

Family Presence & Visitation – Systemwide

This document may be distributed to patients and families

MUSC Health supports a patient-and family-centered approach to care to improve safety, reduce errors, and improve outcomes. Family members are not considered visitors to a loved one who is hospitalized. They are key participants in support, decision-making, and care. We do not have visiting hour restrictions and two people are always welcome at the bedside 24 hours a day, according to patient preferences.

This policy applies to

- all MUSC Medical Centers systemwide, including the Regional Health Network (RHNs) and Orangeburg Medical Center
- all care settings including inpatient, emergency department, ambulatory surgery, ambulatory and outpatient clinics
- both adult and pediatric care settings

MUSC Health does not have “visiting hours”. Patients are encouraged to have 2 people with them 24/7.

Key Messages

- Patients choose their “family”. This can include support people who are not relatives or spouses
- This includes family presence during nursing shift report and physician rounds, unless the patient requested the family step out during those discussions
- Additional family members / support people can participate in discussions virtually or by phone (physician rounds, family conferences, clinic visits etc.) according to patient preferences
- There is not a separate policy for traumas and codes
- The two people can swap with others if additional people would like to be with the patient
- Behavioral health patients may have additional restrictions or designated times for psychiatry units
- A visitor or family member can be denied visitation because of legal, safety, or security reasons or because the patient/family/guardian denied them
- Minors under age 16 can be with patients, including in ICUs and including newborns, when accompanied by an adult

There may be unique and extenuating circumstances that require compassionate exceptions to these guidelines. The health care team, in collaboration with the patient or patient’s family, will consider each patient and family’s unique circumstances when applying these guidelines.

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