

## 3.07 Visitation Policy for Patients with an Emerging Infectious Disease (EID)

Purpose To prevent transmission of infection from patients with an EID or a possible EID to visitors and from visitors with an EID or a possible EID to patients.

Audience Healthcare workers, clergy, security.

- Policy Statement:
- I. **Policy in the absence of transmission of an EID in the community for SARS or avian influenza only**
    - A. EID patients may have no visitors except for the very limited situations below.
      1. EID patients may have visitors when they are terminally ill.
        - a. Immediate family members
        - b. Clergy
      2. Children  $\leq 12$  years of age may have visitors. For children above 12 years of age, the visitation rights will depend on the level of maturity and emotional state of the patient. The charge nurse and the attending faculty will make a joint decision on a case-by-case basis.
        - a. Parents, guardians or family members may not live in with patients.
        - b. Children may have one visitor per day.
        - c. Terminally ill children may be visited by parents and clergy.
    - B. All visitors will be screened for an EID prior to entering a nursing unit.
    - C. Family members and members of the clergy will be appropriately attired with ABP barriers prior to entering the room under the supervision of staff from the Department of Healthcare Epidemiology.
    - D. Staff from Healthcare Epidemiology will also supervise the removal of barriers and proper decontamination of visitors on their exit from the room.
  - II. **Policy when an EID is being transmitted in the community for swine influenza only**
    - A. Each patient on isolation for confirmed or possible swine

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influenza will be limited to two visitors per day (one visitor per day for patients in the newborn nursery or ISCU).

- B. All visitors will be screened for signs and symptoms of an EID prior to entering any patient care unit. Visitors who screen positive for swine influenza or possible swine influenza will not be permitted to enter a patient care unit.
- III. Visitors (family members, clergy) who have an EID or a possible EID and who are entering the hospital to see terminally ill patients will be taken to the decontamination room in the Emergency Department (ED) where they will be required to wash their hands with an antimicrobial soap and water or apply an alcohol hand rub, and don a surgical mask, goggles, gown and gloves.
- A. The person will be conducted to the room of the terminally ill patient by a member of the Department of Healthcare Epidemiology wearing PPE required by All Barrier Precautions.
  - B. The visitor will be taken by a route such that he/she would have minimal contact with other persons. (See policy 3.3 Transportation of Patients with an Emerging Infectious Disease [EID] or a Possible EID)
  - C. The visit will be carefully supervised by the staff person from the Department of Healthcare Epidemiology.
  - D. After the visit, if the patient visited does not have an EID or a possible EID, the visitor will be conducted back to the decontamination room in the ED where they will remove surgical mask, goggles, gown and gloves. The visitor will have a surgical mask placed on him/her prior to leaving and will decontaminate their hands by washing with an antimicrobial soap or apply an alcohol hand rub. After the visitor has departed, the Healthcare Epidemiology staff person will remove their gloves, goggles and gown and leave the decontamination room. They will wash their hands or apply an alcohol hand rub, remove their mask and repeat hand hygiene.
  - E. If the patient visited has an EID, the visitor will remove barriers in the same manner as healthcare workers exiting an EID patient's room. The visitor will then wash hands with an antimicrobial soap and water or apply an alcohol hand rub, don a surgical mask and clean gown and gloves and be taken back to the decontamination room.