Information for Visitors
Wards temporarily restricted to One Named Visitor

Changes to Visiting
To make sure we are keeping you, your family and our staff safe, we have taken the difficult decision to temporarily limit visiting in some wards to ‘one named visitor’ only. This is due to an increase in the number of people we are seeing who have COVID-19.

This decision has been made by senior medical, nursing, and Infection Prevention and Control teams. It is a temporary situation which we will keep under close review.

Up to date information about which wards are temporarily restricted to one named visitor only is available on the NHSGGC website. Ward staff will also be able to tell you about the current visiting arrangements in that ward.

We understand the vital support that family and friends provide and are sorry for how this will affect you and your family. We will help you to remain in contact with them using other means as much as possible.

Who can visit?
Only one family member or friend, chosen by the patient or their guardian, carer or power of attorney can visit at present.

Visiting arrangements will be organised as flexibly as possible to ensure the safety of patients, family and staff.

There may be situations where staff may have to ask you to step outside the ward temporarily or to leave the ward during your visit. We will always explain when this is necessary. Your support and understanding when this is necessary is appreciated to ensure everyone’s safety and privacy.

Can the person chosen to visit be changed?
The person providing support can be changed if required. Examples of when this may happen include:

• if a person in hospital needs support from a different person for a variety of reasons, or
• if the person who has been providing support becomes unwell, needs a rest or is unable to visit for some other reason.

However, changing the named person multiple times in a day or every day would not be expected in normal circumstances.

How do I arrange a visit?
If you are chosen to visit, please contact the ward to arrange a visit in advance. It is important that you do not come to the ward without an appointment – we may need to ask you to leave and come back at another time.

You can find a list of telephone numbers for all wards and departments on the NHSGGC website or you can contact the hospital switchboard.
**Why is it important to contact the ward in advance to make an appointment to visit?**

It is important that we continue to limit the number of people present in the ward at any one time. To help manage this there are maximum numbers of people permitted in a room at any one time to ensure we can all follow physical distancing rules.

**Can other people visit with me?**

We understand in some cases, the family member chosen to visit may need to be accompanied by another person, for example a child visiting a parent or sibling, or a frail elderly person who cannot attend the hospital independently. Ward staff will facilitate the presence of this additional person and will explain how we will support this.

**Why might I not be able to visit?**

COVID-19 is still with us and can be transmitted easily. To reduce risks careful attention to infection prevention and control measures around family support still need to be maintained.

There are many vulnerable patients in our hospital wards and in particular, some types of illness and types of treatments where we need to proceed with extreme caution, ensure a risk assessment is undertaken appropriately, and reassess as and when circumstances change.

If a visit is not possible, we will provide you with an explanation why this is necessary. We will keep this under review where possible and will reassess as circumstances change.

**If visiting is further restricted, are there situations when a visit is possible?**

If there is a need to further restrict visiting to a particular ward or area for example due to an outbreak of COVID-19 or rapidly increasing community transmission, **essential visits will continue.**

Examples of the type of situations where “essential visiting” is possible are as follows:

- a birth partner supporting a woman during hospital visits.
- a person receiving end-of-life care – we expect this to be defined as flexibly and compassionately as possible, to support patients at the end of life spending meaningful time with their loved ones in their final days, weeks, or months.
- to support someone with a mental health issue, or dementia, or a learning disability or autism, where not being present would cause the patient to be distressed.
- to accompany a child in hospital.

Further information about essential visits is available on the [NHSGGC website](https://www.nhsggc.scot.nhs.uk/)

**What if I or another family and friends cannot visit?**

If you cannot visit in person, please use technology such as social media and phone calls to stay in touch. If the person you want to speak to does not have access to their own phone or tablet, please access our [Person Centred Virtual Visiting service](https://www.nhsggc.scot.nhs.uk/). All wards have iPads specially set up to allow 'virtual visits' (video call) allowing patients to see and talk to the people who matter to them using FaceTime, Skype or Zoom.
What do I need to do before I visit?
To help keep everyone safe, we strongly recommend that all visitors undertake voluntary lateral flow testing before visiting. It is then recommended you undertake the test twice per week for as long as you are the named visitor.

This is optional - if you do not wish to have a test or are not able to test this will not be an obstacle to a visit.

Information on how to order Lateral Flow Tests is on the Scottish Government’s website.

What will happen when I arrive at the ward?
On your arrival at the ward and every time you visit the ward, staff will check that you are well and ask you some questions about your health to make sure it is safe for you to visit. They will ask you the following questions:

- Are you feeling unwell?
- Do you have new or continuous cough?
- Have you had any sickness or diarrhoea within the last 48 hours?
- Have you noticed a change in your temperature?
- Have you noticed a change in your normal sense of taste or smell?
- Are you self-isolating because you have been in contact with anyone suspected as having, or has tested positive for COVID-19?

You will not be allowed to visit if you do not pass this safety check.

It is essential you do not visit if you have a persistent cough, loss of taste or smell, flu like symptoms or fever.

It’s also important that you do not visit if you have symptoms of other respiratory infections, including: a runny nose, congestion in your nose or lungs, a sore throat, headache, cough, repeated sneezing, breathlessness, wheezing or chest tightness, muscle aches, tiredness, or shortness of breath.

What must I do when I visit?
It is important for your safety and for the safety of patients and staff that you do the following:

- Face covering or mask must be worn at all times, unless there is a reason why you cannot.
- Avoid communal gatherings in public areas of the hospital. Take the stairs if possible to avoid waiting in lift lobbies. Your movement around other areas of the hospital must be limited as much as is reasonably possible.
- Clean your hands using the hand sanitiser before and after you leave the ward or department and when you touch anything.
- Two metres distance should be maintained from others.
- Self-isolate - You must not attend if you are unwell, if you are a household contact or have otherwise been told that you are a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 and have been advised to self-isolate or have to self-isolate for another reason.
Respiratory hygiene also remains important, please cover your nose and mouth with a disposable tissue when sneezing, coughing, wiping or blowing your nose. You should throw the disposable tissue in a bin immediately and wash your hands.

Will I need to use any personal protective equipment (PPE) during the visit?
There might be situations where staff will need to ask you to use PPE – such as a face mask, apron, gloves etc. If this is required, the staff will help you to put this on correctly and to dispose of it before you leave.

If you are a family member or carer for the person, you are visiting and helping to support aspects of their care such as supporting nutritional intake at meal times, or other personal care you will be provided with necessary PPE to undertake this activity.

Will I be able to touch my relative or friend during the visit?
You are able to touch your relative or friend (for example, hold their hand, hug or kiss them) – however, please remember that keeping a 2 metre distance wherever possible will reduce the chances of COVID-19 or other respiratory viruses spreading to you, your relative or friend, other patients, and staff.

Can I go out of the ward for a walk with my relative or friend if able?
Please check with the ward staff first. It may be possible to go a walk to the main communal areas of the hospital or hospital grounds as long as you follow social distancing measures and wear a face covering.

Will I be able to use the facilities in the hospital?
Retail outlets and hospital dining facilities are open on all our hospital sites. If using any of these facilities, you must make sure you take all the necessary safety measures required – wear your face mask, maintain a 2 metre social distance, provide your contact details for Trace and Protect, apply hand sanitiser on entry and when leaving the facility etc.

Where possible you should use the toilet facilities provided for members of the public. We prefer that you do not use patient and staff toilets, unless there is no other option available.

Where can I find further information?
Further information about the new visiting arrangements is available on the NHSGGC Website.

If you require this information in an accessible format such as large print or Braille, or in a community language, please email person.centred@ggc.scot.nhs.uk

Thank you so much for your co-operation and support.