

# BASSETT HEALTHCARE NETWORK

## COVID-19 VISITOR RESPONSE PLAN

### Overall Plan

In accordance with current New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH) regulations, patients are allowed to have person(s) at the bedside as either a **support person** or a **visitor**. A support person is defined as a person that is essential to a patient's care. These persons will be determined by the patient and/or family and approved by the care team. Visitors are defined as people who are here to visit the patient, but do not fit under the approved categories for support persons.

The allowable cumulative time of these visits per day is four hours. Visiting hours are 12:00pm – 8:00pm, except where otherwise noted (e.g. Inpatient Psychiatry).

For information about visiting Bassett Healthcare Network long-term care facilities, please click on the following links: [A.O. Fox Nursing Home](#) | [Valley Health Services](#) | [Valley Residential Services](#)

***\*Note: The updated visitation policies detailed in this document will take effect for all Bassett Healthcare Network hospitals on Wednesday, June 24<sup>th</sup> 2020.***

### Support Persons

Support persons continue to be allowed without time restrictions in specific situations as noted below:

#### ➤ **ED Patients**

- One support person **is allowed** with a patient in the ED through discharge or admission.

#### ➤ **Pregnant Patients**

- One support person is considered essential to Bassett Medical Center Birthing Center patient care throughout labor, delivery, and the immediate postpartum period, including recovery.
- A support person can be any person that the patient chooses.
- The support person can stay in all settings with the patient and will be the only support person allowed to be present during the patient's care.

#### ➤ **Pediatric Patients**

- The family/caregiver may only designate up to two support people for the entirety of their admission; but only one support person may be present at a time.
- Individuals age 70 years or older are not encouraged to be a support person.

***\*Note: DCF/CPS workers are considered essential workers, and not support persons.***

#### ➤ **Essential to the Care of the Patient (Medically Necessary)**

- The patient/family may designate one support person if it is determined to be essential (medically necessary) to their care. This includes patients with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and patients with cognitive impairments including dementia.
  - Intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD), and cognitive impairments including dementia
    - The patient or family/caregiver may designate two support people, but only one support person may be present at a time.
    - This support person can be the patient's family, caregiver, or another person they choose.

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### ➤ **Imminent End-of-Life Situations**

- Imminent end-of-life situations are defined as a patient who is actively dying, where death is anticipated within less than 24 hours.

***\*Note: The State of New York does not consider comfort care to be imminent end-of-life.***

- The patient and/or family/caregiver may only designate up to two support people for the entirety of their admission; but only one support person may be present at a time.
- In the event the patient is a parent of a minor child, one adult family member and one child may be permitted at the patient's bedside.

### Visitors

Visitors are allowed at all Bassett Healthcare Network hospitals under the following conditions:

- Visitation hours are limited to 12:00pm – 8:00pm  
***\*Note: Special hours for Inpatient Psychiatry; see section on special visitor provisions.***
- Visitors will be screened (e.g. fever, sore throat, runny nose, cough, shortness of breath, muscle aches, diarrhea).
- Individuals with temperatures  $\geq 100.0^{\circ}\text{F}$  and/or symptoms related to COVID-19 within the prior 14 days will not be able to visit.
- Visitors may visit only one-at-a-time.
- Visitors are limited to two people per patient each day. They should be greater than 18 years of age, except in rare situations that have been approved by the clinical team.
- Total time for visitors per patient, per day cannot exceed the four-hour maximum.
- Once in the hospital, visitors must remain in the patient's room throughout the visit.
- Visitors will be asked to perform meticulous hand hygiene and instructed on how to wear the personal protective equipment (PPE) throughout their visit.
- Visitors will wear a mask at all times while in the building.
- Visitors must adhere to such safe care procedures, including careful hand hygiene and appropriate PPE, throughout the visit.

### Protective Measures for Support Persons and Visitors

***\*Note: All people who are placed on quarantine by NYS DOH or a clinician are prohibited from visiting.***

Any and all visitors will be coordinated through Nursing and Security. Visitors will:

- Come through the hospital main entrances, unless they accompany a patient to the ED.
  - ***\*Visitors that accompany someone to the ED will be able to remain with the patient until the patient is admitted.***
- Wear a mask at all times. One will be provided if needed.
- Sign in on the Visitor Log.
- Have their temperature taken and be screened for illness.
  - ***\*Visitors with temperatures  $\geq 100.0^{\circ}\text{F}$  and/or illness will be restricted from visitation at this time.***
- Receive a Visitor Support Education Handout upon entering the hospital.
- Remain in the patient's room, except for entering and exiting the hospital.
- Perform thorough hand hygiene.

