



Hackensack  
*Meridian Health*

## Patient Visitation Rights

### Purpose:

Hackensack Meridian Health Hospitals respect the rights of patients to choose who may visit them when they are inpatients of the hospital.

### Scope:

All clinical departments and patient care areas of all Hackensack Meridian Health Hospitals.

### Policy:

- Hackensack Meridian Health Hospital's shall respect the patient's visitation rights.
- Visitation rights include the right, subject to patient consent, to receive the visitors whom he/she designates, including, but not limited to, a spouse, a domestic partner (including a same-sex domestic partner), another family member or a friend, and the right to withdraw or deny such consent at any time.
- Visitation shall only be restricted when it has been determined to be clinically necessary, or:
  - To protect the patient or others from injury
  - To prevent deterioration of the patient's condition
  - To prevent infringement on the rights of others
  - To prevent damage to the environment
  - To support the wishes and requests of the patient
- Patients shall be informed of their visitation rights, including any clinical restriction or limitation on such rights, upon admission.
- Visitors shall not be restricted, limited or otherwise denied on the basis of: gender, race, age, religion, ethnicity, disability, citizenship, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, any other category protected by state or federal law.
- Visitors shall enjoy full and equal visitation privileges consistent with patient preferences.

- Visitors should refrain from visiting if they are ill or not feeling well, or may have recently been exposed to communicable illness (i.e., flu, chicken pox, etc).
- In the event that the clinical team deems visitation needs to be restricted related to any of the above points, there shall be documentation in the clinical record regarding discussion with the patient.

## REFERENCES:

- Delpercio A., *Healthcare Equality Index 2010*, Washington, D.C., Human Rights Campaign Foundation and Gay and Lesbian Medical Association, 2010, <http://www.hrc.org/documents/HRC-Healthcare-Equality-Index-2010.pdf>
- Wolf D.M., Lehman L., Quinlin R., Zullo T., Hoffman L., Effect of Patient-Centered Care on Patient Satisfaction and Quality of Care. *Journal of Nursing Care Quality* 23(4):316-321, October-December 2008
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), *Changes to the Hospital and Critical Access Hospital Conditions of Participation to Ensure Visitation Rights for All Patients*, November 19, 2010, <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-29194.pdf>