

Calgary Zone Hospice Visitation Guidelines: A Summary Resource for Patients and Families

Hospice care is provided when a person is approaching end of life. The hospice care team focuses on comfort and quality of life and supports the patient along with their family/loved ones during end-of-life.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, some very difficult decisions have been made around limiting visitation within hospices. We recognize that the impact of these decisions may be extremely distressing for everyone considering hospice care.

In order to prepare you for the impact COVID-19 has had on visitation, this resource offers a summary of the guidelines in place for visiting a loved one in Calgary's hospices. Your health care team will review these guidelines with you and your loved ones ahead of going to hospice. As well, the hospice team will review their specific approach to visitation upon arrival.

Page 2 of this resource outlines the specific visitation instructions you need to be aware of but below is an overview of the main guidelines:

- 1) Everyone admitted to hospice will be in quarantine for the first 14 days of their stay.
 - This means the resident will be required to stay in his or her room throughout the 14 days.
 - This minimizes the risk of spreading the infection to you, other patients, families/loved ones, and staff.
- 2) There are limitations to the number of visitors permitted.
 - Until the last 2 weeks of life, one designated person will be able to visit in order to support quality of life or essential care (an **Essential Visitor*** or an alternate if needed).
 - In the last two weeks of life, more visitors are allowed: 1 visitor at a time is allowed except in certain circumstances where 2 visitors can be supported/permitted.
 - Visitors need to remain in their loved one's room (unless visiting outside) and practice physical distancing.
- 3) All visitors need to be screened for COVID-19 prior to entry into the hospice.
 - Screening is done via a health questionnaire and possibly a temperature check. If screening shows you are at increased risk for COVID-19, you may not be able to visit.
- 4) All visitors will need to wear some degree of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) during visits.
 - A mask will always be needed. At other times, full PPE (mask, gown, gloves, face shield) will be required.
 - Any PPE you need will be provided by the care team. They will also instruct you on how to put on and take off the PPE.
 - Refusal to wear the required PPE would prevent you from being able to visit.
 - Virtual Visits are encouraged at every stage.

Visitor Guidelines

First 14 Days After Admission	After First 14 Days	End of Life Approaching (within 2 weeks)
<p>Your loved one will be in a 14 day quarantine period.</p> <p>What this means for visits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 1 Essential Visitor* permitted unless the resident is in the last two weeks of life. • During the visit the visitors must wear full PPE (mask, face shield, gown and gloves) which will be provided. • Prior to hospice entry, the Essential Visitor* will be screened for COVID-19 (via health questionnaire and potential temperature check). • Visitors need to remain in the resident's room 	<p>The quarantine period is over for your loved one after 14 days.</p> <p>What this means for visits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 1 Essential Visitor* permitted unless the resident is in the last two weeks of life. • Visitors need to remain in the resident's room unless visiting outside; • Outdoor visits with the Essential Visitor* and one other person can occur. These visits need to be prearranged with the hospice and depend on what the hospice team is able to support. • All visitors need to wear a mask, but full PPE is not required. • Prior to hospice entry, all visitors will be screened for COVID-19. 	<p>When end of life is approaching for your loved one, additional visitors are allowed.</p> <p>What this means for visits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One visitor will be permitted at a time. Hospice teams can support up to two visitors at a time if circumstances permit. • Visitors need to remain in the resident's room unless visiting outside; two at a time. • A child may visit, provided they are accompanied by an adult to supervise. • All visitors need to wear a mask (including children). • Prior to hospice entry, all visitors will be screened for COVID-19.
<p>Virtual visits are encouraged throughout hospice admission.</p>		

***Essential Visitor** – Person that is designated by the resident, guardian or other alternate decision maker to support quality of life and to attend to unmet care needs specific to the person. These unmet care needs may include psychological, cognitive, emotional, spiritual, or physical care.

The complete COVID-19 Visitor Guidance Document can be found at: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page17001.aspx>

If you have any questions or concerns about this guidance, please contact your health care team or Patient Relations at 1-855-550-2555.