

Notes

Families are more than visitors. They're partners in care.



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TIPS FOR BEING A PARTNER IN CARE

“FAMILY” IS...

- Who you choose to have with you for support and comfort during your healthcare experiences.
- Families are partners in care, not visitors.

“FAMILY PRESENCE”

- enables the person you identify as family to be present and included in all of your health experiences.
- improves the quality and the experience of care, and helps make your healthcare safer.
- is a philosophy, which may be reflected in both policies and in practices that welcome and recognize families as partners in care.

Family should be able to be present 24/7.
Visiting hours are for visitors, not family.
This does not mean that all family are present at all times.

WHAT CAN PATIENTS AND FAMILIES DO?



ASK

- Get to know the names of the healthcare providers and what they do.
- Ask questions, clarify your assumptions, be respectful as you ask for information "Could you help me understand why..." or "How can I help?"



KEEP TRACK

- Use a notebook or the back of this document or whiteboard in the patient's room to write down questions, answers, names, history, tests, observations, etc.
- Choose one person as the main contact to share progress with family and friends, and tell the doctors and healthcare staff as well as other family members.



CONTRIBUTE

- Families have important information that healthcare providers might need to know to provide good care. Find out when the care planning meetings and patient rounds will occur and ask to be present.
- Contribute your knowledge to planning care and the discharge plan.



ENSURE SAFETY

- Write down information about all medicines. This might include medication name, purpose, how often it is taken and how much.
- Ask for instructions in writing, in words you understand.
- Clean your hands.
- Speak up and tell the healthcare team if you are concerned about a change in your loved one's well-being.



PROVIDE COMFORT

- Discuss if, and how, family members might help with routine care.
- Discuss opportunities for a family member to be present during critical illness, uncomfortable procedures, or just before and right after surgery.

These resources have been developed with patients and families to help you begin the conversation about family presence with other patient and family advisors, healthcare providers, organizations and/or community groups. You are welcome to adapt these documents to meet your local teams' needs. Created Summer 2016.