

Visitor Access to the Hospital and Patients

University of Chicago Medicine

Our goal at the University of Chicago Medicine (UCM) is to provide a safe and healing environment for patients, family members and other “partners of care” of the patient and family.

We know how important family members and significant others are in the care and recovery of our patients. We encourage unrestricted patient-directed visits. The patient or health care proxy can decide the kind of visits that are best for the patient. The healthcare proxy is the person who has the legal right to make decisions for the patient when the patient is not able to make decisions on their own.

We are committed to making sure that all visitors enjoy full and equal visitation according to what the patient prefers. We do not restrict, limit, or deny visitation based on age, race, religion, ethnicity, culture, language, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical disability or mental disability.

Visitors may include, but are not limited to, spouses, domestic partners, different-sex and same-sex significant others, different-sex and same-sex parents, other family members, friends, and persons from a patient’s community.

Visitor Policy

The University of Chicago Medicine will provide visitor and vendor access in a professional and polite manner with the principals of patient and family centered care. We will ensure a safe and secure environment for patients, visitors and staff.

To Make Sure Our Visitor Policy Is Followed We Will:

- Allow friends and family of inpatients access to the inpatient in Bernard A. Mitchell Hospital, Comer Children’s Hospital, the Center for Care and Discovery (CCD), Emergency Departments, and Pre-Surgical and Procedure Areas.
- Provide visitor access at the main entrances in the Mitchell Lobby, Comer Lobby, CCD Lobby and the Emergency Departments.
- Give visitor passes to all visitors going to inpatient units through the entrance points.
- Require vendor badges for all vendor representatives.
- Require hospital and BSD employees, volunteers, and contractors, to wear ID badges with photo.

UCM Public Safety Staff will enforce the visitor policy at the entrances to Mitchell, Comer, CCD, and the Emergency Departments.



Visitor Responsibilities

Visitors must respect the care needs of all patients in the hospital and meet the following guidelines.

- Voices and noise must be kept at a minimal level, especially at night.
- Visitors must stay in the patient area, no waiting in hallways or other patient rooms.
- Children must be with an adult who is not the patient.
- Visiting children must be well behaved.
- If a patient is having a procedure or involved in a private matter visitors will comply with requests from the caregiver or patient to leave or wait in another area.
- Visitors will respect the property and surrounding areas by cleaning up their items and keeping them out of the way of caregivers and patient access.

Visitor Guidelines

1. Friends, family and caregivers of patients of the University of Chicago Medicine may visit 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, except at times listed in this policy.
2. Patients may have visits from visitors of their choice. Patients have the right to refuse a visitor or ask a visitor to leave at any time. Patients with a physical or mental disability may receive visits from family, friends, and other individuals, consistent with the University of Chicago Medicine non-discrimination policy.
3. University of Chicago Medicine UCM does not restrict, limit, or deny visitation privileges on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation physical disability or mental disability.
4. Each visitor will be given a visitor pass by University of Chicago Medicine Public Safety Staff at the entrance points. Visitor passes will have the date of the visit and location of the person being visited. All visitors will be check against the visitor list and visitor restriction list.
5. **Access may be restricted for the safety and health of a patient, visitor or for infection control.**
 - a. For patient safety, a member of the health care team may restrict visitor access to a patient. During off hours and on weekends and holidays, the patient's primary nurse, the charge nurse of the unit, and the House Operations Administrator (HOA) can restrict visitation. Visitors can talk with a social worker if needed. The patient and family will be told of any visitor restriction. Public safety officers at all entrances will be told of visitor restrictions to keep visitors from going into the patient care area.



- b. There may be times, such as during the flu season, when access will be restricted for infection control concerns. The infection control concerns will be posted at all entrances. The public, patients, and staff will be told of the restrictions.
 - c. Public Safety staff will keep a list of all restrictions at Mitchell, Comer, CCD, and Emergency Department entrances at the Public Safety Desks.
- 6. Visitors Under Age 18:** Children can visit when directly supervised by an adult, who is not the patient. There may be other rules in special areas of the hospital.
- a. Visiting children with disruptive behavior may be asked to leave the patient care area with the supervising adult.
 - b. Parents must sign a statement saying that all immunizations for the child are current and that the child has no signs or symptoms of infection.
 - c. Children under 12 years may visit in prep areas if they are with a responsible adult and only with the approval from the direct patient care giver or charge nurse.
 - d. Children under 12 cannot visit in post recovery areas.
 - e. If a patient arrives with a child under 12 and has no other resources for the child, the patient must contact a responsible adult to provide childcare. Childcare must be provided before the patient can have medical treatment.
- 7. CCD 10 East and Comer 6:** Visitors must complete a health screening form before they can enter a patient's room. This form is given and collected by the patient's nurse during each visit. The form is to ensure that the visitor is free from any illness that may be harmful to a patient and that it is safe for the patient to see the visitor. The nurse may deny access to the patient room if the answer to any of the questions is yes or if the health screening form is not complete.
- 8. Adult Emergency Department:** No more than two adult visitors may be at the bedside in the Emergency Department except in the case of a patient's death or if a patient is near death. Children must be at least 12 years of age to visit and be with a responsible adult, other than the patient. If a patient arrives with a child under 12 and has no other resources for the child, the patient will still get medical treatment. We will talk with the patient to try and get resources for the child.
- 9. Perioperative Procedure Areas:** No more than two adult visitors may be at the bedside except in the event of a patient's death or if a patient is near death.



