

Patient (Customer) Visitor Policy—NICU

The purpose of this policy is to outline the guidelines for visiting infants/customers in the NICU.

Guidelines

1. Designation of visitors:
 - a. Primary Caregivers (typically parents and/or guardian) — Individuals will be given an ID band to note their status and this ID band should be presented at each visit. Notation will be made in electronic health record to indicate names of ID band holders.
 - b. Designated Caregivers — Primary caregiver may designate one individual as a Designated Caregiver. This visitor may visit without the ID band holders when Primary Caregivers are unable to be with the infant. Designated Caregiver will be given a band to indicate their role as Designated Caregiver. Notation will be made in electronic health record to indicate names of Designated Caregiver. Designated Caregivers may not bring other visitors with them.
 - c. Other Visitors — All other visitors must be accompanied by the Primary Caregiver in order to be able to visit the infant.
 - d. Adaptions may be made in cases of surrogacy, adoption, or at discretion of manager.
2. Primary Caregivers and Designated Caregivers are welcome in the NICU 24 hours a day.
3. Primary Caregivers should sign the NICU Visitation Guidelines upon visiting the NICU. This will be kept in the patient chart for the duration of the hospital stay. At discharge the document can be shredded.
4. A total of 4 visitors are allowed at a bedside at any one time (one of these must be a Primary Caregiver). Limitations on the number of visitors may go into effect depending on community health developments such as illness outbreaks or seasonal illness, or circumstances in the NICU, i.e. procedures, emergencies.
5. Security:
 - a. Visitors must utilize the door buzzer to gain access to the NICU.
 - b. Visitors should check in at front desk or nurse's station prior to proceeding to the patient bedside/private room.
 - c. If the visitor is not an ID band holder, staff must verify that a Primary ID band holder is present before allowing the visitor access to the patient.
6. Child visitors:
 - a. Children 12 years and younger must be a sibling of the patient to be permitted to visit. Children older than the age of 12 years that are not siblings may visit per approval of infant's parent.
 - b. Siblings must be age 2 or older to enter the unit and must be supervised by an adult at all times.
 - c. The *NICU Visitor Communicable Disease Questionnaire* must be completed for each visitor 12 years and younger. This should be completed upon entrance to the unit by staff member who opened the door or designee.
 - i. Visiting children must be current on immunizations.
 - ii. Questionnaire will be reviewed and updated at each visit.
 - iii. The document will be retained for the duration of the patient stay.

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- d. Siblings younger than 12 years may not hold the infant unless under the direct supervision of the parent.
 - e. Length of visit by any child may be limited based on unit circumstances and/or the age of the visitor and how the baby is reacting to increased stimulation. For example, if a visiting child is being disruptive or loud and it is causing stress to patients, the parent may be asked to take the visiting child out of the unit.
 - f. In the case of multiples where one of the infants remains hospitalized, the other infant is permitted entrance to the NICU to encourage tandem breastfeeding and visitation with the hospitalized infant. Effort should be made to accommodate the visitors in a private room if available.
7. Holding — For infants of higher acuity, holding is reserved for parents only.
8. Infection Prevention — All visitors should be advised of the following infection prevention measures:
- a. All visitors are expected to be healthy: no cold or flu symptoms (fever, cough, cold, runny nose, sore throat, diarrhea, vomiting, cold sores, rash) within the past 48 hours.
 - b. Removal of artificial nails is advised.
 - c. Hands and forearms should be washed with soap and water for one minute prior to entering the NICU or upon entering the private NICU patient room.
 - d. Rings, watches, and bracelets should be removed prior to washing hands.
 - e. During the visit, alcohol foam or soap and water should be used to clean hands any time they may become contaminated (example: changing diapers or touching face, nose, and mouth).
 - f. Cell phone use at the bedside is discouraged. If use is necessary, hand hygiene must be performed after touching cell phone. Cell phones may not be placed in the infant bed.

Privacy

- 1. Information is given to parents only.
- 2. Primary Caregivers may call 24 hours a day. Upon admission to the NICU, a “code” word or MRN may be used to identify a parent/guardian when calling in to receive patient information from NICU team members. Primary Caregivers must give the nurse a “code” word or MRN as the password before information can be given out in person over the phone.
- 3. Visitors are not allowed to visit the bedsides/rooms of other babies unless invited by the ID band holder of another baby. The ID band holder of the other baby must be present.