


GOLDEN PLAINS COMMUNITY HOSPITAL
Borger, Texas 79007

POLICY/PROCEDURE

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Dept/Function: HOSPITAL-WIDE	Approved By/Date: 	Effective Date: 4/16/07 Reviewed By: MH:12/10 Revised By: MH 1/31/14

Golden Plains Community Hospital supports liberal visiting hours that assist the patient in meeting their personal visitation preferences while, at the same time, assisting them in obtaining required restoration of health. If a visitor is allowed access to the patient outside of normal visiting hours, the visitor must comply with legal limitations regarding the patient's right to refuse visitation, the right to privacy, and the responsibility to follow hospital policies and procedures. The Hospital will not restrict, limit or deny visitation privileges on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, culture, language, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Visitors play a role for inpatients, swing bed patients and outpatients. A day surgery patient may wish to have a support person present during preoperative preparation or post-operative recovery. An outpatient clinic patient may wish to have a support person present during their examination by the physician. An ultrasound or lab draw patient may wish to have a support person present while undergoing their procedure.

All visitors will enjoy full and equal visitation privileges consistent with patient, or their representatives, preferences.

Each patient has the right to choose with whom they want to talk. This applies to both inpatients and outpatients. Patients do have the responsibility to communicate with healthcare providers their needs and participate in their plan of care. Visitors may include, but not limited to, a spouse, a domestic partner (including same-sex domestic partner), another family member, or friend. All visitors designated by the patient (or support person where appropriate) shall enjoy visitation privileges that are no more restrictive than those that immediate family members would enjoy. **The patient may withdraw or deny consent for a particular visitor at any time.** If a patient believes his or her visitation rights have been violated the patient or caregiver may file a grievance using the internal grievance resolution process. A complaint with the State survey agency may also be filed.

Legitimate examples for restricting or limiting visitors includes:

- Any court orders limiting or restraining contact.
- Behavior representing a direct risk or threat to the patient, staff or others in the immediate area.
- Behavior disrupting to the patient care unit functioning. This includes unattended children.
- Reasonable limitations on the number of visitors at one time.
- Patient's risk of infection by the visitor.
- Visitors risk of infection by the patient.
- Extraordinary precautions due to infectious disease outbreak.
- Treatment protocols requiring restricted visitation. If the patient requests at least one support person in the room during treatment, every effort will be made to allow that support person.
- Patients need for privacy or rest.
- Need for privacy or rest by another individual in a shared room.

Written notice of this policy will be handed to each patient by the admissions clerk, except for Day Surgery patients who will be given a written notice of this policy in their Day Surgery preoperative information packet. A signed copy, by the patient or their representative, will be obtained in admitting or by the Day Surgery staff and scanned

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into their medical record.

A patient's support person does not have to be the same person as the patient's representative designated under an advance directive who is legally responsible for making medical decisions on the patient's behalf. The support person could be a family member, friend, or other individual who supports the patient during the course of the hospital encounter. A patient's designation, orally or in writing, as the patient's support person must be accepted by the Hospital staff. The support person may also exercise a patient's visitation rights on behalf of the patient with respect to other visitors, when the patient is unable to do so.

When a patient is incapacitated or otherwise unable to communicate his or her wishes, there is no advance directive designating a representative on file, and an individual provides an advance directive designating an individual as the patient's support person, the Hospital must accept this designation, provide the required notice of the patients visitation rights, and allow the individual to exercise the patients' visitation rights on the patient's behalf.

