

## Essential Care Partner & Support Person Guidelines and Exceptions

Here at SJGHEL, we recognize the value that visits from family and caregivers contribute to a patient's quality of life and well-being. We strive to balance this with the need to protect the safety of our patients and staff.

At this time, there will be no general visitors, only fully vaccinated Essential Care Partners (ECP) and Support Persons deemed essential to care. Guidelines will be reviewed regularly and are subject to further changes as circumstances evolve. **Patients will not be denied care based their vaccination status.**

### **Essential Care Partner (ECP) for Admitted Patients**

An ECP is an individual who has a critical role in a patient's health and well-being. The need for an ECP will be determined together with the patient and the health care team based on diagnosis and required level of care.

If an ECP is deemed essential, a maximum of two ECPs will be appointed. ECPs will be required to participate in infection prevention and control education and **must provide proof of full COVID -19 vaccination or an approved medical exemption**. To enter the Hospital, the ECP must present their ECP Designation Card with photo identification and pass COVID-19 screening.

**Admitted Patient:** 1 ECP can visit daily from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm and/or 5:00 – 7:00 pm

**Palliative Care:** 1 ECP can visit with unrestricted hours

**End of Life:** 2 ECPs can visit with unrestricted hours

### **Support Person (SP) Deemed Essential**

A Support Person is an individual who is deemed essential for a patient receiving care, such as when required for consent, children under 18 years or for quality of care or safety reasons (e.g., patient has visual/hearing/cognitive impairment or language barrier). A Support Person must pass COVID-19 screening. There is no requirement to provide proof of full COVID-19 vaccination, however infection prevention and control practices must be adhered to.

**Emergency Department/Outpatients:** 1 Support Person

**Obstetrics/Pediatrics:** 1 Support Person for diagnostic procedures or admission

**Palliative Care:** 1 Support Person or 1 ECP at a time - unrestricted hours

**End of Life:** 2 Support Persons or 2 ECPs at a time - unrestricted hours

### **Exceptions in Urgent or Compassionate Circumstances**

We understand there are urgent and compassionate circumstances that will need special consideration. These exceptions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Please call **705-848-7181 ext. 2419** to contact the Patient Relations Office or email [patientrelations@sjgh.ca](mailto:patientrelations@sjgh.ca).

### **Other Ways to Connect with Patients**

Our **Virtual Connections Program** can be used to connect for a virtual visit with a patient. This service is available daily from 10:00 am – 9:00 pm. Urgent connections may be made at any time at the discretion of the clinical team. Requests can be made by phone to all units of the Hospital.