



DESOTO MEMORIAL HOSPITAL POLICY & PROCEDURES

DEPARTMENT: Administration
SUBJECT: In-person Visitation Rights / No Patient Left Alone Act

I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to comply with Senate Bill 988: [No Patient Left Alone Act](#) requiring hospitals to allow a patient to designate a visitor who is a family member, friend, guardian, or other individual as an essential caregiver and allow that designated person in-person visitation rights.

II. POLICY:

DeSoto Memorial Hospital will allow patients to have in-person visitation by the essential caregiver of his/her choice for *at least* two hours daily. In-person visitation, including COVID-19 positive patients, will be allowed in all of the following circumstances, unless the patient objects:

- End-of-life situations
- Patient who was living with family before being admitted to the hospital and is struggling with the change in environment and lack of in-person family support.
- The patient is making one or more major medical decisions.
- The patient is experiencing emotional distress or grieving the loss of a friend or family member who recently died.
- The patient needs cueing or encouragement to eat or drink which was previously provided by a family member or caregiver.
- Patient who used to talk and interact with others is now seldom speaking.
- Patient who is in experiencing childbirth, including labor and delivery.
- Pediatric patients.

Essential Caregiver: A designated visitor who is a family member, friend, guardian, or other person selected by the patient as an essential caregiver. This caregiver is not required to provide necessary care to the patient.

NOTE: Visitors cannot be compelled to show or provide proof of vaccination or immunization status.

III. PROCEDURE:

A. Visitation Hours

1. Hospital visitation hours are from 6:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Exceptions will be made for the designated essential caregivers of those patients outlined in the above listed circumstances.
2. Patients on the Med Surg unit will be allowed open visitation during this time.
3. Visitation for patients in the ICU may be limited based on nursing recommendations but will be allowed for at least two hours daily.



B. Infection Prevention

1. All visitors will enter the facility through designated entrances for screening.
 - a. Main entrance, Monday – Friday 6:30 am to 4 pm; or
 - b. Emergency Department entrance at any time.
2. Screening consists of verbal questioning based on [CDC Guidelines](#).
3. Visitors with a positive screen may not be allowed in the facility but will be evaluated in the Emergency Department if desired.
4. Visitors will not be required to show or provide proof of vaccination or immunization status.
5. Visitors will be instructed on diligent hand hygiene and the importance of limiting the amount of surfaces touched.
6. Consensual physical contact will not be restricted between the patient and the designated essential caregiver.
7. If the patient is on isolation, the visitor will be:
 - a. Explained the rationale for wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in the patient's room including that it protects the visitor from infection
 - b. Offered the appropriate PPE (surgical mask with eye protection, gloves, gown) to be used while in the patient room
 - c. Given instructions for appropriate donning and doffing of PPE

C. Visitor Education

Visitors will be educated on the importance of following the hospital's infection prevention policies through the use of hospital website, verbal communication, and signage posted throughout the hospital.

Education provided will include:

1. Hand Hygiene
 - a. Frequent hand washing encouraged through visual alerts posted within the facility.
 - b. Hand sanitizer is available to all visitors entering the building
2. Cough Etiquette
 - a. Tissues will be provided to patients and visitors so they may cover their mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing.
 - b. Person coughing will be encouraged to sit at least six feet away from others.
3. Social distancing and masking
 - a. Visitors will be provided with a surgical mask if they do not have one of their own.
 - b. Visual reminders on social distancing and masking are posted throughout the hospital.

D. Any compliance concerns should be reported to the Compliance Officer, extension 697.

1. Compliance Hotline, 844-965-3495
2. Email, bcox@dmh.org

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REVISIONS BY: Becki Cox, Corporate Compliance Officer
REFERENCES: [SB 988, No Patient Left Alone Act](#)
[CDC Guidelines, COVID-19](#)
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