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Owner Juli Clay
Area Administration

Patient Visitation Rights

Purpose:

Gonzales Healthcare Systems ensures that all visitors will enjoy full and equal visitation privileges consistent with patient preferences and subject to hospital clinical restrictions and to comply with §482.13(h), CFR 5482.13(h) - Patient Visitation Rights.

Definitions:

Attending Physician - An attending physician is a physician on record for the patient.

QPD - Qualified Period of Disaster

Policy

The visitation policy applies to all hospital inpatients and outpatients, regardless of their ability to pay, race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability or any other characteristic or status that is protected under the US Constitution.

Upon admission each patient or patient representative will be given information regarding the hospital visitation policy. This information will include any clinical restriction or hospital limitation on such rights.

Each patient or patient representative, has the right to consent to receive visitor(s) whom he/she designates, including, but not limited to, a spouse, a domestic partner (including a same sex domestic partner), another family member, or a friend, and has the right to withdraw or deny such consent at any time.

Potential Clinical Restrictions

Flexibility is allowed to balance all patient needs. With respect to restrictions on visitation, when

visitation would interfere with the care of the patient and/or the care of other patients, it would be considered clinically appropriate to place a restriction.

As of September 1, 2021 in consideration of HB-221, a hospital may not, during a qualified period of disaster, prohibit in-person visitation with a patient receiving care or treatment at the hospital unless federal law or a federal agency requires the hospital to prohibit in-person visitation during that period.

During a QPD, a hospital may restrict the number of visitors for a patient to one visitor (at least one visitor must be allowed per patient during the QPD). The visitor may be required or requested to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at the time while visiting the hospital.

Patient visitors and guests can be limited except for the following:

- Governmental personnel performing their official duties
- An attorney, a legally authorized representative, or a person acting under an advance directive of a patient when performing their official duties.
- Provider of essential services (contract doctors, contract nurse, hospital workers, other contract health care providers, SANE nurses, a single designed caregiver acting on the patient's behalf).
- A religious or spiritual counselor

In Consideration of HB-2211. guidelines for denial of in-person visitation:

- If an attending physician determines that in-person visitation with a patient may lead to the transmission of an infectious agent that poses a serious community health risk, the attending physician can order that patient not be allowed in-person visitors.
- This order will only be valid for 5 days after the date the determination is made unless a renewal order is written by the attending physician.
- If an in-person visitor is denied for a patient receiving care or treatment at the hospital by order of the attending physician, the patient may authorize a person verbally or by advance directive or medical power of attorney to receive a daily oral or written update of the patient's condition. This person can be authorized verbally upon admission and documented in the Release of Directory and other Healthcare Information form. If the person is named in the patient's advance directive or the patient's medical power of attorney, that person will be the person who is otherwise the patient's surrogate decision-maker regarding the patient's health care needs and other applicable law; this person will be given an estimated date and time at which the patient will be discharged from the hospital.

Examples include, but are not limited to, patients undergoing care interventions or when there may be infection control issues. Other situations where restrictions are appropriate include disruptive, threatening or violent behavior, a patient's need for rest or privacy, existing court order restricting contact of which the hospital is aware. Limitations may be placed on the number of visitors during a specific period of time. Based on the patient's condition, a minimum age requirement for child visitors or a physician order limiting visitation may be necessary.

Visitation Rules:

- Inpatient - Unless ordered by the physician or requested by the patient, Gonzales Healthcare

Systems does not limit visitors.

- Inpatient - A patient with an illness that poses a health risk to the community will be allowed one visitor per day.
 - A patient at the end of life may be allowed additional family members. This will be at the discretion of the charge nurse.
- Emergency Room patients are allowed one visitor
 - A patient at the end of life may be allowed additional family members. This will be at the discretion of the Emergency Room nurse.
- Outpatients are allowed one visitor/guest.
- Ambulatory Surgery patients are allowed one visitor who will be allowed to wait in the surgical waiting area.

Gonzales Healthcare Systems does not allow underage overnight guests unless that guest is the parent of a hospitalized infant or child.

Regular visiting hours are 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Overnight guests are not permitted in semi-private rooms to ensure the safety and privacy of both patients.

Overnight guests are limited to one guest per person in private rooms.

If an executive order or other direction is issued by the Governor of Texas, the President of the United States, CDC or another applicable authority that is more restrictive than the emergency rule or any minimum standard relating to GHS, GHS must comply with the executive order or other direction.

Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
BOD Approval/Review	Juli Clay	08/2024
CEO Approval	Brandon Anzaldua	06/2024
CNO Approval	Karen Iacuone	06/2024
	Juli Clay	06/2024