

## **Visitor Information and FAQ**

Dear Visitor,

Martlets, under guidance from Public Health England (PHE) and the NHS, has restricted visiting during the Covid-19 outbreak. This is in order to protect our patients, you and our staff. Each visitor to the hospice increases the risk of transmission to our patients, who are all vulnerable, and our staff, and potentially further.

We are having to restrict physical visiting but will work tirelessly to keep you feeling connected with your loved one during this difficult time.

### **Virtual visiting:**

We can arrange daily virtual connection/s through FaceTime or Zoom. This can be arranged via the nursing team. Please call us if we have not already called you, to arrange a good time for this to happen.

### **Face to face visiting:**

Face to face visiting is currently permissible for all our patients on the hospice ward, as we acknowledge how important and therapeutic this contact is at what is already a very challenging and potentially distressing time. However, we have had to implement some key restrictions in order to protect our patients, their families and friends and our staff. Our staff will ensure you have been given the most up to date information and guidance concerning our visiting policy, along with a Frequently Asked Questions information sheet. You will need to contact the Ward Coordinator in order to discuss and pre-book your visiting slot.

### **General:**

- Currently, up to five named visitors, with only 1-2 people visiting daily, can visit for a maximum of 1-2 hrs per day (if two people visit, then they should visit at the same time).
- Generally, visiting is between 9am and 5pm when there is adequate staffing to support the visit; however, in exceptional circumstances this may be extended to out of hours.
- Children under the age of 16 years are not permitted to be a nominated visitor, unless it is deemed there are exceptional circumstances.
- Unfortunately, pets are not permitted to visit (except for assistance dogs).

### **Before visiting:**

- Visits should be pre-planned everyday with an estimated arrival time (to avoid multiple visitors arriving at the hospice around the same time).
- Please come to the ward ambulance entrance doors.
- A Nurse will greet you and assess whether you are safe to visit that day:
  - Do you have any symptoms of Covid-19?
  - Your temperature will be taken
  - You will be asked to wash your hands following PHE guidance
- Please leave bags and coats locked in your car before entering the building.
- You are required to wear the full personal protective equipment (PPE) which we will provide. This consists of a mask, gloves and an apron (and eye protection if needed). You will be required to wear this protection before entering your family member's room. A Nurse will be available to assist you in how to put this on/remove it, including guidance on wearing it for the duration of your visit.
- We would ask you not use the facilities on site and ensure you have eaten and drunk prior to your visit as we are unable to provide or allow refreshments to be consumed by you during your visit.

**Before leaving the room:**

- Visitors will be asked to buzz on the nurse call bell system before they leave the room, so that we can escort them safely from the building, aid in removing PPE, washing hands and make sure they are signed out correctly.
- Hands are to be washed again prior to leaving.
- Masks to be left in place until the visitor reaches the exit doors. Masks can be discarded in a designated bin by the exit or worn en-route home.
- Please go straight home. It is important that you do not visit anywhere else on your journey home in order to reduce the risk of transmission.
- When you return home, we advise that you remove your clothing carefully and wash it at 60°C and to shower/bathe in order to reduce the risk of transmission to your household.
- We may, at any point, need to review the visiting procedures in line with ongoing PHE guidance, local and national Covid-19 figures, staffing & PPE levels as well as prioritising visiting to those patients who are actively dying.
- It is also pertinent to note that should we identify a Covid-19 outbreak on the hospice ward, locally experience a lockdown or there is a change in tier category, then we will of course need to review our visiting policy and revert to potentially tighter infection prevention and control measures.

We thank you for your understanding and co-operation at this difficult time. We can only imagine how upsetting this must be for you. We want you to know that we will take extra care of your loved one while they are distanced from you and will do everything we can to keep you feeling connected.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us on 01273-273400.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

We know that connection to loved ones who are staying at Martlets is really important.

We've updated our visiting policy to help reduce risks to patients, visitors and staff at this time.

This guidance is to help you understand how visiting currently works through Covid-19 (Coronavirus). It talks through what to expect if you or someone you know comes to the hospice In-Patient Unit for care and explains other ways we can help you stay close to those you love.

Thank you for helping us keep you and your loved ones safe.

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### **I've just been referred to Martlets for care on the In-Patient Unit (IPU). Can people visit me?**

Yes. Every person who is brought in for care on the IPU can name up to 5 people whom they wish to be able to visit. These can be friends or family members. You can name less than 5 people, but you cannot name more than 5 at this time. This is because we need to ensure a safe limit of different people coming into the building.

Every patient is welcome to one visit every day.

