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### **PURPOSE:**

Georgian Bay General Hospital (GBGH) recognizes the important role of persons supporting the care and recovery of patients. GBGH is committed to creating an environment supportive of patient/family-centered care and positive health outcomes. It is important that the Health Care Team facilitate and support engagement of significant persons with the patient during their Hospitalization stay or visit in order to:



- Support the patient’s healing process.
- Help to maintain the patient’s necessary support systems.
- Enable the patient to return to their home environment.
- Keep patient linked and connected to their community.

### **Definitions:**

**Child** – An individual less than 14 years of age

**Family** – A group of individuals with a continuing legal, genetic, and / or emotional relationship. The individual patient will define their “family” and how they will be involved in care, care planning and decision making.

**Family Presence** – Family members are integral in the care provided for patients and are considered part of the patient’s care team. Therefore, family presence is welcomed and encouraged. The patient, patient’s parent (s), family members/legal guardian and health care team will collaborate on a plan for family involvement in order to create a healing, supportive environment for all patients and families. This policy recognizes the importance of individualized family presence and takes into consideration their safety and well-being.

**Guest** – Visitor of the patient.

**Alternate Guests**- Pets and/or animal-assisted therapy.

**Patient** – A person admitted to a hospitalized bed, emergency department, ambulatory care department or the diagnostic imaging department.

### **POLICY:**

1. Families are welcome in the diagnostic imaging department according to patient preference.

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2. The number of people welcomed in the exam room at any one time will be determined in collaboration with the patient, family and care team. To ensure safety, consideration will also be given to the physical limitations of the space.
3. The length of the family member's stay in the exam room is at the discretion of the care team in collaboration with the patient. Should the Medical Diagnostic Sonographer (MDS) require concentration to capture images, the family may be asked to step out while the MDS and welcomed back in afterwards.
4. Ultrasound is an important medical diagnostic tool which requires dark, quiet spaces and minimal movement. In order to ensure an accurate report, considerations should be taken to avoid these interruptions.
5. Cameras and other recording devices are restricted.
6. MDS's are trained to operate ultrasound machines and take fetal measurements. Since they are not medical practitioners, they are not qualified to give medical diagnoses (this includes gender reveals). In this case, you will have to wait for your doctor to exam the images and report provided.
7. Family and guests who are feeling unwell, have symptoms of respiratory illness, flu-like illnesses (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea) should not visit.
8. If a hospital outbreak of infection requires some restrictions for public health and safety, the staff will collaborate with the patient and family to enable and ensure that selected family members are still welcomed.
9. For the safety of our patients, families and guests must perform hand hygiene with soap and water or alcohol based hand rub upon entering/leaving the patient's room and entering/exiting the hospital.
10. Children (i.e. 14 years and under) supervised by an adult, who is not the patient, are welcomed.
11. There may be interruptions to family presence to protect the privacy rights of other patients or to maintain safety and security.
12. Individuals who have concerns regarding the application of this policy should refer the issue to the department Manager.
13. Central North Correction Centre (CNCC) patients are not permitted the presence of family/guests unless the nursing staff have been notified by the General Duty Manager at CNCC.

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14. Alternative guests (e.g. pets and/or animal-assisted therapy) must be pre-arranged with the care team.

### **Expectations for Families and Guests:**

- 1) GBGH will respect the needs of the patient. In compliance with GBGH's Code of Conduct, family/guests are expected to treat patients and staff at GBGH with respect. Violent, threatening, and/or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and as such family and/or guests may lose the privilege of presence.
- 2) Family/guests should only enter the patient's exam room that they are there to see, as per the instructions provided by the MDS. Patients are to communicate with the MDS, if at any time, the presence of families/guests are interfering with their ability to have a successful ultrasound exam.
- 3) Non-compliance to safety, security and infection prevention control practices by family/guests may result in the loss of presence.

### **Supporting Documents**

#### **References**

September 2018 – Georgian Bay General Hospital- Family Presence Policy & Procedure  
May 2013 – Professional Practice Network of Ontario – review of Visiting Hour Policy and Procedures from 8 Ontario Hospitals.  
March 2015 – Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre - Family Presence Policy  
September 2015 – Orillia Soldiers' Memorial Hospital – Family Presence Policy

Sign on the ceiling stating that we cannot provide any information.  
Cite pet policy.