

Helen McArdle Wing In- Patient Visitor Guidance - Covid 19 Update February 2023

As we learn to live with COVID-19, our priority remains to protect our patients, their visitors, colleagues, and volunteers from the spread of infection.

The Hospice Senior Management Team meet frequently to ensure that all necessary precautions are taken. We review Public Health England Guidelines, along with our local NHS Trust policies, and we encourage you to keep up to date by visiting - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

You can find the Government's latest guidance on protecting people previously considered extremely clinically vulnerable from COVID-19 at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk>

If you have any specific questions about your personal circumstances, please contact **Willow Burn Hospice Clinical Team on 01207 523293** before visiting.

There are currently no restrictions on visiting patients on the Inpatient Unit, however where possible planned visits after 10:30am would be appreciated to allow our patients time to wake & be prepared for visits.

Testing- please note this guidance is subject to change with immediate effect

All **patients** will have a test before or on admission to the hospice, which will enable us to manage anyone with a positive result & for those who require immediate care will not prevent an admission. All **visitors** (including those who may be providing personal care to a hospice patient) are no longer required to test. However, individuals who are symptomatic and/or feeling unwell should not visit, even if they provide a negative COVID-19 result from a test obtained privately, are fully vaccinated and have received their booster vaccination. Transmissible viruses such as flu, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and norovirus can be just as dangerous to hospice patients as COVID-19. If visitors have any symptoms that suggest they may have other transmissible viruses and infections, such as a cough, high temperature, diarrhoea or vomiting, they should avoid visiting, if possible, until at least 5 days after they feel better.

In view of the vulnerability of our patients, to assist in prevention of cross infection to patients, staff & other visitors we can supply you with LFT kits & invite you to undertake testing while visiting in the hospice- please just ask a member of staff who will provide you with the tests.

Visits at the very end of life, that is, the last few days or hours of life should continue to be supported where possible in all circumstances. Infection prevention and control (IPC) measures, for example providing personal protective equipment (PPE) and allowing visitors to go directly to the patient's room without accessing any communal areas, will help reduce transmission.

Visiting will be considered in line with this on a case-by-case assessment. Having discussed personal circumstances to agree that we can ensure maximum protection for our patients, visitors and colleagues where additional PPE or testing is required this will be provided. We can adapt & assist when visiting requires to be restricted with telephone calls & virtual visits. Please call to arrange this.

Face Masks- Please note this guidance is subject to change with immediate effect if required

The current position regarding mask wearing in line with our local Hospital Trusts is to withdraw the mandatory wearing of masks for everyone including staff unless individual circumstances dictate. Should this be the case the clinical team will discuss the plan with you & your co-operation will be required in order to prevent cross infection in the hospice. Although a facemask is no longer required to be worn these will still be available along with hand gel as you enter the hospice & in the

patient's room should you require or choose to wear one, equally we won't be offended if a patient prefers us to wear one when delivering care and there may be individual circumstances where we may require or choose to wear one too.

If your loved one or you, are displaying symptoms or have been diagnosed with COVID-19, please contact the in-patient unit 01207 523293.

We ask that you continue to be mindful of your social activity outside of the hospice while you are a visitor to optimally support provision of a safe environment for your loved one, yourself & the staff. Please consider discussing visiting with family & friends to manage visiting to only those who are particularly important to the patient.

Parking

Adjacent to the Hospice are designated spaces with Disabled Parking identified at the front. Please consider our local neighbourhood and park responsibly at busy times.

Arrival

During working hours please arrive at reception & sign the visitors book, the receptionist will inform the nursing team of your arrival & will provide access to the ward.

Out of hours or when reception is unmanned please ring the doorbell located to the right of the door in the entrance vestibule. This will be answered by ward staff but please be patient if there is a slight delay as they may be busy providing care to patients and unable to answer immediately. Please follow instructions given by staff when they answer. **It is essential to maintain good levels of hand hygiene at all times. Please use the hand sanitiser available on arrival and prior to leaving the hospice.**

Fire

Signing the visitors book at reception on arrival & leaving accounts for all visitors in the event of a fire. Our fire alarms are tested weekly and staff will inform you of any tests. In the event of the alarm sounding please assemble at the fire evacuation point outside the café marked by a sign and large carved wooden owl. Please leave immediately through the patio door- we will manage the situation requesting assistance only if necessary. It is important that we are able to account for you at the assembly point.

Facilities

You are welcome to use the communal lounge to make a drink or heat snacks if you are visiting for a while. Arrangements for food will be made for visitors staying with a poorly patient. We ask that you take into account that when visiting the café facilities this is a public space which is uncontrolled regarding Covid management. The staff will be happy to place an order from the café menu while you are visiting if you wish to have your refreshments in the ward area. Please speak to a member of the team if you need any help with any practical arrangements or advice.

You may meet Joanne our Family support co-ordinator who will offer practical and other support you may require.

Thank you for your assistance in helping us to maintain a safe environment for our patients, all visitors and staff at Willow Burn.

If you would like a copy of this guidance in large print or an accessible format please speak to a member of staff