

Visiting Policy

Date Approved	Ed No	Review Date	Developed By	Approved By	Person Responsible for Implementation	Applicable To	Reason For Review/Changes
26/11/2021	1	26/02/2022	Local Management Team	Patricia McCoy	Person in Charge, Heads of Department. All employees of Saint Joseph's	All staff	Complete review following updated guidance from HPSC guidance of 15/11/21
04/07/2022	2	04/07/2023	Local management Team	Sinoy Allyboccus	All employees of Saint Joseph's	All Staff	Complete review following updated guidance from HPSC guidance of 04/07/2022
20/11/2024	3	19/11/2025	Local management Team	Sinoy Allyboccus	All employees of Saint Joseph's	All Staff and visitors	Complete review following updated guidance from HPSC guidance and recent incident review and Regulatory updates.

Contents

1.0 Policy Statement..... 2

2.0 Purpose 2

3.0 Scope 2

4.0 Communication of visiting arrangements..... 2

5.0 General visiting guidelines to adhere by all visitors..... 3

6.0 Visiting in the context of an outbreak of infectious disease 7

7.0 Specific Critical and Compassionate Circumstances 8

8.0 Comments, Complaints and compliments..... 9

9.0 Training, education and monitoring 10

10.0 Executive Approval:..... 10

11.0 Appendix A 10

1.0 Policy Statement

St Joseph's Centre recognizes the importance of visiting to promote quality of life and well-being for residents. We encourage relatives and friends to visit the resident as though the resident were in their own home. St. Joseph's is committed to ensuring that all appropriate steps are taken to ensure the safety of residents, visitors and staff during visits.

2.0 Purpose

To outline the arrangements in place to support visiting for residents that promotes the health, safety and welfare of residents, staff, and visitors to St Joseph's Centre.

3.0 Scope

The policy applies to residents, staff, volunteers and all visitors to St Joseph's.

4.0 Communication of visiting arrangements

The home will engage with residents and first contact person, involve them in decision making and communicate clearly with each resident and relevant others regarding our visiting policy, including any restrictions.

Visiting arrangements are communicated to residents and their first contact person during the admission process by service manager. Visiting arrangements are communicated to visitors through signage at reception and public areas and displayed on website. All nominated representatives or the first contact person will receive text messages/emails to update them on any changes to visiting guidelines. It is the responsibility of first contact person to share

the visiting guidelines with other family members and friends who intend to visit the resident in St. Joseph's.

Families and friends are welcome to contact St. Josephs with any queries they may have in relation to visiting or linking with a resident. Each lodge have a direct mobile number including social media access or WhatsApp access for families to link with residents. Tablet available in each lodge to aid residents' communication and access to internet and social media.

Name of Lodge	Contact number
Glendalough Lodge	0873502540
Carrigeen Lodge	0876622209
Delgany Lodge	0876919894
Avoca Lodge	0873639117
Kilcronney Lodge	0870606872
Rathmichael Lodge	0872200917

NB: Where possible avoid contacting lodge mobile during peak times when clinical staff are busy with residents' clinical care needs especially during 8am-10.30am and 8pm-10pm unless an emergency.

5.0 General visiting guidelines to adhere by all visitors

- Full Access should be facilitated to the greatest degree practical for all residents.
- To protect all our residents, please enter by using the doorbell at the lodge front door or at reception.
- Staff should answer the doorbell and ask the visitor who they are and who they have come to see.
- Visitor should ring the lodge mobile number in case a delay in getting access during out of hours.
- Consider staff doing their job, could be busy and alert staff appropriately when there is a concern.

- We do ask all visitors to sign a visitor's book on entry and exit, as part of our safety management policy.
- Visitors should be extremely vigilant while passing through internal or external doors and do not allow other residents to pass through the door unsafely. Ensure the internal doors are locked behind you (keypad lock). If unsure if a resident or day care attendee alert a staff member before exiting.
- Internal door codes for the keypad should only be made known to staff and given to families on a "need to know" basis.
- If visitors are unfamiliar with the Centre, they can ask any member of staff for assistance at any time.
- Visitors are welcome to visit residents at any time preferred by the resident. It is the residents' choice whom they wish to have visit them.
- We do ask that the residents' bedtime and residents' mealtimes be respected. Visitors are not permitted into the dining area at mealtimes- 08.00-10.30hrs, 12.30-13.30hrs, and 16.30-17.30hrs.
- Should you visit during mealtimes, we may ask that you wait in the reception area to allow the resident to finish their meal at their own pace.
- Should the resident wish to have visitors, or assistance from loved ones, during mealtimes, this shall be facilitated in the privacy of the residents' own room, or another suitable area. Please discuss this with the nurse in charge.
- Residents generally do not have their visitors restricted unless there is an identified health and safety issue or refused by a resident.
- Any breaches relating to security or inappropriate conduct by visitors will result in the visit being terminated immediately and future visits may be cancelled.
- Any visitors who deemed to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be asked to leave the premises immediately.
- Any visitors who are determined to be disruptive will be asked to leave the premises immediately.

- Children or young people under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a responsible adult. The accompanying adult visitor is expected to remain with and always supervise the child for the duration of the visit. Children may not be left unattended while visiting the Centre.
- Visiting children are expected to be well behaved and are not to be left unsupervised or allowed roam around the Centre unattended. No running is permitted inside the Centre as this is unsafe.
- Visiting is permitted in public areas, lodges, in residents' bedrooms and in private room as requested.
- Visitors must be aware and respectful of the confidentiality and privacy of other residents.
- Visitors and staff should refrain from discussing private and confidential matters which is not part of the purpose of their visit.
- Visitors may be asked to produce some form of identification if required.
- Be responsible for the safety and security of individual belongings, do not leave items unattended.
- Visitors should avoid unsafe handling of furniture or equipment of St. Joseph's or other residents. This includes other resident's belongings.
- Refrain from touching treatment and care items such as catheter, drips, dressings, etc.
- Avoid bringing food or beverages for residents without prior consultation with staff nurse regarding suitability for the resident.
- Ensure staff are aware of any valuables or clothing brought into the nursing home for a resident. This will facilitate labelling and storage of items correctly.
- Ensure residents have given their consent when photographs are being taken and do not share photographs, videos in social media platforms without prior consent.
- Please do not enter unauthorized areas eg, main kitchen or treatment rooms or pharmacy.
- Follow nursing home car parking regulations, signage and adhere to the one-way traffic flows system.

- All visitors are required to partake in precautionary infection control measures, and to practice good hand hygiene on entering and leaving the Centre. Handwash basins and hand sanitizer stations provided throughout the Centre.
- St Joseph's may refuse access to a person who is unwilling or unable to comply with reasonable measures of infection control or health and safety measures.
- We would ask visitor with respiratory symptoms or infectious disease should not visit during their infectious period.

Visitation restrictions apply only on the explicit direction of the Director of Nursing and in agreement with the resident(s). Restrictions that may be implemented include:

- If the visit could pose a risk to the safety of resident concerned or to another resident.
- For reasons of resident privacy.
- Where the resident has requested the restriction of visits.
- If the resident is likely to become unduly upset or tired or if the visitor appears to be agitated or displaying behaviours that may be deemed inappropriate.
- Due to a specific health and safety risk, e.g. an outbreak of infection. (S.I. No 415 of 2016; HIQA, 2016;).

Where visiting hours are restricted, the resident's family members are contacted and informed of the restriction. They will be kept updated and informed when the restriction is removed.

Where there are restrictions in relation to visiting an individual resident, these will be adequately documented in their nursing notes and care plan including names of restricted visitors. Restrictions will be communicated to reception and staff in the lodge to ensure all staff are aware of restrictions.

In addition to communication with residents, families and friends, restrictions to visiting will be communicated in engagements with HIQA (along with expected duration of same) and with

relevant advocacy services as required. Residents with significant unresolved concerns regarding visitor access will be supported in contacting relevant advocacy services.

6.0 Visiting in the context of an outbreak of infectious disease

Visiting is organised in line with HPSC and Public Health Guidance. All changes are shared with residents and families through text and emails. This visiting policy should be read in conjunction with HPSC guidance **'Public Health & Infection Prevention & Control Guidelines on the Prevention and Management of Cases and Outbreaks of Respiratory viral Infections in Residential Care Facilities'**.

