

Visiting Arrangements – Specialist Palliative Care Unit Blackrock Hospice



We keep our visiting arrangements under constant review. This is in light of the varying levels of Covid-19 transmission in the community and hospitals and in accordance with HSE advice.

We do our absolute best to keep all our patients, their visitors and our staff safe. We also understand how important and valued visiting is for patients and visitors. This can be a difficult balance to strike and we appreciate the hardship restrictions may cause.

We hope you understand we are taking these measured steps to protect those in our care. We ask that you please work with us so we can continue to providing visiting.

Current visiting arrangements:

The clinical team advise the Hospice's Visiting Coordinator if a visiting slot can be offered to a patient.

The Visiting Coordinator will call you on the morning of your visit to find a suitable time and explain the process. They will also complete Covid 19 risk assessment with you by telephone. In the case of weekend visits, this will all be completed on a Friday. If there are any changes, please contact the ward prior to your visit.

- Visiting for patients in rooms 1, 5, 9 is Monday and Thursday only
- Visiting for patients in rooms 2, 6, 10 is Tuesday and Friday only
- Visiting for patients in rooms 3, 7, 11 is Wednesday and Saturday only
- Visiting for patients in rooms 4, 8, 12 is Thursday and Sunday only

Only two people may visit per day. These should be close family or friends and the same people as much as possible. The lower the number of different visitors, the lower the risk to patients and staff

There are two visiting slots, between 14:00hrs & 16:00hrs and 15:30 & 17:30hrs. Every effort will be made to facilitate your preference.

On the days when a patient is not receiving a visitor, the nursing team will telephone their first point of contact in the afternoon or evening to keep the family informed of any updates.

For the very sickest patients, where time and visits are particularly precious, we will work with you to agree exceptions to the above. Please talk to the person in charge on the ward.

Visitors are kindly reminded to:

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

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

- a fever, cough or new shortness of breath
- 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 are welcome to speak with our Medical Social Worker, pastoral care team or bereavement counsellors by telephone. Please ask the ward staff for contact 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://www.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 two hours only. 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.