



Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System **CAVHCS**

Memorandum No. 11-07-44
October 15, 2009

VISITING HOURS

- I. **PURPOSE:** To state policy, assign responsibilities and provide procedures for visitation of patients by relatives, friends and other patients.

2. **POLICY:** It is the policy of this health care system to permit relatives and friends to visit hospitalized patients and residents consistent with practices and in keeping with provisions outline in this policy.

3. **RESPONSIBILITIES:**
 - a. The Director is responsible for establishing visiting policies and hours.

 - b. The Associate Director for Patient Care Services, or designee, is responsible for assuring compliance with this policy.

 - c. CAVHCS Police is responsible for responding to incidents of disruptive behavior and illegal activities and taking the appropriate actions necessary to resolves the situation.

4. **PROCEDURES:**
 - a. **General Provisions:**
 - (1) Normal visiting hours are 10:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m daily. Individual units have the authority to alter visiting times based on patient care needs and/or special circumstances at the discretion of the physician/nurse manager or designee.

 - (2) Visitors will report to the nursing station before entering the patient's room.

 - (3) For the comfort and safety of patients, the number of visitors allowed at the bedside at any one time will be limited to two (2) persons.

 - (4) Children under the age of twelve (12) years must remain under direct adult supervision at all times and be granted permission from a member of the interdisciplinary team caring for the patient prior to visiting in any patient care areas within health care facility. Children under fifteen (15) years of age are not to visit patients in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) except on

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written order of a physician. Children under thirteen (13) years of age are not permitted to visit patients on the High Intensity Psychiatry Unit (HIPU).

(5) Patients on the Seriously Ill (SI) list, in Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) status, or if the patient's condition warrants, may have visitors at other than regular visiting hours. SI or DNR patients may have only two (2) visitors at a time in their room. Only one (1) visitor may remain in the room during the night. The Social Worker or Administrative Officer of the Day (AOD) will assist in providing recommendations for lodging in the local community.

(6) Visitors who come to the health care system at night to see seriously ill patients and desire to remain nearby for an indefinite period of time will be permitted to remain in the visitor's waiting area/dayroom on the unit. However, visitors will be required to sign the Police visitor's log located at the Administrative Officer of Day (AOD) desk and have visitor ID issued.

(7) Visiting areas for patients will be designated on each unit.

(8) Food and beverages are permitted in designated areas only.

(9) Weapons, alcoholic beverages and drugs are prohibited on federal property.

(10) Smoking is prohibited in all buildings. Smoking is only permitted in outside designated areas.

(11) Visitors who have not registered with security must leave the units and exit the campus promptly when visiting hours are over.

(12) Police Officers will assist with problems related to visitors.

b. Intensive Care Unit Hours

(1) Visitors to the intensive care units will be limited to family and significant others. Visitation time should be limited to 15 minutes on the even hours around the clock. No more than two (2) visitors at one time will be at the bedside. Longer visiting periods will be provided only by written orders of the physician. However, visitors will be required to sign the Police visitor's log located at the Administrative Officer of Day (AOD) desk and have visitor ID issued.

(2) Patients on the Seriously ill (SI) list, in Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) status, or if the patient's condition warrants, may have visitors at other than regular visiting hours. SI or DNR patients may have only two (2) visitors at one time in their room. The Social Worker or Administrative Officer of the Day (AOD) will assist in providing recommendations for lodging in the local community.

(3) Visitors who come to the health care system at night to see seriously ill patients and desire to remain nearby for an indefinite period of time will be permitted to remain in the visitor's waiting area/dayroom on the unit. Visitors will be required to sign the Police visitor's log located at the Administrative officer of Day (AOD) desk and have visitor ID issued.

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(4) Children under 15 years of age are not permitted to visit patients on the Intensive Care Unit except on the written order of a physician.

(5) Nursing personnel will be responsible for communicating established visitation guidelines to patients/significant others.

(6) Employees who enter the Intensive Care Unit to visit patients will be held to the rules and limitations applied to all visitors to this unit.

5. **REFERENCE:** MP-1, Part 1, Paragraph 1.52; CAVHCS Memorandum No. 115-06-04, dated December 12, 2006; CAVHCS Memorandum No. 116-07-06, dated January 25, 2007.

6. **RESCISSIONS:** CAVHCS Memorandum No. 11-04-44, dated February 6, 2004.

7. **RECERTIFICATION DATE:** This document is scheduled for re-certification on/before the last working day of April 2010

8. **FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY:** 118

Glen E. Struchtemeyer
Director

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