors entering the hospital?

Visitors who fail screening at the entrance to the hospital will not be permitted to visit. Visitors will be expected to wear a mask for the duration of their visit, as well as any additional PPE recommended by the care team at the time of their visit, wash their hands on entry and exit (and repeatedly through their visit, as required) and to restrict their movement when inside the hospital as much as possible.

Q. 10 I have a loved one receiving chemotherapy treatments. Can I join them now for their treatment?

NHH continues to restrict outpatient visitors to 'essential only'. Unless your loved one has specific needs to support them during their appointment (for example, requires support getting in/out of the hospital for their appointment or has a cognitive impairment that limits their ability) general visiting to patients within our outpatient clinics is not permitted at this time.

Q. 11 What if the patient is unable to identify that they wish to have an essential caregiver/visitor?

In situations where the patient is not able to communicate, their substitute decision maker is expected to determine who will visit each day and communicate this to the care team.

Q. 12 Do I need to have a COVID-19 swab prior to visiting?

No. NHH does not require designated primary family caregivers/visitors to have a COVID-19 swab at this time, but active screening is in place prior to entry. This involves the successful completion of a series of questions regarding symptoms and potential exposure to COVID-19 positive cases. Those who fail the screening will not be permitted to enter the hospital.

Q. 13 What door should I come in/go out if I'm visiting an inpatient?

Visitors to those admitted to an inpatient bed should enter/exit at the main front entrance, between the hours of 8AM and 8PM, to minimize traffic into the Emergency Department and through the hospital. Those arriving outside of these visiting hours will be required to enter via the Emergency Department entrance. All visitors will be asked to sign in on arrival, and to provide their name and contact information to support any necessary contact tracing.

Q. 14 Is the cafeteria open to the public?

Yes, the Main Street Bistro is currently open to all within the hospital.

Q. 15 Can I bring food, such as a coffee or tea, in to my loved one, or consume food in the patient's room?

No, not at this time.

Q. 16 Will the Virtual Visiting service continue to be available?

Yes, the Virtual Visiting program introduced in April 2020 continues to be available. Virtual visits may be scheduled weekdays, with some exceptions during statutory holidays, by contacting the hospital's Virtual Visiting Team at 905-372-6811 ext. 3146 or by email to virtualconnections@nhh.ca. Note: to protect patient privacy, the patient's full name should not be included in the email. For full details, please refer to our website at: <https://nhh.ca/Patients/VisitingGuidelines>

Q. 17 I have a question regarding your Visitor Policy. Who should this be directed to?

Any individual patient and/or visitor with questions or concerns regarding the COVID-19 Visitor Policy is encouraged to contact the manager of the patient care unit during business hours. In the event a visitor-related concern arises outside of business hours, when unit managers are not typically on site, the Clinical Operations Manager has been designated as the point person responsible for addressing

questions regarding visiting, in consultation with NHH's Patient Relations Manager or manager/senior manager on call.

Q. 18 Is this COVID-19 Visitor Policy subject to change?

Yes. We are constantly monitoring the total volume of traffic into and out of the hospital to ensure physical distancing requirements can be maintained, as well as any sign of hospital-acquired infection. This policy is subject to change on short notice.

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