

Ref. No: FOI0059
Date: 20/07/23
Subject: Visitation policies

REQUEST

This response is for St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

1. Did your Trust alter or update its visitor policy in response to Covid-19, yes or no?
 - a. If yes, what changes were introduced?
 - b. If yes, are any of those policies still in place?
 - i. If yes, which of those policies are still in place?
2. Does the Trust currently have any visitation policies that:
 - a. Would prevent a patient from receiving a visitor?
 - i. If yes, in what wards or circumstances does this apply?
 - ii. If yes, were these restrictions in place before March 2020?
 - b. Set a restriction on the number of different people able to visit a patient during their stay?
 - i. If yes, in what wards or circumstances would the number of different people visiting a patient be restricted?
 - ii. If yes, how many different people do these restrictions permit as visitors?
 - iii. If yes, were these restrictions in place before March 2020?

RESPONSE

1. Did your Trust alter or update its visitor policy in response to Covid-19, yes or no?

In line with national guidance, visiting was suspended with the following exemptions:

One visitor permitted:

- For patients who were in their last days / hours of life receiving end of life care.

- Patients with a mental health issue such as dementia, a learning disability or autism, where not having a relative or carer present would cause them to be very distressed i.e. John's campaign.
- Children may have one parent or guardian stay with them when in hospital.
- Women may be accompanied by one birthing partner during active labour and childbirth.
- Babies up to 28 days old can have both parents with them in hospital.

These visitation policies are no longer in place, although in line with infection control guidance wards may be closed to visitors if there is an infection outbreak.

2. Does the Trust currently have any visitation policies that:

a. Would prevent a patient from receiving a visitor?

Yes, as noted above visiting restrictions may be introduced temporarily for any relevant area if there is an infection outbreak to ensure patient / visitor safety. This was in place before March 2020.

b. Set a restriction on the number of different people able to visit a patient during their stay?

Yes, the Trust has guidance in place to limit the number of visitors to two per patient, unless the patient is in their last hours / days and receiving end of life care. For most wards two visitors are allowed during visiting times, with extended visiting times available for one nominated adult on pre / post-natal ward between 09:00 to 21:00. This was not in place before March 2020.