

Visitation

Updated 6/2013

Policy

It is the policy of SAGE Hospitals to support and facilitate in-person visitation that promotes a safe, secure, and supportive healing environment for patients during their hospital stay and ensure all visitors enjoy full and equal visitation privileges consistent with patient preferences and subject to the hospital's reasonable clinical and safety restrictions.

In accordance with R.S. 40:2005 ("No Patient Left Alone Law"), any person eighteen years or older may designate those individuals who will not be denied access to visit in-person during any stay in any hospital, nursing home, or other healthcare facility within the state of Louisiana, including during a public health emergency. Patients will have the right to consensual nonsexual physical contact, such as hand holding or hugging, between a patient and his/her visitor.

Patient Visitation Rights

- Each patient (or support person, where appropriate) will be informed of his or her visitation rights, including any clinical restriction or limitation on such rights, when he or she is informed of his or her other rights at the time of admission to the facility.

A patient's "support person" does not necessarily have to be the same person as the "patient's representative" who is legally responsible for making medical decisions on the patient's behalf.

- A **support person** must be a family member, friend, or other individual who supports the patient during the course of the hospital stay. The support person may also exercise a patient's visitation rights on behalf of the patient with respect to other visitors when the patient is unable to do so. Hospitals must accept a patient's designation, orally or in writing, of an individual as the patient's support person.
 - A **patient's representative** who is legally responsible for making medical decisions on the patient's behalf.
 - In the event that a patient has both a representative and a support person who are not the same individual, and they disagree on who should be allowed to visit the patient, the hospital must defer to the decisions of the patient's representative. As the individual responsible for making decisions on the patient's behalf, the patient's representative has the authority to exercise a patient's right to designate and deny visitors just as the patient would if he or she were capable of doing so.
- Patients may receive visitors of their choosing, including, but not limited to, spouses, domestic partners (including same-sex domestic partners), other family members, or friends subject to the patient's consent.
 - Patients may refuse visitors or may withdraw consent for one or more visitors at any time. SAGE will use reasonable measures to help patients enforce or implement their visitation preferences.
 - SAGE will ensure that all visitors enjoy full and equal visitation privileges consistent with patient preferences.
 - SAGE Hospitals will not restrict, limit, or otherwise deny visitation privileges based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability.
 - Patients may designate personal representatives to exercise their visitation rights on their behalf. Patients may designate personal representatives in any manner, including orally, in writing, or through non-verbal communications (such as pointing).
 - In accordance with R.S. 40:2005.1, the hospital will allow members of the clergy to visit patients during a public health emergency whenever a patient or the legal or designated representative of the patient requests the visit. Special consideration shall be given to patients receiving end-of-life care.