I. Title

*Hospital and Ambulatory Services Visitation*

II. Policy

The University of Texas Medical Branch provides a caring environment while recognizing the importance of visitation to our patients, their families, and friends. These guidelines were developed for visitation while considering the following factors: a) the benefits of visitation to the patient; b) the impact of visitation on patient care; and c) the safety and security of patients, visitors, and employees. The following guidelines shall be followed to assure that patients and their visitors achieve a positive visitation experience without compromising patient care, confidentiality, and security.

Each patient has the right (subject to his or her consent, which can be withdrawn at any time) to receive the visitors whom he or she designates, including but not limited to a spouse, a domestic partner (including a same-sex domestic partner), a family member or friend. Visitation privileges shall not be restricted, limited, or otherwise denied on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability. The type and number of visitors present may however be reasonably restricted or limited by staff to the extent such restriction or limitation is clinically necessary and communicated by the health care providers to the patient (or his or her designated representative or decision maker). The patient’s condition, the type of patient care unit, safety, and privacy are some of the factors to be considered in this determination.

Inpatients are advised of hospital visitation policies through the patient handbook; ambulatory areas and the emergency services areas have this information posted.

III. Visitation Guidelines

A. All visitors should be free from recent exposure to communicable diseases and without fever or visible signs of illness. During times of infectious outbreak in the community (e.g., influenza, measles, mumps, chicken pox, etc.), the Department of Healthcare Epidemiology may recommend restrictions in visitation. Visitors to patients in isolation are subject to isolation guidelines.

B. All visitors are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate and courteous manner:
   - Adhere to visitation policy.
   - Refrain from smoking. UTMB is a non-smoking institution and smoking is prohibited everywhere on campus, as well as in UTMB affiliated facilities and vehicles. Not consume alcoholic beverages on campus.
   - Running, littering or loitering in the hallways is prohibited.
IHOP Policy 9.7.1 Hospital and Ambulatory Services Visitation

- Refrain from loud conversations or from any behavior that may be disruptive to a patient
- Children should be under the close supervision of an adult at all times and managed appropriately
- Approved visitors of the TDCJ hospital must abide by the regulations established by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.
- Dress appropriately.

C. Because visiting hours or the number of visitors may be restricted, visitors are encouraged to inquire about area specific visitation standards.

D. Visitors under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult other than the patient. In the NICU or PICU units, a screening tool will be used to assist the charge nurse in determining the appropriateness of a child’s visitation. All visitors to these units must call from the phone outside the unit to request entry.

IV. Hospital Guidelines
A. After Hours Access and Overnight Visitors
   Overnight visitation is allowed at the discretion of the unit charge nurse based on patient need and/or request. Visitors of patients may be authorized to remain in public waiting areas overnight by the unit charge nurse. Staff may awaken visitors in public waiting areas early in the morning to allow for cleaning of area and to prepare area for additional daytime visitors.

B. For visitors entering the hospital between 9:00 p.m. and 5 a.m., staff at the reception desk will issue a visitor pass. The visitor’s name and destination will be recorded.

   All visitors should check with the patient’s nurse for additional standards or restrictions particular to the patient.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit/Area</th>
<th>Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TDCJ</td>
<td>Refer to Policy 9.9.2, Security Associated with the TDCJ Hospital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISCU/ISCI/PICU</td>
<td>Parents determine the list of approved visitors. Visitors must have appropriate identification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery Room</td>
<td>Visitation is based on special circumstances at the discretion of the charge nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/Adult ICU’s</td>
<td>Permission must be granted by the receptionist or approved by the unit charge nurse over the designated phones.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. Ambulatory Guidelines
Ambulatory Services welcomes visitors. The type and number of visitors present in the exam or procedure room may be reasonably restricted or limited by staff to the extent such restriction or limitation is clinically necessary and communicated by the health care providers to the patient (or his or her designated representative or decision maker). Patient safety and privacy are additional factors to be considered in this determination.

VI. Enforcement/ Compliance
A. All healthcare staff and employees are responsible for the enforcement of this policy. Employees visiting patients are also subject to the information listed in this document.

B. Visitors who are unresponsive to requests or displaying inappropriate behavior will be referred to the appropriate nursing administrator or clinic manager and/or University Police/Security.

VII. Related UTMB Policies and Procedures
IHOP Policy 8.1.4 Workplace Violence
IHOP Policy 8.2.5 Security Management
IHOP Policy 9.3.13 Patients’ Rights and Responsibilities

VIII. Dates Approved or Amended

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Originated: 3/29/1999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reviewed with Changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/28/2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/19/2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IX. Contact Information
Patient Services
(409) 772-4772