March 18, 2020

Hospital Visitation Policies during COVID-19 Outbreak

As COVID-19 continues to spread throughout the Commonwealth, Virginia's hospitals and health systems are committed to caring for our patients, our workforce, their families, and the communities we serve. A major focus of this effort is ensuring that we take appropriate precautions to mitigate the spread of the virus in our facilities, among our workforce, and within our communities. In furtherance of this goal, hospitals across the Commonwealth are taking steps to limit visitation based on the current situation in their communities.

Specifically, hospitals, to the extent practical, are taking the following steps:

- Limiting and/or prohibiting visitors with certain exceptions.
- Exceptions may include mother/baby units, pediatric units, neonatal intensive care units, end-of-life situations, or instances where visitation is essential to care outcomes.
- For exceptions, visitation will typically be limited to a designated partner or primary care taker.
- Visitors under the age of 18 will generally be prohibited.
- All visitors will be screened for exposure to COVID-19 and, if displaying symptoms of upper respiratory illness, asked to return home unless seeking medical care.

Virginia hospitals and health systems understand that having a loved one in the hospital is a difficult time for every family, and we are committed to working with our patients to achieve effective care outcomes. **Patients and their families are encouraged to visit their local hospital's website for the most up-to-date guidance on visitation.**

Everyone is encouraged to take the following steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth;
- Stay home if you are sick;
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue and throw that tissue in the trash;
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces with a household cleaner; and
- Regularly wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.