

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, December 21, 2020

New restrictions for visitors at Niagara Health Emergency Departments and Urgent Care Centres

Niagara Health is implementing new restrictions for visitors at our Emergency Departments and Urgent Care Centres, effective today (Monday, Dec. 21) at noon.

Niagara Health regularly reviews and updates its safety measures based on COVID-19 activity to ensure the hospital remains a safe environment. Emergency Departments and Urgent Care Centres are busy areas of the hospital and these additional measures are necessary to maintain proper physical distancing. These changes have been made in collaboration with our Patient Partners.

Consistent with provincial guidelines, visitors/support people will only be able to accompany patients in the ED/UCC if they are supporting patients:

- in life altering circumstances.
- experiencing a mental health crisis.
- at end of life.
- who are vulnerable. This includes those under 18 years of age, cognitive or developmentally delayed, and those with severe language impairment.

“We regret any inconvenience this may cause patients and their loved ones, but these measures are in place for everyone’s safety,” says Derek McNally, Niagara Health’s Executive Vice President of Clinical Services and Chief Nursing Executive. “We recognize the importance of patients having support on their care journey and look forward to lifting restrictions as soon as it is safe to do so. We thank the community for their understanding and co-operation.”

Patients and visitors/support people will be screened for COVID-19 per our existing guidelines. At triage, the nursing staff will assess whether the visitor/support person may accompany a patient in the ED/UCC based on the special circumstances outlined above.

All visitors to Niagara Health must wear a mask properly at all times while in the hospital. Please also note that visitors may not bring outside food or drink to the hospital for their own consumption.

For further updates on our visitor policy and other COVID related information, please [visit our website](#).

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