



SUBJECT:	Essential Care Partner Policy	POLICY #:	I-B-120.00
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MANUAL:	Administration	REFERENCES:	
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Policy Objective

Residents have a right to engage external caregivers and healthcare practitioners in their direct physical, social, cognitive and emotional care. This policy sets out our guiding principles and practices to ensure Essential Care Partner have the timely access and information they need to support residents.

Guiding Principles

This Essential Care Partner policy is guided by the following principles:

- **Equality:** All residents may receive visitors, consistent with their preferences and within reasonable restrictions that protect their safety and mental health, as well as those of other residents, visitors and staff.
- **Access:** Visitors enjoy unsupervised access including during emergency situations such as outbreaks.
- **Compliance:** Minister's Directives and Public Health guidelines will prevail with respect to visitor access and protocols.

Definition of an Essential Care Partner

An Essential Care Partner provides physical, social, and emotional support, deemed essential by the resident. This can include hands-on physical support (i.e., grooming, dressing, or bathing), support with decision making, care coordination, and/or continuity of care. Essential Care Partners can include family members, close friends, or other persons of importance and are specifically designated by the resident or the resident's substitute decision maker.

An Essential Care Partner includes:

- Family members, friend or other significant person in the resident's life
- hired caregivers, paid companions
- persons visiting a very ill resident for compassionate reasons including, but not limited to, hospice and end of life care.

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Other : Government inspectors are considered “essential” under the Fixing Long-Term Care Act (2021) and have the right to enter Osgoode Care Centre at any time.

Designation of Essential Caregivers

An Essential Care Partner:

- Must be at least 16 years of age. If under the age of 16, approval is required from a parent or guardian.
- Is designated by either the resident and/or their substitute decision maker.

Hours of Access

Essential Care Partners are welcome every day, seven days a week, from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Visits outside of these hours are permitted when a resident is in a palliative or very ill condition. There are no time limits for visits. Visits are not scheduled in advance.

Essential Care Partners Protocols

- Essential Care Partners must enter their name, date of visit, and name of the resident they are visiting in the Visitor Log Book upon entry.
- All public health measures must be followed, which may include health screening, personal protective equipment (PPE), and health and safety practices. These may change from time-to-time and up-to-date protocols will be posted at the front door as well as on Osgoode Care Centre’s website.
- Visits may occur in any area of the home excluding the dining room during meal times.
- Essential Care Partners may enjoy a meal with a resident, subject to a fee.
- Essential Care Partners will continue to have access to the home during an outbreak of a communicable disease, an outbreak of a disease of public health significance, an epidemic or a pandemic, subject to applicable laws.
- Any limitations regarding the number of essential caregivers to the home are subject to any applicable directives, orders, advice or recommendations issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health or a local public health unit.
- Essential Care Partners may access the home during an emergency. An “emergency” is defined as an urgent or pressing situation or condition presenting imminent threat to the health or well-being of residents and others attending the home that requires immediate action to ensure the safety of persons in the home.

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Osgoode Care Responsibilities

- Osgoode Care Centre will provide Essential Care Partners with the training, communication and tools to support the delivery of their direct care.
- Osgoode Care Centre reserves the right to ask Essential Care Partners to leave the premises if they do not respect health and safety procedures.
- Up-to-date visitor health and safety protocols are posted at the Osgoode Care Centre entrance and website.
- A Visitor Log Book is maintained with visitors' names for a minimum of the past thirty days.
- The Essential Care Partner Policy is reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with the Resident Council and Family Council, and updated as appropriate.

Related Policies

I-B-121.00 General Visitor Policy