

Standard Operating Procedure	Reintroduction of visiting to maternity units
Version:	5.0
Prepared By:	Deputy head of Midwifery Senior Midwife for Inpatient Services
Approval Date:	02.07.2021

Standard Operating Procedure for visiting in Maternity at Cardiff and Vale UHB

1. Introduction

This SOP sets out the procedure and process for reintroducing visiting. This guidance will be reviewed in line with changes to national policy and advice from Welsh Government, RCM, RCOG and the Health and Safety Executive.

Version 5 has been updated in line with recent correspondence from the Welsh Government's Interim Chief Nursing Officer and changes to Welsh Government Visiting with a Purpose Guidance which come into effect on 5th July 2021.

Visiting may be suspended if an outbreak or increased numbers of patients with symptoms of COVID-19 occurs in the healthcare setting.

2. Definitions

- Birth partners are persons nominated by the woman to accompany her during labour and birth. They are not necessarily life partners, but may be other supportive persons such as relatives, friends or doulas.
- Visitors and other supporters of pregnant women are other people who either visit a woman during her stay in hospital or a community birth centre, or accompany her to outpatient appointments. This may include her partner, a relative, a friend or a doula.
- Essential support assistants are individuals required by women with specific additional support needs, e.g. a support worker or interpreter. Essential support assistants are not to be classed as visitors in the traditional sense. In some circumstances where a woman usually receives care and support from a family member or partner they may nominate this person as their essential support assistant.

3. Visiting policy for:-

PHASE 1

Fetal Medicine

- Women will be able to have 1 person with them for first appointments and decision making appointments.
- This support person will stay outside the maternity unit until the woman is called for her consultation in a single room. At this point, the women will telephone her support person to attend with her.
- The woman's support person will leave the hospital premises wait following the appointment while the woman attends the reception desk for further appointments if required
- The woman and her support person are to wear a face mask at all times

Ultrasound Scans

- Women will be able to have 1 person with them for their 12 week dating scan (11 weeks + 2 days to 14 weeks + 1 day) and 20 week anomaly scan (18 to 20 weeks + 6 days).
- This support person will stay outside the maternity unit until the woman is called for her ultrasound scan in a single room. At this point, the women will telephone her support person to attend with her or collect her support person from outside.
- The woman's support person will leave the hospital premises wait following the ultrasound scan while the woman attends for the remaining elements of her appointment, or the reception desk for further appointments if required
- The woman and her support person are to wear a face mask at all times

Obstetric Assessment Unit (OAU) - Inpatients, Midwifery Led Unit (MLU), Obstetric Unit (OU), T2, First Floor – Antenatal, Postnatal and Transitional Care:-

- All women that attend for a labour assessment will have the option of being accompanied by 1 birthing partner
- 1 birthing partner may be present during the duration of active labour and the immediate postnatal period
- If women are not in established labour on assessment but require or wish to be admitted for care on the antenatal ward the birthing partner will be unable to remain with them. They will be able to return once the woman is in established labour and transferred to the OU.
- Women on First Floor Maternity and OAU inpatients, whether antenatal, postnatal or transitional care will have the opportunity of daily visiting during a specified time period. Whether in a side room or a bay, visiting will be for a maximum of one 2 hour period per day by 1 named birth partner (the same birth partner who was present during labour and birth if postnatal)
- The standardised appointment times for visiting will be
 - 10.00-12.00 (odd numbered beds)
 - 14.00-16.00 (even numbered beds)

- Women in single rooms can choose which 2 hour slot as documented above they wish their visitor to attend.

Out-patient Induction (Room 16, First Floor)

- Women attending for an outpatient induction of labour (IOL) can be accompanied by their birth partner to Room 16.
- When returning to room 16 as part of the IOL process they may be accompanied.

PHASE 2

Outpatient Appointments:

Antenatal Clinic, Day Assessment Unit and Obstetric Assessment Unit – Triage.

At this point in time in view of the continued requirement for social distancing within the waiting areas in both Antenatal Clinic, Day Assessment Unit and Obstetric Assessment Unit (Triage) we are unable to lift visiting restrictions further for outpatient appointments at this time.

The use of lateral flow or point of care testing has been considered, however, as this would not remove the requirement for social distancing within the waiting areas around the maternity unit this does not enable us to further lift restrictions.

4. Visitor Process

- Visiting is only permitted for the nominated birth partner
- Visitors must maintain the recommended social distancing requirements
- Visitors to the ward will be asked to declare any COVID19 related symptoms. They will be asked to confirm that they are not currently self-isolating and that they have not been in contact with someone who is suspected of having or is confirmed as having COVID 19
- Visitors are to wear a face mask at all times during the visiting period
- Visitors are to remain with the patient during the visiting period.
- If the visitor leaves during the visiting period re-entry will not be permitted
- Visitors must use toilet facilities that are provided for members of the public only
- Visitors are to refrain from sitting on the beds and must not visit other patients
- Visitors are to adhere to hand hygiene recommendations and sanitise their hands on entering and exiting the ward
- Visitors should be encouraged to sanitise their hands on exit from the clinical area and dispose of their face mask at the main doors
- Visitors must not bring in flowers, helium balloons or similar items
- The information for visiting form (appendix 1) will need to be signed and contact details provided to assist Public Health as part of the 'test and trace or test and protect' strategy, should there be a necessity following their visit. This form is also available by QR code for completion.

5. Virtual Visiting

We continue to offer virtual visiting for any appointment within the Obstetric Department, with the exception of ultrasound scans where telephone or video equipment is not permitted.

6. Exceptions

These will be considered by prior arrangement with Senior Management

7. Shielding

If you were formerly shielding or at increased risk from the virus or in the vulnerable category outlined by Welsh Government, it is advised that you should avoid hospital visits wherever possible.

Information for visiting

It is important that you read, understand and sign this document if you choose to visit the ward

If you have any symptoms such as a cold, cough, flu, breathlessness, vomiting and diarrhoea, then please do NOT visit.

Please speak to the Midwife in charge or member of staff at the entrance to ward on arrival.

Infection control

- Visiting will only be permitted for two hours maximum between the hours of 10.00-12.00 and 14.00-16.00. Your allocated visiting time will be explained to you.
- Visiting will only be permitted for one named Birth Partner (the same birth partner who was present during labour and birth)

On arrival, you will:

- Need to confirm that you are not currently self-isolating, do not have Covid-19 symptoms and /or that you have not been in contact with someone in the past 14 days who is suspected of having or is confirmed as having COVID-19
- Need to wear a face mask at all times during the visiting period and maintain social distancing
- Need to remain with the patient during the visiting period (no repeated entering and exiting the ward)
- Please **do not sit** on your partner's bed or visit other patients
- Please adhere to hand hygiene recommendations and wash your hands on entering the ward area; **before** and **after** you help care for your partner and baby and rub with alcohol based gel when you leave the ward

Safety

- You will need to sign this form and provide your contact details so that we know you are present and can account for you in case of fire and the need to evacuate. These details may be used by Welsh Government as part of Test, Trace, Protect strategy should there be a necessity following your visit
- If the fire alarm sounds please follow instructions given by the ward staff. Do **not** attempt to leave the ward.
- Do **not** take your baby out of the ward at any time. We need to ensure that babies stay with their mother at all times.
- Cardiff and Vale UHB operates a zero tolerance policy on violent, disruptive or aggressive behaviour. It is a criminal offence to cause a nuisance or disturbance on NHS premises.

I have read, understood and agree to adhere with the above conditions.

Name (signed and printed)

Date:

Contact Details:

Bed Number: