

VISITING POLICIES FOR CAREGIVERS AND VISITORS AT MOH HOSPITALS IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Healthcare facilities should minimize the risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission between healthcare professionals, patients and visitors/caregivers especially in the pandemic era.
- 1.2 The risk of visitors/caregivers introducing SARS-CoV-2 into healthcare facilities increases as community transmission becomes widespread.
- 1.3 However, the importance of caregivers and visitors in patient management and well-being, especially with regards to mental health, is supported and protected by the healthcare system.
- 1.4 In certain conditions in which risk of transmission is high, the hospital might consider some modification of the policy (e.g., Hospital outbreak).
- 1.5 This guideline is to assist the healthcare workers in managing visitors/caregivers at all MOH Hospitals.
- 1.6 This policy will be timely reviewed and updated as required based on the evolving COVID-19 situation in the country.

2. Objectives:

- 2.1 Reducing the risks of hospital infections from unexpected exposures from caregivers or visitors.
- 2.2 Protecting the caregivers and visitors from SARS-CoV-2 transmission (from COVID-19 patients).
- 2.3 Reducing the risk of closure of units and / or interruption of essential services such as Emergency and Trauma Department (ETD), wards, Operation Theatre (OT), Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and others.
- 2.4 Protecting health care workers (HCW) and in-patients.

3. Essential group of patients where visitors or caregivers are permitted to the healthcare facility:

- 3.1 Patients with critical illness, palliative care, hospice care, end of life, and medical assistance in dying.

- 3.2 Patients who need assisted care, e.g., help patient to mobilize, personal care especially for patients with disabilities, critically ill, elderly or postoperative patients.
- 3.3 Patients who need assistance for communication, such as those with hearing, visual, speech, cognitive, intellectual or memory impairments.
- 3.4 Patients require emotional and support in decision making.
- 3.5 Paediatric and mothers in labour.

4. Criteria of Visitor/ Caregiver

- 4.1 Limited to one (1) visitor/ caregiver per patient at one time (depending on the size of room/ area).
- 4.2 Should be ≥ 18 years old (≥ 16 years old may be allowed provided he/ she has completed the COVID-19 vaccination schedule).
- 4.3 Completed COVID-19 vaccine.
- 4.4 Not from the high-risk group (immunocompromised, elderly ≥ 60 years old, multiple comorbidities).
- 4.5 Not suspected of COVID-19 or Person Under Surveillance (PUS).
- 4.6 No symptoms suggestive of COVID-19.
- 4.7 Filled up the COVID-19 declaration form or MySejahtera and "*Borang Persetujuan dan Pemahaman Risiko Jangkitan COVID-19 bagi Penjaga Pesakit*" (Appendix 1).
- 4.8 Caregiver should be screened negative using RT-PCR or RTK Antigen (within 72 hours prior entering the hospital).
- 4.9 Companion in labour should be screened negative using RT-PCR or RTK Antigen (within 72 hours prior entering the hospital) or RTK Antigen Saliva (on arrival).
- 4.10 Strict adherence to available Standard operating procedures (SOP) and recommended personal protective equipment (PPE).

5. SOP of Visitor/ Caregiver

- 5.1 Visitors/caregiver must wear surgical masks while in the hospital. The use of plastic aprons and gloves are recommended when anticipating exposure to bodily fluids.

- 5.2 Visitors/caregiver should be advised to limit their movement in the healthcare facility.
- 5.3 HCW should educate and supervise the visitor/ caregiver on hand hygiene (before entering and leaving the room), respiratory etiquette, physical distancing (maintain at least 1 metre), use of PPE and other infection prevention and control (IPC) measures as well as on how to recognize the signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
- 5.4 HCW must supervise all visitor/caregiver whom require to donning and doffing full PPE (gown, glove and N95 mask) before entering the room.
- 5.5 Caregiver of a confirmed COVID-19 patient should report to the healthcare providers if they develop symptoms suggestive of COVID-19.
- 5.6 No visitor/caregiver should be allowed during aerosol generating procedure (AGP).
- 5.7 In-charge person of the ward should be informed if there is changing of caregiver.
- 5.8 Patients should NOT leave the hospital to visit family or friends or for any other reason, unless discharged.
- 5.9 If visitor or caregiver explicitly ignore or defy the public health requirements during their time at the hospital, they should be asked to leave.

6. Visitation Policies and Requirements

6.1 Outpatient visiting policies (non-COVID):

These rules apply at the emergency department or when accompanying family members for an outpatient procedure.

- a. Caregiver
 - Only one caregiver allowed for specific caregiving needs as mentioned in 3.0 for the entire visit.
 - No COVID-19 test required but wearing of a surgical mask and hand hygiene practices must be applied at all times.
- b. No visitor allowed.

