

St Mary's Nursing Home	POLICY NO: 060	
	Date reviewed:	08/04/21
	Reviewed by:	BOARD
VISITING POLICY (Covid-19)		

Visits at St Mary's between residents and their visitors must **operate fully in line with the latest infection prevention and control guidance** including provisions relating to the use of designated areas for visits and the use of social distancing practices, good hand hygiene, use of PPE for visitors and residents.

As previously stated, the approach to enabling visitors has to be based on the circumstances of the individual home (including both residents and staff), the individual needs of the residents within that setting, and the external COVID-19 environment around that care setting. Personalised risk assessment is key, and it is the home's responsibility as the care provider to make that assessment.

Hut Visits & Individual Face to Face Visits from 12th April

From 12th April 2021 the government is allowing;

- Care home residents to be allowed a second regular visitor indoors to reunite families and friends;
- Babies and toddlers will also be able to accompany visitors, allowing grandparents to meet grandchildren;
- Visitors can hold hands, wearing full PPE at all times.

Designated indoor visitors must:

- Have an LFT at the home prior to indoor visiting taking place. You will need to arrive ½ hour before your visit at the front entrance so that the test can be carried out in our LFT testing area;
- You will need to sign a disclaimer prior to the LFT test;
- You are encouraged to wait outside the building for your result, although if this is not possible we are able to provide a waiting area;
- Wear full PPE including gloves, aprons and masks. This also applies to children aged 11 and over;
- Children visiting the home must stay with the visiting adult at all times;

- Comply with infection control procedures once in the home and only use the designated facilities as explained by the home staff on arrival.
- Visits will need to be **booked in advance for a specific day and time**. Visits will be on alternate days for each floor (top floor/middle & ground floor) to cohort to minimise the risk of the spread of any infection to residents and staff and to ensure the smooth running of visits. Visitors will be allocated a slot. A double slot may be available to those visitors travelling from outside the county. Late comers will be asked to leave at the end of the slot if the next visitors are waiting. For the same reason you should not arrive before your slot.
- All visits must be pre-arranged and booked with either reception or the activities staff. Ad-hoc visits are not permitted.

Infection control measures

We request that all visitors (inside or using the huts):

- book visits in advance for a specific day, time and length of visit
- be free of any COVID-19 symptoms for at least 10 days prior to the visit, as per Government guidance
- not be unwell on the day of their visits
- not be self-isolating as a result of advice from NHS Test and trace
- provide the necessary information required by the provider at the visits (e.g. honest response to screening requirements about COVID-19 risk factors, compliance with NHS Test and Trace arrangements)
- comply with the infection prevention and control measures, including a temperature test, mandatory hand hygiene, the use of PPE as required and social distancing requirements, remaining in the designated visiting area
- ensure that any gifts brought to give to the individual they are visiting can be sanitised, in line with relevant infection prevention and control (IPC) guidance
- avoid public transport when visiting the home if possible.

Essential Family Carers (EFC)

Many family members and friends of care home residents provide essential day-to-day support to help maintain their physical and mental wellbeing. That may include help with eating, drinking, cleaning, or keeping in touch with others.

Where it is safe to do so, (following risk assessment) we have an Essential Family Carers visiting scheme which, when in line with Government and the local Director of Public Health guidance, can enable EFC support to be take place.

The definition of an Essential Family Carer is as follows;

“A resident’s family member or friend whose care for a resident is an essential element of maintaining their mental or physical health. Without this input a resident is likely to experience significant distress or continued distress. Although we have used the word Family, we recognise that you may be a resident’s friend and not a family member. Also, we acknowledge that you may not see yourself as a ‘carer’ but as a partner or a supporter of your relative.”

If an EFC is identified, we require that EFCs must:

- have a negative PCR COVID-19 test within three days of a visit (with appropriate paperwork to confirm this) and commit to regular testing thereafter;
- confirm that they are willing to comply with the home’s infection control policy;
- allow the care home to retain contact details, in case they need to share these with the NHS Test and Trace scheme;
- agree any limits to length and frequency of visits with the care home.

Exceptional circumstances

- As a resident approaches the last months, weeks and days of their life we believe it is important to communicate well to enable good and timely decisions around care and especially important to allow visits to residents, and we will ensure that visits in these exceptional circumstances will always be supported;
- This must be by prior discussion and approval of either the Registered Manager, Deputy Manager or the senior nurse on duty;
- Specific procedures will be implemented in these instances which will be communicated prior to any visit.

Ability to suspend visiting

In the event of any suspected or actual outbreak of COVID-19, or a suspected or known case of COVID-19 within the home, visitor restrictions may need to be immediately implemented which suspend some of these enabling approaches and will include exclusion of any non–essential

visitors. This will be implemented in a transparent manner with open and clear communication to residents and relevant family members.

Responsibilities

Our Visiting Pledge sets out a range of responsibilities for all parties regarding visiting:

Partners in Care – Visiting Pledge for St Marys

This pledge recognises the essential role played by visitors and essential care givers in a person's wellbeing and the importance of partnership between relatives, friends and care providers.

Care homes and relatives and friends have an equal responsibility to do their part towards a safe visit for everyone to maintain a safe environment for all.

We, at St Mary's Nursing Home, pledge to do our part to keep visitors, (relatives, friends and essential caregivers), residents and staff safe by:

- ✓ Recognising essential caregivers as care partners
- ✓ Recognising the importance of visiting for a person's care and wellbeing
- ✓ Communicating clearly and regularly about visiting arrangements
 - ✓ Training visitors in IPC and use of PPE
 - ✓ Providing PPE and testing

I, the visitor, pledge to do my part to keep the person I support, the other residents and the staff safe by:

- ✓ Communicating clearly and regularly about visiting arrangements
- ✓ Undertaking training or read the guidance in IPC and use of PPE
- ✓ Following the rules on IPC and use of PPE in place in the home
 - ✓ Being tested as requested
- ✓ Following instructions from staff and asking for clarification/support when I need it