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Area Hospitals to Implement Visitor Restrictions to Limit Spread of COVID-19

*Measures taken to limit contact and contain community
spread*

(DAYTON, OH) – The Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association (GDAHA) announced today that area short-term acute care hospitals will implement visitor restrictions to limit the spread of COVID-19 beginning March 16, 2020. The robust visitor restrictions will help minimize contact for patients who need a safe and controlled environment to recover. Restrictions will provide an additional safeguard to protect the Dayton region’s healthcare workforce – the doctors, nurses, and other hospital personnel – who are essential in the response to COVID-19.

Visitor restrictions for COVID-19 have been developed with the support of GDAHA’s COVID-19 Taskforce and input from our region’s infection control experts.

The COVID-19 visitor restriction policy for area acute care hospitals is:

- No visitation by anyone who is ill with seasonal flu or COVID-19 symptoms including: shortness of breath, coughing, fever, chills, headache, vomiting, sore throat, muscle aches or diarrhea.
- No visitation by anyone under the age of 14.
- Patients will be allowed **one** visitor per day.* Visitation will only be allowed by spouses, significant others, parents or legal guardians.
 - Emergency Department patients may have one (1) support person.
 - OB patients may have one partner and one (1) birth support person.
 - Surgical or procedural patients may have one (1) visitor.
 - Patients who require assistance due to mobility, interpretation or healthcare decision making may have one (1) additional assistance person.

**Patients of Dayton Children’s Hospital will be permitted two legal guardians per day due to the needs of their patient population.*
- When visiting a patient, visitors will be asked to primarily remain in the room with the patient.

“We acknowledge the hardship that these measures may create for our patients, visitors, and family. We ask the public to cooperate with hospital staff during this difficult time. Hospitals across the country are on the frontlines of this crisis. We must be prepared to care for patients and are responsible for providing a safe and controlled environment that minimizes the risk of contracting

COVID-19.” said Sarah Hackenbracht, President & CEO of GDAHA.

Community spread of COVID-19 is a significant concern as the number of cases in Ohio continues to increase.

“Implementing stronger visitor restrictions and limiting the number of visitors allowed into hospital facilities is a necessary measure.” Hackenbracht continued. “COVID-19 is in Ohio and likely in our region. Hospitals must ensure they can keep unnecessary contamination away from patients whose immune systems are compromised. It is also important to help keep our doctors, nurses and other hospital personnel healthy so that they can take care of the patients throughout the duration of this pandemic,” she added.

There are also exceptions for special circumstances.

“The visitor restrictions are being implemented with the utmost sensitivity and respect to patients and their families,” Hackenbracht explained. “Each hospital will work with patients on a case-by-case basis to ensure that patients receive the support needed, especially in situations where end of life may be a concern.”

The Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association (GDAHA) is a member-service organization representing 29 hospitals and health systems in the Dayton region. GDAHA collaborates with its members to improve the delivery of healthcare services in Auglaize, Butler, Darke, Champaign, Clark, Greene, Miami, Montgomery, Preble, Shelby, and Warren Counties in West Central Ohio.

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