Ward	Visitors / Caregivers	Number of Visitors/ Caregivers	Duration	COVID-19 Test	PPE	Notes
Emergency	Caregiver	One caregiver	Entire visit	Not required	Surgical mask & hand hygiene	Caregivers are allowed only for specific caregiving needs
	Visitor	No visitor allowed	-	-	-	-
Ambulatory/ Daycare	Caregiver	One caregiver allowed	Entire visit	Not required	Surgical mask & hand hygiene	Caregivers are allowed only for specific caregiving needs
	Visitor	No visitor allowed	-	-	-	-

6.2 Inpatient visiting policies (Non-COVID WARD):

These rules apply for inpatient in non-COVID ward.

a. Caregiver

- Only one caregiver allowed for specific caregiving needs as mentioned in 3.0 for the entire visit.
- Only those with negative RT-PCR or RTK Antigen COVID-19 tests are allowed to care for the patient.
- Caregivers must wear surgical mask and practice hand hygiene at all times.

b. Visitor

- One visitor (Family members only) is allowed at one time.
- RTK Antigen saliva test is encourage prior to visit.

Ward	Visitors / Caregivers	Number of Visitors/ Caregivers	Duration	COVID-19 Test	PPE	Notes
General wards (Adult, Gynaecology and Paediatric)	Caregiver	One caregiver	Entire visit	A negative RT-PCR or RTK Ag test	Surgical mask & hand hygiene	End of life care – One to two visitors at a time may be permitted based on individual circumstances
	Visitor	One visitor (Family members only)	One visitor per day (during visiting hours)	Not compulsory (encouraged to do a RTK Ag saliva test)		
Obstetric wards	Visitor	One visitor (Family members only)	One visitor per day (during visiting hours)	Not compulsory (encouraged to do a RTK Ag saliva test)		-
Labour room (Intrapartum)	Companion-ship	One companion	Entire duration of active labour	A negative RT-PCR or RTK Ag (within 72 hrs) or RTK Ag saliva (on arrival)		-
Intensive Care unit (ICU)	Visitor	One visitor at a time (up to two per day) (Family members only)	Limited to one hour per visitor at a time	Not compulsory (encouraged to do a RTK saliva test)	Surgical mask Hand Hygiene Gloves Apron Face shield	End of life care – One to two visitors at a time

6.3 Inpatient visiting policies (COVID Ward):

- a. If the patient you're visiting has COVID-19, certain restrictions apply regardless of the hospital's current visitation level. See the chart below for rules about visiting COVID-positive patients.

Ward	Visitors / Caregivers	Number of Visitors/ Caregivers	Duration	COVID-19 Test	PPE	Notes
COVID Ward (Adult ward)	Caregiver	One caregiver – individual basis	Entire duration of stay	RT-PCR or RTK Ag (pre-admission & prior to discharge)	Surgical mask Face shield Gloves* Plastic apron* Hand Hygiene	End of life care - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One family member at a time Family member must wear full PPE (supervised donning & doffing)
	Visitor	No visitors are allowed	-	-	-	
COVID Ward (Paediatric ward)	Caregiver	One caregiver	Entire duration of stay	RT-PCR or RTK Ag (pre-admission & prior to discharge)	Surgical mask Face shield Gloves* Plastic apron* Hand Hygiene	
	Visitor	No visitor allowed	-	-	-	

6.4 Inpatient visiting policies (COVID WARD):

Ward	Visitors / Caregivers	Number of Visitors/ Caregivers	Duration	COVID-19 Test	PPE	Notes
Obstetric ward	Caregiver	No caregivers are allowed				End of life care - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One family member at a time • Family member must wear full PPE (supervised donning & doffing)
	Visitor	No caregivers are allowed				
Intensive Care Unit (ICU)	Visitor	No visitor allowed	-	-	-	



BORANG PERSETUJUAN DAN PEMAHAMAN RISIKO JANGKITAN COVID-19 BAGI PENJAGA PESAKIT

1. Saya telah memahami dan bersetuju sepenuhnya bahawa:
 - a. Hospital _____ telah mengambil segala langkah pencegahan untuk mengelakkan risiko jangkitan COVID-19 kepada pesakit, penjaga, pelawat serta anggota kesihatan hospital dengan mematuhi semua peraturan dan garis panduan berkaitan dengan COVID-19.
 - b. Pesakit, penjaga atau pelawat masih mempunyai risiko untuk mendapat jangkitan COVID-19 ketika berada di hospital.
2. Berdasarkan perkara di atas, saya dengan ini bersetuju untuk tidak membuat sebarang tuntutan dan / atau meneruskan tuntutan terhadap pihak Kerajaan dan Hospital _____ di atas kerugian, kos, liabiliti, penderitaan atau kerosakan sekiranya saya atau pesakit yang dijaga mendapat jangkitan COVID-19.
3. Saya seterusnya mengesahkan bahawa perkara di atas telah dijelaskan kepada saya oleh pihak Hospital _____ dan saya memahami sepenuhnya sifat dan akibat yang dinyatakan di Perenggan 2 dan saya menandatangani borang ini dengan rela hati tanpa sebarang paksaan.
4. Saya berjanji akan mematuhi semua peraturan dan garis panduan berkaitan dengan COVID-19 yang telah ditetapkan oleh pihak Kerajaan dan Hospital sepanjang keberadaan saya di kawasan Hospital _____.