Visitor Guidelines for the Women's Care Center

This area includes Labor and Delivery, T3 North Mother Baby and the General Care Nursery. Visitors must have a photo ID such as a driver's license or state ID. Visitors will be checked against the visitor list and visitor restriction list.

To meet the emotional, psychological, safety, and physical needs of each patient, the number of visitors, age of visitors and hours of visitation may be changed by the team nurse manager, charge nurse or doctor.

1. **Triage:** Patients may only have 1 visitor at a time. Visitors can take turns visiting a patient. There are no restrictions on the amount of time for visitation.
2. **Labor and Delivery:** Patients may only have 1 to 3 visitors at a time. This includes the support person. Visitors can take turns visiting a patient. There are no restrictions on the amount of time for visitation.
3. **Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU):** Patients may only have 1 visitor at a time. This is often the person who came with the patient to surgery. Visitors can take turns visiting a patient.
4. **Mother Baby Rooms:** Patients may only have 1 to 3 visitors at a time including the support person. Visitors can take turns visiting a patient.
 - a. The support person, if present at the birth, will be given a wrist band to give them visitation in the nursery. They will be able to take the baby from the nursery for transport to the mother's room.
 - b. One visitor, often the support person, may have 24 hour visitation rights if they are 18 years or older or if they are the parent of the baby.
 - c. All other visitors may only visit from 9:00am to 9:00pm.
 - d. All visitors in contact with the newborn baby will be shown proper hand cleaning before and after contact with the baby and after diaper changes.
5. **Visitors Under age 18 in the Labor and Delivery or Mother Baby Departments:**
 - a. Children of the mother and siblings of the newborn baby may visit between 9:00am and 9:00pm.
 - b. Visitors under 18 must be with an adult who is not the patient.
 - c. Children under age 16 are not allowed in the Labor and Delivery or Mother Baby Departments.
 - d. Visitors will be asked their date of birth when coming to the department.



Visitor Guidelines for Comer Children's Hospital:

This includes Comer 5, Comer 6 and the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU)

1. Visitors must have a photo ID such as a driver's license or state ID and will be checked against the visitor list and visitor restriction list.
2. The parent or legal guardian is given a yellow wrist band when coming on the unit and can decide who a second wrist band can be given to. The yellow band shows that the caregiver can be at the bedside 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.
3. The parent or legal guardian can add a visitor exception in an emergency. They can choose someone else to be at the bedside if they are not able to be there. This exception is approved by the floor manager or charge nurse and added to the visitor exception log. The visitor exception will not be given a yellow band but they must have a photo ID.
4. Siblings and visitors under age 18 may visit from 8:00am to 9:00pm but must be with an adult who is not the patient.
5. Only four visitors at a time may be at the bedside between 8:00am to 9:00pm.
6. Visitation may be limited at times when a high level of care is needed for a patient.

Sibling Visitor Guidelines for the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)

1. All visiting siblings must have a health screen by security before going to the NICU. Security in the Comer lobby will ask questions about signs and symptoms of illness within the last 48 hours.
2. Parents and siblings must follow the NICU hand washing and infection control policies.
3. The Comer NICU Sibling Visitation Program is only for siblings 6 years old and above.
4. Siblings may visit 7 days a week from 12 noon until 6:00pm.
5. No more than two siblings may be at the bedside at one time.
6. The total number of visitors at the bedside including siblings cannot be more than 3.
7. All siblings must be with a visitor wearing a yellow wrist band.
8. A copy of an up-to-date immunization record for each visiting sibling must be given to the bedside nurse at least 48 hours before any visit.
 - a. A folder for immunization records will be kept at the front desk.
 - b. All approved immunization records will have an approved sticker on them.
9. Siblings 6 to 12 years old may visit for no more than 10 minutes. Siblings 13 years and older may visit for no more than 30 minutes.
10. The amount of time a sibling may visit, and whether or not a sibling may visit, may be decided by the nurse caring for the patient.
11. Parents are responsible for the safety of siblings inside the NICU and at the patient's bedside.