The following principles are used to support access and visiting are recommended by HPSC:

1. Must strike a balance between the need to manage the risk of introduction of respiratory viral illness or other communicable infectious diseases by people accessing the nursing home and their responsibility for ensuring the right of residents to meaningful contact is respected in line with regulatory obligations
2. Access may be very limited for a period in the early stages of dealing with an outbreak, but a total withdrawal of access is not appropriate. If limitations on access are considered necessary, this should be based on a risk assessment that is reviewed regularly in view of the prevailing public health circumstances in the population served. Risk assessments that underpin decisions regarding restricted visiting should be documented. Visits should not be restricted unless there is an identified risk
3. Should have the capacity and relevant skill sets within its staffing complement to manage access appropriately.
4. Other than a resident transferring or returning to, no one should access who has symptoms of respiratory infections or other communicable infectious disease. Very rare exceptions to

this may need to be considered on compassionate grounds. In that case, careful risk assessment and planning is required.

5. Everyone who accesses must adhere to directions on essential infection prevention and control practices including maintaining physical distance (in so far as appropriate to their purpose), mask / PPE use, respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette and hand hygiene.

6. During periods of high community transmission, visitors should follow the IPC advice for that lodge at that time. This may include a recommendation to wear a medical face mask at certain points during the visit, or for the duration of the visit. Visitors who have symptoms of respiratory infection should not be allowed to visit.

7. St. Jospeh's may be obliged to refuse access to a person who is unwilling or unable to comply with reasonable measures to protect themselves and all residents and staff or if the person has not complied with reasonable measures during previous access.

9. Where an outbreak occurs, and if indoor visiting is restricted for shorter period, alternative forms of communications and engagements with families and loved ones should be facilitated proactively and to the greatest extent possible, including video calls etc.

10. All visits during an outbreak are subject to the visitor accepting that all visiting during an outbreak is associated with a risk of infection for the visitor and that they choose to accept that risk and will comply fully with any measures they are asked to follow for their own protection or the protection of staff or residents, which may form part of the visitors screening on arrival.

7.0 Specific Critical and Compassionate Circumstances

Critical and compassionate circumstances are difficult to define and of necessity, require judgment. The term should not be interpreted as limited to circumstances when the death of a resident is imminent. During compassionate circumstances resident could spend extra time with visitors and overnight stay or visit could be facilitated during end-of-life care.

Examples of specific critical and compassionate circumstances:

- Circumstances in which end of life is imminent.
- Circumstances in which a resident is significantly distressed or disturbed and although unable to express the desire for a visit there is reason to believe that a visit from a significant person may relieve distress.
- When there is an exceptionally important life event for the resident (for example death of a spouse or birthday).
- When the visitor may not have another opportunity to visit for many months or years or never (for example because they are leaving the country or are themselves approaching end of life).
- Increased visiting is recommended by their team as a non-pharmacological therapeutic alternative to an increased dose of an existing agent or introduction of a new anxiolytic or sedative agent.
- A resident expresses a strong sense of need to see someone whether for personal reasons, to make financial or other arrangements or to advocate on their behalf.
- A person nominated by the resident expresses concern that a prolonged absence is causing upset or harm to a resident.

In a situation where a resident is ill, families are free to remain with the person, as they wish. At other times nursing staff may make specific requests for people to leave an area for a time, to facilitate the nurses in their care for the residents.

8.0 Comments, Complaints and compliments

- We welcome comments, complaints and compliments as a means of enabling us to continuously improve the quality of our care and services.
- Residents and visitors can appeal against any limitations on access that they consider to be unreasonable.

- Our complaint Officer is Tushar Gupta and can be contacted via Ph: 01 2771400 email - tushar.gupta@sjog.ie
- We ask you to show respect towards all staff, volunteers and residents during your time in St. Joseph's Centre. Inappropriate behaviour towards staff, volunteers and residents will be documented and reported through Datix incident reporting system. This will be investigated, and appropriate actions will be taken to prevent future incidents.
- Staff are to report to the management any features of the premises and access that may constitute a breach of safety measures. All reports should be addressed to the manager and should be entered in the datix system.

9.0 Training, education and monitoring

All relevant staff will be asked to read this policy and familiarise with the contents of the policy. Visiting arrangements are monitored and reviewed regularly as required. Visiting data collected through the sign in log will be maintained confidentially for a period time. All feedback and complaint are monitored to ensure satisfaction with visiting arrangements and the data will be analysed to identify opportunities of improvement.

10.0 Executive Approval:



Sinoy Allyboccus, Person in Charge, St Joseph's Centre

Date: 20/11/24

11.0 Appendix A

[IPC and PH guidance for outbreaks.pdf](#)