PENJAGA

Tandatangan:

Nama:

Kad Pengenalan:

Hubungan dengan pesakit:

Tarikh:

ANGGOTA KESIHATAN

Tandatangan:

Nama:

Kad Pengenalan:

Jawatan:

Tarikh:

PERATURAN BAGI PELAWAT / PENJAGA DI HOSPITAL KEMENTERIAN KESIHATAN MALAYSIA

KRITERIA PELAWAT/PENJAGA:

1. Hanya satu (1) pelawat/penjaga di benarkan bagi setiap pesakit pada satu-satu masa.
2. Hendaklah berumur ≥ 18 tahun (≥ 16 tahun boleh dibenarkan dengan syarat dia telah melengkapkan jadual vaksinasi COVID-19).
3. Telah lengkap vaksin COVID-19 (14 hari selepas suntikan kedua bagi vaksin jenis 2 suntikan dan 28 hari selepas suntikan bagi vaksin jenis 1 suntikan).
4. Bukan daripada kumpulan berisiko tinggi (system imun yang rendah, warga tua ≥ 60 tahun, pelbagai komorbiditi).
5. Bukan dalam kumpulan disyaki COVID-19 atau Orang Dalam Pengawasan (PUS).
6. Tiada simptom yang menunjukkan COVID-19.
7. Mengisi borang pengisytiharan COVID-19 atau MySejahtera dan “Borang Persetujuan dan Pemahaman Risiko Jangkitan COVID-19 bagi Penjaga Pesakit”.
8. Menjalani ujian COVID-19 seperti yang ditetapkan iaitu;
 - 8.1 Penjaga hendaklah disaring negatif menggunakan RT-PCR atau Antigen RTK (dalam masa 72 jam sebelum masuk ke hospital).
 - 8.2 Peneman semasa bersalin hendaklah disaring negatif menggunakan RT-PCR atau RTK Antigen (dalam 72 jam sebelum masuk ke hospital) atau RTK Antigen Saliva (semasa ketibaan).
9. Mematuhi prosedur operasi Standard (SOP) dan alat pelindung diri (PPE) yang disyorkan.

*Pelawat adalah digalakkan untuk melakukan ujian *RTK-Antigen Saliva Self-Test* sebelum melawat pesakit di hospital

PROSEDUR OPERASI STANDARD:

1. Pelawat/penjaga hendaklah sentiasa memakai pelitup muka semasa berada di hospital. Penggunaan apron plastik dan sarung tangan disyorkan apabila terdapat pendedahan kepada cecair badan.
2. Pelawat/penjaga perlu sentiasa mengamalkan;
 - 2.1 Kebersihan tangan (sebelum masuk dan keluar bilik)
 - 2.2 Etika batuk (menutup mulut dan hidung ketika batuk atau bersin dengan tisu atau sapu tangan atau tangan)
 - 2.3 Penjarakan fizikal (menjaga sekurang-kurangnya 1 meter)
3. Pelawat/penjaga hendaklah menghadkan pergerakan mereka di kemudahan penjagaan kesihatan.
4. Penjaga kepada pesakit COVID-19 hendaklah melaporkan kepada anggota kesihatan jika mereka mengalami gejala COVID-19.
5. Tiada pelawat/penjaga dibenarkan semasa prosedur tertentu seperti pemasangan tiub pernafasan (intubation).
6. Penjaga perlu memaklumkan kepada anggota kesihatan di wad sekiranya terdapat pertukaran penjaga.
7. Pesakit TIDAK dibenarkan untuk meninggalkan wad atau hospital untuk melawat keluarga, rakan-rakan atau atas sebarang sebab lain, melainkan dibenarkan keluar.
8. Pelawat/penjaga yang mengabaikan atau mengingkari SOP ini semasa berada di hospital, boleh diminta untuk meninggalkan hospital.

References:

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<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/non-us-settings/hcf-visitors.html>
3. Visitor Restrictions Due to COVID-19, University of California San Francisco, Updated November 1, 2021 <https://www.ucsfhealth.org/covid/visitor-restrictions-due-to-covid-19>
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