When a patient is incapacitated or otherwise unable to communicate his or her wishes and no one has presented an advance directive designating them as the patient's support person, but an individual asserts that he or she, as the patients spouse, domestic partner (including same sex), parent or other family member, friend, or otherwise, is the patient's support person, the Hospital is expected to accept this assertion, without demanding supporting documentation, provide the required notice of the patient's visitation rights, and allow the individual to exercise the patient's visitation rights on the patient's behalf. However, if more than one person claims to be the patient's support person, the Hospital may ask each individual for documentation supporting his/her claim to be the patient's support person. The following forms of proof may be considered: shared residence; shared ownership of a property or business; financial interdependence; marital/relationship status; existence of a legal relationship; acknowledgement of a committed relationship, such as an affidavit; written documentation of the patient's chosen individual even though it is not a legally recognized advance directive.

A refusal by the Hospital administrative representative of the individual's request to be treated as the patient's support person with respect to visitation rights must be documented in the patient's medical record, along with the specific basis for the refusal.

In the event the patient is a minor, the legal parent of the minor shall be given the opportunity to verbally designate the individuals permitted to visit the minor patient.

The designation of an individual as the patient's Support Person does NOT extend to medical decision making.

The well-being of the patient is the primary consideration in determining visitation.

Hospital Visitation Guidelines:

- Patients have the right to receive visitors 24 hours a day, seven days a week, as long as it is not critically disruptive to their overall healing. We strongly encourage visitors to leave at 9 P.M. so the patient may have a restful sleep.

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- Between the hours of 7AM and 9 PM, visitors may enter the hospital through the main entrance.
- Visitors should stop at the information desk, if this is their first visit, to locate the patient's room number.
- Minors, under the age of 18 years of age, may visit if there is no evidence of communicable disease. A responsible adult must accompany the child at all times. Minors may not be in the hospital unattended. The supervising adult must be someone other than the patient. At no time may children be left with the patient with an expectation for the patient or staff to care for them.
- The number of visitors will range from one to no more than three at one time.
- Between the hours of 9 PM and 7 AM, when the main entrance is locked, visitors may enter through the emergency room entrance. Visitors will stop at the Operator to sign in on the visitors' log.
- Visitors may be stopped if the patient or designated visitation support person denies access to identified visitors.
- Under emergency situations, such as Code Blue, Code Pink, Code Red, Code Safe, Internal or external disaster, the Hospital reserves the right to limit all visitors.
- Visitors should not visit a patient if they themselves are ill.
- Visitors should wash their hands when they arrive and when they leave as frequent hand washing is the best way to prevent the spread of germs.

ICU Visitation Guidelines:

- Patients have the right to receive visitors 24 hours a day, seven days a week, as long as it is not critically disruptive to their overall healing. We strongly encourage visitors to leave at 9 P.M. so the patient may have a restful sleep. **The exception is during change of shift from 6:30 AM to 7:30 AM and 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM.** This allows for a smooth transition of care and helps maintain patient confidentiality.
- No more than three visitors at a time are allowed. All visitors must be at least 12 years old.
- No live plants or flowers are allowed in the ICU. Although space is limited, cards, mylar balloons (not latex) and silk flowers are allowed.
- Please check with a nurse before entering a patient's room to make sure it is an appropriate time to visit.
- Visitors will be asked to step out of the ICU during emergency situations within the unit, for infection control reasons, or for other reasons the assigned nurse or physician deems appropriate.

Limitation or Extension of Visitation:

- The staff nurse can limit or extend the visitation practice. The number of visitors may be limited to less or extended beyond policy under certain circumstances. Any limits or extensions to visitation will be noted in the patient's medical record. The reason for limitation or extension must be in the best interest of the patient and other patients.
- Golden Plains Community Hospital is a smoke-free campus. Patients and visitors may not smoke in any location inside or outside of the building. Patients may not leave the grounds to smoke.

Pets:

- Pets may not visit patients or enter building except under previously arranged visits. These visits must adhere to the Texas Department of Health guidelines for pet visitation. Advance permission from the physician and nurse are required.

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HIPAA (Health Information Portability and Accountability Act)

- We are very respectful of our patients' privacy, so you may be asked to step out while treatments are being given or while treatment options are discussed with the patient and healthcare providers.

Patient's Signature

Date