

## Visiting Arrangements – Specialist Palliative Care Unit Blackrock



We keep our visiting arrangements under constant review. This is in light of the varying levels of Covid transmission in the community and in hospitals and in accordance with advice from the HSE.

We do our absolute best to keep all our patients, their visitors and our staff safe while also acknowledging how important and valued visits are. This can sometimes be a very difficult balance to strike.

We know how important visiting is for patients and visitors and are working hard to keep all our patients, visitors and staff safe. We will keep reviewing the situation and ask that you work with us so we can continue to providing visiting.

### **The following visiting arrangements now apply in Blackrock Hospice:**

- Regular visiting is accommodated by appointment only alternate days.
- The clinical team advise the Hospice's Visiting Coordinator if a visiting slot can be offered to a patient and if it is for one or two people.
- The Visiting Coordinator will call you to find a suitable time and explain the process.
- There are two visiting slots between 14:00hrs & 16:00hrs and 15:30 & 17:30hrs which may be offered. Every effort will be made to facilitate your preference.
- Visits are for between one and two hours.

**For the very sickest patients, where time and visits are particularly precious, we will work with you to agree exceptions to the above.**

### **Visitors are kindly reminded to:**

- Clean their hands when arriving and leaving
- Sign in and out at reception
- Wear a mask in the building
- Practice social distancing
- Stay in the patient's room during your visit, using the en-suite if needed.
- Follow guidance on signs and from staff
- The restaurant is closed to visitors.
- Children are welcome but if a child under 6 visits, the patient should wear a mask

**Stay safe – please talk to us about extra precautions if you have:**

- a fever, cough or new shortness of breath
- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste
- been in contact with someone being treated for Covid 19
- arrived in Ireland in the last 14 days

Visits to those being treated for, or awaiting for a test result for, Covid-19 are considered on a case-by-case basis. Please read the page below for details.

**Virtual visits**

We encourage 'virtual visits' by phone or video calling and we will support this in any way we can. For more details on how to 'stay connected' with your loved ones, please click [here](#). We are working hard to support you and your loved ones.

Although they cannot meet you in person at the moment you can speak with our Medical Social Worker, chaplaincy and bereavement counsellors by telephone. Talk to the ward staff for details.

Thank you for your patience and understanding.

**You may be visiting a loved one who is being treated for or waiting for a test result for Covid-19. We understand how important this is. We will do our best to help and want you to be as safe as possible.**

## **Your safety**

It is important you understand that visiting someone who is Covid-19 positive brings risks to your own health, especially if you are in an “at risk” group or were advised to “cocoon”. We suggest you discuss these risks with a family member or trusted friend. You could also pass an infection to someone else who may be at high risk.

Remember, if you choose to visit you are now considered a “close contact” and will need to self-isolate for 14 days. More information about this is available at [hpsc.ie](https://hpsc.ie)

## **What happens during my visit?**

- At the time of your arranged visit, you will be met and brought to your loved one’s room.
- To protect against infection, we will assist with handwashing and putting on equipment. This may include gloves, goggles, a mask and plastic apron. These feel strange but are important for your own safety and that of others. You must keep them on while with your loved one.
- Please be aware that close contact such as hugging significantly increases the risk of spread of infection. We recommend that you avoid or minimise this. It is best if you keep a distance of at least two metres from your loved one.
- Visits are no more than two hours. When your visit finishes please use the call bell in the room to notify a staff member. Please do not leave the room until the staff member arrives. This is very important.
- Staff will assist you to safely take-off the protective equipment and escort you directly to the exit.

We regret that these measures are necessary but hope you understand why they are important.

‘Virtual visits’ by phone or video messaging are encouraged and we will support this as best we can. For details on staying connected please click [here](#).

Finally, please be assured that at all times we will be doing everything we can to ensure that your loved one receives the very best of care.