

## PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

This document clarifies specific clinical environmental guidance around visitation policies for end-of-life situations.

To protect patients and caregivers from exposure and spread of COVID-19 (novel coronavirus), Intermountain Healthcare has implemented visitor restrictions to our facilities. These restrictions are modeled from policies at other health organizations, as well as guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the State of Utah's Department of Health and reflect proven best practice standards in reducing the spread of infectious diseases.

Minimizing the number of visitors in our facility reduces the risk of potential exposure to COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) and other infectious diseases such as influenza and seasonal colds. Because of this change, nursing units will be subject to a new process to accommodate a patient's need to stay connected with loved ones and representatives outside the hospital.

## DEFINITIONS

To be considered end-of-life:

- **Patient must be actively dying, or withdrawal of care has been determined.** MD must determine if the patient is actively dying or if a decision to withdraw care has been made.
- **Intrauterine fetal demise.** As determined by the MD caring for the patient.

### For end-of-life or deceased patients who are COVID-negative or non-PUI

- **Patients at end of life who are not suspected or not tested positive for COVID-19** may have two visitors at a time, and no more than four designated visitors total while in the hospital.
- **Visitors (and all others entering Intermountain facilities) must follow PPE guidelines to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.** This includes wearing a mask or cloth face covering and washing their hands or using alcohol sanitizer upon entering and leaving rooms and facilities.
- **Visitors must be in good health and must not be suspected of or have a positive COVID-19 test result.** Any eligible visitor must have a health screening. No sick visitors will be allowed.

### For end-of-life or deceased patients who are COVID-positive or PUI

- **The number of visitors will be limited to 2.** Those visitors will be designated for all encounters and cannot switch with others.
- Although death is a time for to support each other with compassion, **due to viral transmission, visitors should not hug or physically comfort patients or other family members at this time.** Remind visitors that the exterior of their PPE is contaminated and may spread disease as well. Reserve personal contact among family only for after PPE is doffed and hands are washed.

- **Visitors must wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including gown, gloves, eye protection, and procedural mask while visiting.** Visitors (and all others entering Intermountain facilities) must wash their hands or use alcohol sanitizer upon entering and leaving rooms and facilities to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Doffing and donning instructions for droplet/contact PPE [can be found here](#).
- **Visitors must be informed of risk.** Visitors will be informed of the risk of exposure to COVID and that visiting the patient will put them at a higher risk of transmission to themselves.
- **Visitors must be in good health and must not be suspected of or have a positive COVID-19 test result.** Any eligible visitor must have a health screening, including a temperature check. No sick visitors will be allowed. Visitors cannot be pregnant, breastfeeding or under the age of 18.
- **Visitation period is limited to 1 hour or less** to reduce risk of exposure.
- **No visitors will be allowed in the room for aerosolizing procedures, including:**
  - **CPR.** NO visitors allowed in the room if CPR is anticipated or being performed, or for 1 hour after.
  - **Extubation.** Visitors may enter the room while the patient is intubated as the ventilator circuit is closed with droplet/contact PPE. However, if extubation is recommended for withdrawal of care, the visitor will need to leave.
  - **For deceased patients,** the room must be vacated for at least one hour before the visit if CPR or an aerosolizing procedure has occurred.
- **No visitors will be allowed in respiratory units that have been transformed into a large negative space.** Patients in a respiratory unit who are being transitioned to end-of-life/hospice care should be considered for transfer to a medical/surgical floor for COVID patients in order to allow the patient's family to participate in the end-of-life process
- **Visitors will remain in patient's room.** Visits to the cafeteria, or trips in and out of the hospital are not allowed during the visitation period. Visitors will not be allowed to eat in patient rooms.

## When visitation is complete

- **When leaving the room,** visitors will be shown how to doff PPE correctly and complete hand hygiene.
- **Visitors must don a clean procedural mask** and immediately exit the hospital.