This can be one person visiting alone, or 2 people visiting together and they should be from your named list; and we ask that the visit is no longer than 1-2 hours. They will need to book their visit in advance by calling the IPU on 01273 273400.

### **What will happen when I call to book a visit?**

You will be asked if you have any Covid-19 symptoms (a temperature, and/or a cough and/or loss/change in sense of taste and/or smell). You will also be asked if you are waiting for the results of a Covid-19 test, if you have been in contact with someone with Covid-19 or recently tested positive for Covid-19. If you are unsure at all of any symptoms, please talk this through with the Nurse on the phone. If all is well for you to visit, your timeslot will be agreed.

### **Can I visit my loved one at any time?**

To ensure we can appropriately support visitors we will ask you to book a visit preferably between 9am – 5pm daily. If there is difficulty visiting during this time (e.g. because you are in full time work), please let us know and we can discuss other options.

### **What will happen when I arrive?**

You will be welcomed by our Reception Team who will show you where to wash your hands. You will be asked to take your temperature and again screened for possible symptoms of Covid-19. We do reserve the right not to allow the visit to happen if your temperature is high or if we identify another possible risk. This is to ensure the safety of our patients, who are all vulnerable, and our staff. Please bear this in mind in terms of your travel arrangements both to and from the hospice.

A member of our care team will help show you how to put on your PPE (Personal Protective Equipment). This will consist of a mask, gloves and an apron. We ask that you stay in this all the time you are visiting as it is there to keep you, your loved one and our staff safe.

When you are in your PPE you will be escorted to your loved one's room. We ask that you do not leave this room or enter any other area of the hospice as part of your visit. There is a call bell that you can use for assistance or when you would like to leave the hospice.

### **Can I bring food or drink with me? Is your café open?**

Our café remains closed and we cannot allow visitors to eat or drink on the premises. This is because eating and drinking poses a risk to the safe use of PPE. We ask that you plan your visit with this in mind.

**Can I bring items in for my loved one? Also, it's my loved one's birthday. Can I bring a cake or gifts?**

Only items that can be wiped down with antiseptic wipes can be brought in for your loved one. Similarly, gifts that are wipeable are allowed for birthdays and celebrations. If you are asked to bring in additional clothing for your loved one, please ensure it can withstand a hot wash. Food and drink can be brought in for your loved one's consumption only. If there is a special day coming up, please speak to us about how we may be able to support you to celebrate safely.

**Are there toilet facilities?**

We do ask that where possible you do not use the toilets at the hospice as a hygiene measure.

**Why can only one person, or two people together, come in each day?**

We want everyone staying at the hospice to be able to welcome visitors. By limiting the numbers any one patient has per day, this allows us to ensure all patients have the same access to visitors while also keeping everyone safe.

**Someone close to me is at the hospice but I am not on their named list. Can I visit them?**

We know that people may have more than 5 people whom they would like to visit. Unfortunately, at this time, we are only accepting visitors from a patient's named list. However, we are able to facilitate Zoom and FaceTime calls as well as telephone calls and 'patient.post' emails. You can find out more by contacting the Nurse in charge about this.

We are also committed to reviewing this policy regularly in line with the developing situation.

**Can children visit the hospice?**

Although children under 16 are not permitted to be named as one of the 5 named visitors, it is possible for children to visit with a parent, carer or guardian in some specific circumstances. This is assessed case by case according to their health, their ability to wear PPE and the risks at any given time on our IPU. Please mention this when calling to book a visit.

**Can I visit via the garden?**

We are not currently able to offer garden visits. Privacy for all our patients is key and with our current building layout, your visit could disturb other patients. Also, with winter here, the changeable cold or wet weather is a risk to visitors and to our staff, who have to look after any visitors on site. We did trial garden visiting earlier this year, but many visitors found the physical barrier of not being in the room upsetting.

Please do talk to our team about other ways you can maintain contact with those you love, such as 'patient.post' email, telephone and video calling.

**Can pets visit?**

At this time, we are not able to allow pets on site for visits (except assistance dogs).

**What if I want to stay overnight with my loved one at the hospice?**

In some circumstances, it may be possible to 'isolate' with a patient in their room overnight. This request needs to go to the care team for discussion and agreement.

**Should I do anything when I get home?**

We advise after leaving that you go directly home or to where you are staying and that you change your clothes, washing those you wore for your visit in a hot wash.

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE, THIS IS A RAPIDLY CHANGING SITUATION AND WE MAY NEED TO MAKE CHANGES TO THIS POLICY AT SHORT NOTICE IN LINE WITH LOCAL AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE\*\***