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- Support persons/visitors with temperatures  $\geq 100.0^{\circ}F$  and/or symptoms of illness or COVID-19 within the prior 14 days will be asked to leave the building.

### Special Visitor Provisions by Specific Department and/or Level of Care

#### ➤ **Emergency Department**

- One support person **is allowed** with a patient in the ED through discharge or admission.  
**OR**
- One visitor **will be allowed** with the patient with the approval of the ED Charge Nurse. The visitor will not be allowed to accompany the patient to the unit once the patient is admitted, unless approved through the nurse's office per the inpatient visitor response plan outlined above.
- The visitor will be issued a white nametag and the ED Charge Nurse will place a green dot (or green mark) on this pass.
- There are no time constraints on the time of the day the visits can occur, but visits are allowed at the discretion of the ED Charge Nurse.

#### ➤ **Same Day Procedures:**

- Patients undergoing same day procedures may be accompanied to the facility by a companion regardless of the time of the procedure.
- The companion may remain with the patient through the initial intake process and may rejoin the patient for the discharge process.
- If the patient is admitted post-procedure, the companion may visit the patient during the established visiting hours (12:00pm – 8:00pm).

#### ➤ **Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities (I/DD), and Cognitive Impairments, Including Dementia**

- The patient or family/caregiver may designate two support people, but only one support person may be present at a time.
- This support person can be the patient's family, caregiver, or another person they chose.

#### ➤ **Birth Center Patients (Bassett Medical Center)**

- Only one support person is allowed to visit and participate in the birth. They must not have a fever at the time of labor/delivery/immediate postpartum period, including recovery.
- The support person will have their temperature checked and will be monitored for symptoms every 12 hours. They will also need to plan to stay once they arrive.
- The support person can stay in all settings.

#### ➤ **Pediatric Patients**

- Pediatric patients may have two parents/guardians/support persons designated for alternate visitation. They will only be allowed to visit one at a time.  
**\*Note: This restriction must be explained to the patient's family/support system upon arrival, or ideally, prior to arriving at the hospital.**  
**\*\*Note: DCF/CPS workers are considered essential workers, and not support persons.**
- Individuals age 70 or older are not encouraged to be support persons.

#### ➤ **Inpatient Psychiatric Unit (Bassett Medical Center):**

- Visitation hours:
  - Monday – Friday: 5:00pm – 8:00pm

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- Weekends/Holidays: 12:00pm – 6:00pm
- Visit duration:
  - Monday – Friday: 1 hour per visit
    - Weekends/Holidays: 2 hours per visit
- A maximum of three patients may have a visitor at any one time. This is to maintain appropriate social distancing between visitors.
- Visitors will be encouraged to make an appointment time so that each patient's visitors can be accommodated.
- All visitation must be in the Day Room.
- Due to safety procedures, patients awaiting COVID screening results will have visitors scheduled once their negative test is confirmed.
- **For Critically Ill/End-of-Life Patients**
  - Visits will be coordinated with Nursing Unit Leadership and Security.
  - Coordination of visits includes a representative from Security meeting visitors at the hospital entrance.
  - The patient and/or family/caregiver may only designate up to two support people for the entirety of their admission; but only one support person may be present at a time.

### **Patients with Pending or Confirmed COVID-19 Results**

Patients with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 may receive visitors if they are in a single room or are the only patient in a double room.

Bassett Healthcare Network is committed to caring for the social needs of our patients with pending or confirmed COVID-19 results. When possible, we will facilitate video-conferencing or phone visits between our patients and their loved ones.

### **Protective Gear for Support Persons/Visitors**

On entry to the facility, all support persons/visitors will be required to wear a mask. This can be a cloth mask or a procedure mask. When support persons/visitors arrive to their destination, nursing staff will assist in donning of the appropriate protective gear for the type of patient they will be seeing. This is described as follows:

- **Visitors of Patients on Precautions**
  - All precautionary measures must be followed for patients on isolation precautions.
- **Visitors of Patients with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19**
  - Procedure Mask
  - Eye protection
  - Isolation gown
  - Gloves

*\*Note: In situations of limited PPE, visitation may be suspended until adequate protective gear becomes available again.*
- **Visitors of Patients *Not* Suspected or Confirmed to have COVID-19**
  - Cloth or Procedure Mask