

Status **Active** PolicyStat ID **14104833**



Origination 10/1991  
Last Approved 07/2023  
Effective 07/2023  
Next Review 07/2026

Owner April Novotny:  
4298 VP -  
LHRMC/CNE LRH  
Department Administrative

## Visitation and Welcoming Presence for Patients, Family, and Visitors- AD.0136

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to create a healing environment for our patients at Lakeland Regional Health Medical Center (LRHMC). We understand that affiliation needs are recognized as part of the healing process and are met through interactions with **Care Partners**, visiting friends, family members, clergy members, and others. We will treat all patients, Care Partners, and **visitors** with kindness, dignity, and human respect while recognizing our utmost responsibility to maintain a secure and efficient atmosphere for all who enter our campus. Our aim through this policy is to provide the right balance of a friendly, welcoming environment with a safe, orderly, and tranquil setting that will allow Care Partners and visitors to take part in the patient's healing process. Our policies guide our practices and ensure that we place people at the heart of all we do to deliver the best outcomes and safest care.

### APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to Lakeland Regional Health Medical Center's **Workforce**.

### POLICY

Care Partners are encouraged to be a part of our patients' healing process as outlined through the following procedures.

### PROCEDURE

#### General Guidelines:

1. LRHMC values **patient and family-centered care** and provides open visitation so patients can have around-the-clock support from a family member or Care Partner.

2. Our Safety & Security team partners with our Clinical and Administrative teams to maintain an environment of healing. LRHMC promotes a tranquil and healing setting for its patients and encourages visitation, including appropriate physical contact between a patient and visitor. We reserve the right to intervene when necessary if individuals are identified as a threat or a risk to patients, employees, volunteers, physicians, or other visitors. Likewise, because we value the safety of all patients, employees, and guests, individuals who display disruptive behavior will not be permitted on our campus.
3. LRHMC is happy to welcome visiting children on campus, but we ask that those who are under the age of 16 years be accompanied by an adult.
4. Depending on the needs of our patients and patient care units, visiting guidelines may be determined on a case-by-case basis. For example, to respect the collective needs of the patients in a given area, we may find it necessary to modify these guidelines at times which may result in limited visitation, modified length of stay, gift restrictions, visitor age limitations, etc. Notwithstanding the foregoing, LRHMC will always allow for in-person visitation for all of the circumstances set forth in Fla. Stat. 408.823(2)(c); however, in-person visitation may be suspended or limited in accordance with Fla. Stat. 408.823(2)(d), when appropriate. Approval by Resolution Services should be obtained prior to suspending or limiting a Care Partner's in-person visitation rights and an Incident Report should be completed. Team members or providers may contact Resolution Services at ext. 1025 or by contacting the Administrative Manager during weekend/evening hours to obtain such approvals.
5. Consistent with Florida statutes and 59AER23-2 (Standards for the Appropriate Use of Facial Coverings for Infection Control), we may require a visitor to wear a facial covering only when the visitor is:
  - (a) Exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has a diagnosed infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission,
  - (b) In sterile areas of the health care setting or an area where sterile procedures are being performed,
  - (c) In an in-patient or clinical room with a patient who is exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has a diagnosed infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission, or
  - (d) Visiting a patient whose treating health care practitioner has diagnosed the patient with or confirmed a condition affecting the immune system in a manner which is known to increase risk of transmission of an infection from employees without signs or symptoms of infection to a patient and whose treating practitioner has determined that the use of facial coverings is necessary for the patient's safety.Visitors may opt out of wearing a facial covering if an alternative method of infection control or infectious disease prevention is available
6. In order to promote healing and protect our patients from additional illnesses, visitors who do not feel well, have a fever or rash, or have been exposed to an infectious or contagious illness are respectfully requested to refrain from visiting patients. Because LRHMC values our patient's safety, we may deny visitation of a patient if the visitation could negatively affect the patient's continued care.
7. In order to maintain a healing environment, we will observe Quiet Hours in the clinical areas after 8:00 p.m. We ask that team members, visitors, and Care Partners respect this time and make every effort to keep noise levels to a minimum to allow our patients the opportunity for a

quiet night of rest.

8. Education regarding visitation requirements will be provided on our website, in hospital signage, and available by contacting hospital entrance reception and security staff. This visitation policy will be easily accessible from the LRH website home page.

## Special Considerations:

- Patient visitation is 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Patients are not limited in the number of visitors provided that patient care is not affected. However, only Care Partners or designated individuals are allowed overnight stays and are limited to one person, with consideration always of the patient's individualized needs.
- If someone is staying overnight, considerations regarding the roommate in semi-private rooms are as follows:
  - Initiate transfer of the patient to a private room, if available, or state when this will be possible.
  - If a private room is unavailable, the patient's roommate must grant permission for the patient to have someone stay overnight. Staff should frame this conversation with the roommate in a sensitive, caring, kind, respectful, and courteous manner and can seek Leadership's guidance when necessary.
- Patients have the right to be identified as "non published," indicating our staff members are not permitted to release any information regarding the patient and the right to limit or stop visitation.
- Hearing and visually impaired, or other physically challenged visitors are afforded full and equal access to LRHMC.
- For safety purposes, visitors to our Labor & Delivery, Mother & Baby, NICU, and Pediatrics units must stop at the security desk to be permitted to visit, and will receive an identification badge.
- Visitors to Labor and Delivery and the Intensive Care Units may be limited to two visitors at a time.
- When patients have conditions that require special precautions of those who would enter the patient's room, including visitors, these special precautions will be noted in signage outside the patient's room. Personal protective equipment may be required of visitors and will be provided to visitors depending upon a patient's condition.
- Safety policies for visitors will not be more stringent than those applicable to hospital staff. Visitors are not required to submit proof of any vaccination or immunization.
- LRHMC has the right to change these guidelines or this policy without prior notice to address emergent health and/or safety needs in the community or at LRHMC.

## DEFINITIONS

**Care Partner:** A Care Partner is chosen by the patient and may be a family member, friend, or other individual who can be present and available for emotional support during the patient's stay, supporting the patient in his or her beliefs. The Care Partner is encouraged to actively participate in the patient's plan of care. The Care Partner may or may not be the patient's surrogate decision-maker, or legally authorized representative. HIPAA regulations still apply.

**Owner:** The Policy Owner above is the person responsible for ensuring that staff adhere to the visitation policy.

**Patient and Family Centered Care** is defined by the Institute for Patient and Family Centered Care as healthcare founded on partnerships between providers, patients, and family members. Families play a vital role in the health and wellbeing of patients of all ages by providing attentive reassurance, assisting in mutual problem solving, and fulfilling affiliation needs. Emotional, social, and developmental support are all key components of healthcare that contribute to the dignity and autonomy of the patient.

**Visitor:** A visitor is defined as any individual who is not a patient, Care Partner, volunteer, treating physician, or business invitee/sales representative.

**Workforce:** All LRH employees, volunteers, trainees/students, contractors, and medical staff.

## REFERENCES

Business Invitees/Sales Representatives - Refer to policy [Vendor Representative Control: LRH Clinical Sites](#).

Pet Therapy and Pet Visitation - Refer to policy [Pet Therapy/Animal Assisted Therapy and Pet Visitation](#).

Service Animals - Refer to policy [Service Animals](#).

Visitation of Patient Inmates - Refer to policy [Managing In-Custody/Prisoner Patients](#).

## Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
	Danielle Drummond: 0001 President & Chief Executive Officer - LRHS	07/2023
	Jonn Hoppe: 1011 Executive VP, Chief Legal Officer-General Cou	07/2023
	April Novotny: 4298 VP - LHRMC/CNE LRH	07/2023