

**Freedom of Information Request**

**Ref: 23-533**

9 August 2023

By Email

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The Trust's response is as follows:

- We can confirm that we do hold the information you are requesting

**1. Did your Trust alter or update its visitor policy in response to Covid-19, yes or no?**

Yes

**a. If yes, what changes were introduced?**

On 23 March 2020 the Trust responded to the Covid-19 pandemic, in line with the Government's guidance, and suspended visiting to all hospitals across the Trust.

Exceptions were agreed on compassionate grounds, including vulnerable patients and dementia or learning disabilities, patients with a key carer and patients receiving end-of-life care.

Exceptions:

Maternity services – One birthing partner

Children – one immediate family member on wards

**b. If yes, are any of those policies still in place?**

No, throughout the pandemic our visiting guidance was updated based on Government guidance and local need, to support visiting.

**i. If yes, which of those policies are still in place?**

Not applicable.

**2. Does the Trust currently have any visitation policies that:**

**a. Would prevent a patient from receiving a visitor?**

We allow visitation of patients, except in circumstances where it is not appropriate for patients to receive visitors due to their health condition or undergoing surgery.

We are guided by our visiting principles to ensure clinical safety and wellbeing of patients.

Our Visiting principles are:

- Maximum of two visitors per patient at the bedside, at any one time.
- Visiting time is between 11:00 -19:00.
- No more than 2 patients at a bedside a time.
- Consideration should be given to mealtime visiting under the mealtimes matter principles.
- No children under the age of 12.
- Visitors may be asked to leave the bedside, if specific treatment is required

We ask all visitors to ensure they are feeling well enough to visit and inform visitors that the trust may need to make local (ward level) short term changes to visiting.

**i. If yes, in what wards or circumstances does this apply?**

We may prevent a visitor seeing a patient if there were already:

Two visitors at the bedside (Adult wards)

Two adults and one child visiting (Bristol Royal Hospital for Children)\*

Two nominated birthing partners in labour - one partner to all appointments (Maternity)

three adults visiting (Maternity wards)

–Four other named visitors (Neonatal ICU)

**ii. If yes, were these restrictions in place before March 2020?**

Yes

**b. Set a restriction on the number of different people able to visit a patient during their stay**

No, except in the below circumstances:

**i. If yes, in what wards or circumstances would the number of different people visiting a patient be restricted?**

At the time of your visit, there were already:

Two visitors at the bedside (Adult wards)

Two adults and one child visiting (Bristol Royal Hospital for Children)\*

Two nominated birthing partners in labour - one partner to all appointments (Maternity)

Three adults already visiting (one of whom is the agreed partner) (Maternity wards)

Four other named visitors (Neonatal ICU)

**ii. If yes, how many different people do these restrictions permit as visitors?**

Please see above for individual areas.

**iii. If yes, were these restrictions in place before March 2020?**

Yes

Please note:

\*The total number of visitors allowed for paediatric patients can be flexible in some circumstances, arranged according to patient and family need and location.

This concludes our response. We trust that you find this helpful, but please do not hesitate to contact us directly if we can be of any further assistance.

If, after that, you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to:

Data Protection Officer  
University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust  
Trust Headquarters  
Marlborough Street  
Bristol  
BS1 3NU

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

#### Publication

Please note that this letter and the information included/attached will be published on our website as part of the Trust's Freedom of Information Publication Log. This is because information disclosed in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act is disclosed to the public, not just to the individual making the request. We will remove any personal information (such as your name, email and so on) from any information we make public to protect your personal information.

To view the Freedom of Information Act in full please click [here](#).

Yours sincerely

**Freedom of Information Team**  
**University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust**