

Visitor Security and Safety Policy

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Purpose: To provide optimum visitor flexibility while promoting a safe, secure, and quiet environment for patients, visitors, and staff. North Baldwin Infirmary shall not restrict, limit, or otherwise deny visitation privileges on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability.

Responsibility: Security enforces this policy, through coordination with Nursing Administration and Emergency Registration Clerks.

Policy: North Baldwin Infirmary strives to create a welcoming atmosphere for its patients and visitors while maintaining their safety and security. In order to ensure our patients are provided the best care, North Baldwin Infirmary sets certain parameters for visitors. These parameters are designed to promote a climate that facilitates staff interaction with patients and visitors; while meeting safety and security requirements. North Baldwin Infirmary recognizes that patient safety and the environment of recuperative care are often enhanced by having a support person remain overnight.

Patients have the right to receive, withdraw or deny visitors of their choice (provided there are no clinical restrictions or other limitation on patient visitation, such as, if visitation would otherwise interfere with the patients care and/or care of other patients) including, but not limited to, a spouse/domestic partner (including a same-sex domestic partner), another family member, or a friend. Consensual physical contact between the patient and a visitor (e.g., holding the patient’s hand or placing a hand on the patient’s arm or shoulder may be appropriate, but intimate physical contact may not).

Restrictions on visitation may include, but are not limited to:

- Any court order limiting or restraining contact.
- Behavior presenting a direct risk or threat to the patient, hospital staff, or others in the immediate environment.
- Behavior disruptive of the functioning of the patient care unit.
- Reasonable limitations on the number of visitors at any one time.
- Visitor’s risk of infection by the patient.
- Immunocompromised patients at high risk for infection.
- Extraordinary protections because of a pandemic or infectious disease outbreak.
- Substance abuse treatment protocols requiring restricted visitation
- Patient’s need for privacy or rest.

- Need for privacy or rest by another individual in the patient's shared room.
- Circumstances where the Health Care Professional responsible for the care of the patient, deems it clinically necessary to restrict visitation.

In situations where it may be necessary for patient visitation to be limited or restricted, the patient and/or support person should be informed of the reasons for such restrictions or limitations.

Visitor Infection Prevention Requirements:

North Baldwin Infirmary has certain requirements to prevent the spread of infection that visitors should adhere to while in the healthcare facility, or when visiting specific departments or units which include but may not be limited to:

- Temperature screening upon facility entrance.
- Compliance with Transmission Based Precautions/ Isolation Precautions on designated patients.
- Up to (2) two visitors (12 years or older) per patient on Transmission Based Precautions.

Visitation Guidelines:

Due to fire safety codes and quality of care considerations, North Baldwin Infirmary may limit the number of visitors a patient may receive at a time. NBI shall inform patients of this policy during admission, through the new patient welcome rounds, and via intercom/overhead speaker.

Med/Surg (2100/2400) Unit(s):

A patient may have up to (4) four visitors (any age) at a time from 8:00 A.M. until 8:30 P.M. each day.

CCU (Critical Care) Unit:

A patient may have up to (2) two visitors between 9:00 A.M. – 11 A.M & 4:00 P.M – 6 P.M daily. Children under the age of twelve (12) are not permitted in the Critical Care areas without permission from Nursing Administration. Exceptions to the visitor schedule may be made at the discretion of the patient care team/Nursing Administration. Exceptions may include: patients requiring additional attention, terminal patients, fall risk patients, confused patients, psychiatric patients, or any patient that it is deemed safer for the patient to have someone stay at their bedside. Visitation may be limited by the patient care team/Nursing Administration if it is deemed that visitors cause undue stress or safety issues for the patient. As a general rule, only one support person per patient may remain overnight in the waiting room. Other visitors shall be encouraged to go home.

SBH (Senior Behavioral Health) Unit:

A patient may have up to (2) two visitors (14 years and older) from 3:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M. Monday through Friday & 2:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M. Saturday and Sunday.

ER (Emergency Room):

When patient's condition allows, (2) two people (12 years of age or above) shall be allowed to visit at any given time. Visitation shall be restricted depending on circumstances occurring within the department.

In the event of extreme trauma, critical cases, or impending death, visitation exceptions can be made as long as it does not impede care of patient; or cause direct risk to the patient, hospital staff, or others in the immediate environment.

Nursery:

Visitors shall be limited to the parents, grandparents, or mother, and her designee. If the parents are not married and concerns are expressed regarding the father's visitation, the father has the same visitation rights as the mother; if the mother has acknowledged the man as the father of the baby.

Visiting hours in the nursery are restricted during the hours of 8:00 A.M to 8:30 P.M., or if a procedure is in progress and are restricted to (2) visitors per baby.

Information concerning the newborn shall be only given to his/her parents in respect of confidentiality.

Birth Center:

General Guidelines:

- Visitation of up to (3) three visitors per patient shall be 8:00 A.M. – 8:30 P.M.
- Visitors with rash, fever, diarrhea, respiratory infection, cold sores, or any obvious signs of infection may not visit.
- Visitors should perform hand hygiene with antiseptic soap or alcohol based sanitizer.
- Children should not be left unattended. Siblings, should be accompanied and supervised by a responsible adult whose primary responsibility is to the child, and the adult should have the ability to leave with the child if this becomes necessary.
- Visitation guidelines may be altered by the patient and/or where there are circumstances where the health care professional responsible for the care of the patient, deems it clinically necessary to restrict visitation.
- Visitation may be extended for compassionate reasons, at the discretion of the physician and/or the health care professionals/team caring for the patient.

During Delivery:

- Support persons during the delivery process should be limited to a maximum of (2) two per patient.
- Visitors during labor and delivery shall be allowed if deemed clinically appropriate by the physician/ and or the health care professionals/team.

Sibling Visitation:

- Sibling visitation is encouraged from 4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M daily.
- Sibling visitation should be encouraged to take place in the mother's room or designated area.
- Prior to handling the infant, the sibling should perform hand hygiene with antiseptic soap or alcohol based sanitizer.

Pre-op (Preoperative Care) Department:

A family member/ support person shall be permitted to stay with the patient prior to surgery depending on the circumstances. Children shall be accompanied by one parent/guardian.

PACU (Post Anesthesia Care Unit):

Visitation in PACU shall be allowed at the discretion of the health care professionals/care team caring for the patient. Additionally, the status of other patients in the PACU shall be taken into consideration prior to visitation of any patient. Children shall be accompanied by one parent/guardian.

Exceptions:

North Baldwin Infirmary may allow exceptions to the visitor policy because of many variables that occur in a healthcare setting. Exceptions may include a person in addition to the one designated to remain overnight (support person/caregiver), and people authorized to arrive after 8:30 P.M.

- Method for obtaining an exception:
Nursing Administration shall contact the Emergency Room Registration clerk to communicate the exception. The Emergency Room Registration clerk shall document the exception and facilitate after-hours access. The shared goal of Security, Nursing Administration, and nursing is to create the most favorable environment for patients.
- Criteria for granting an exception include situations such as terminal patients, patients requiring additional attention, underage patients, or patients with dementia, etc.
- North Baldwin Infirmary shall be attentive to the patient's request for an overnight support person/caregiver, regardless of the patient's condition, in order to ensure an enhanced quality of stay.
- The definition of a caregiver is a family member or friend/significant other who is able to and intends to improve the recuperative environment by their presence (included in this definition are hired "sitters"). Caregivers should not be underage minors, or be accompanied by underage minors.
- In the event of a late admit (patient who enters via the Emergency Department or after-hours surgery patient, etc.) family members may be granted permission to see the patient or drop off personal items if they do not intend to stay overnight. The general rule is to limit these interactions to (2) two adults at a time in order to reduce noise for other patients in the area.
- Not all of the various types of situations that may arise can be addressed in this policy.
- Protective Services and Nursing Administration should ensure their decisions to grant exceptions factor in the goals of keeping the hospital quiet and safe in order to maintain a recuperative environment.
- Due to the fact that children are more susceptible to obtaining infections and are less capable of being quiet, underage minors (under 18) should not be allowed.
- The Emergency Room Registration Clerk should document any exceptions granted by the Nursing Administration.
- Nursing Administration shall contact patient/designated patient representative in order to grant permission for Clergy visiting after 8:30 P.M., and follow the criteria of "terminal patients, adverse change in patient situation, late admit, or similar situation" for granting access.
- Birth Center/Labor and Delivery: the birth of a child constitutes an exception to the visiting hours policy. Family members of a labor and delivery patient will shall be registered at the Emergency Room Registration desk and allowed access to the 2nd floor waiting area. Due to fire safety codes and quality of care considerations, North Baldwin Infirmary may limit the number of after hour visitors allowed in this area to (3) three per patient. There should be no underage visitors allowed afterhours. Labor and Delivery shall staff control access to that department. Exceptions may be made by the patient care team/nursing administration while the patient is in labor.

Guidance:

If a patient has requested more than one support person/caregiver to remain overnight after being informed of the policy, the patient/overnight guest should be informed that due to space limitations, quality of care concerns, and safety factors, only one overnight caregiver is allowed per room. Due to the potentially adverse impact on other patients, overnight guests should not include children. Nursing Administration and other hospital staff are expected to exercise judgment, coordinate decisions, and communicate effectively.