

POLICY # 21.21

SUBJECT: PARTNERS IN CARE WELCOME POLICY

POLICY:

It is a policy of The Valley Hospital that all Hospital staff, as well as physicians, shall not restrict, limit or otherwise deny access to Partners in Care on the basis of race, creed (religion), color, national origin, age, ancestry, nationality, marital status, domestic partnership or civil union status, sex, gender identity or expression, military service, affectional or sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, or any other protected characteristic under federal and New Jersey State Law.

Partners in Care are welcomed to be with the patient based on the patient's preferences and wishes. There may be times when Partners in Care would need to be limited, as referenced below.

When in semi-private rooms the preferences of the patient and roommate will be taken into account to maintain the comfort, health, safety, privacy and confidentiality of all patients.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines that support Patient Family Centered Care practices in ways that enhance the patient's care experience. The Hospital recognizes that Partner's in Care, as defined below, play an important part in the patient's healing process.

Partners in Care (formerly referred to as visitors) are respected as essential members of the patient's health care team in sharing information and providing support and comfort. They enhance quality and safety and provide pertinent information essential to the patient's care plan.

Hospital employees will work with patients and their designated Partners in Care to ensure specific presence needs are accommodated as requested. However, there may be times when the presence of Partners in Care will need to be limited to ensure quality of care, safety and/or confidentiality. Examples may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Patient condition, patient care or treatment which, at the advice of the patient's care provider(s), precludes the presence of Partners in Care;
- Semi-private rooms;
- A court order limiting or restraining contact;
- Behavior that is a direct threat or causes discomfort to patients, families, staff, others, or that may interrupt the functioning of the care unit, department or facility.

The presence of Partners in Care in operating rooms and procedural areas is restricted unless the treatment team feels it would be in the best interest of the patient to have their presence. Two exceptions are:

- Parents remaining with their child in the operating room until anesthetized
- An identified Partner in Care accompanying a patient to the operating room for the removal of life support prior to organ donation harvesting.

DEFINITION:

Partners in Care are person(s) identified by the patient who are family members and/or other individuals that are present to support the patient during the course of the patient's stay.

PROCEDURE:

- I) Upon admission, patients will be asked to identify their visitation restrictions (if any) related to hours or individuals. Restrictions shall be passed to patient relations at ext. 8169 when open, after hours contact security at ext. 8290.
- II) Upon arrival, the "Partners in Care Welcoming Guide" will be made available to patients and their Partners in Care.
- III) Quiet time, designated from the hours of 9:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. every day, will be observed to promote a restful healing environment for patients. This is accomplished by lowering the level of light on the unit, reducing noise, and limiting disruptions by staff and Partners in Care. While specific units may add additional designated quiet times, patient preferences will be taken into consideration whenever possible.
- IV) Every effort will be made to work collaboratively and respectfully with the patient and Partners in Care to ensure safety, quality care, privacy, rest and confidentiality for all patients.

RESPONSIBILITY: Assistant Vice President, Hospital Operations and Emergency Services


Audrey Meyers
President and Chief Executive Officer

EFFECTIVE: 10/08/14

REVIEWED: 10/08/14

Approved: Executive Staff: 8/26/14

References: CMS regulations revisiting the Medicare Conditions of Participation set forth at 42 CFR 482.13.
The Joint Commission RI.01.01, EP28.
Patient's Bill of Rights