



**Exceptional care that makes a difference**

## **Visiting or Accompanying Patients at Mercy Hospital**

Information for Patients and their Whanau/Family and Friends

## **Statement of Intent**

Mercy Hospital embraces the principles of partnership, participation and protection inherent in the Treaty of Waitangi, and welcomes the presence and involvement of a patient's whanau/family as integral to their wellbeing.

We support the right of patients to determine who whanau/family is and to decide the role they will play in their care.

Mercy Hospital asks that patients and their visitors work together with staff so that safe access to all patients is maintained and the Hospital's therapeutic environment is not compromised.

## **Visiting Hours and Visitor Numbers**

- Whanau/family are welcome outside of the regular visiting hours but must talk to a Nurse or Administrator at Ward Reception before going to see the patient.
- When a patient is in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), family members are welcome to sit with the patient at any time.
- Occasionally, in shared rooms, the number of people or length of time spent with a patient may be restricted out of consideration to other patients nearby.
- Due to limited space in the Day Surgery Unit, **we ask that no** more than two whanau/family members remain with the patient.

## **Requests by the patient for a whanau/family member/friend to stay overnight**

- When the patient will benefit from a support person due to language barriers or to assist in meeting specific cultural or health needs a whanau/family member or friend may remain with a patient overnight. This needs to be arranged prior to the patient's admission to allow an appropriate room to be assigned.
- Late requests for someone to remain with a patient overnight must be discussed with the nurse in charge, who will consider the nature of the request and the location of the patient. Out of respect for the privacy and dignity of other patients, support people cannot be accommodated in a shared patient room. Where a request can be met, the family member / friend will be offered a lazy-boy chair or sofa bed.
- A fee is charged for a support person staying overnight. Meals are an additional cost; for current charges please ask the Booking Coordinator or nurse in charge of the ward. This fee is not generally covered by ACC, insurance or other funders and is the responsibility of the patient or family member/friend.

### **Patients' choice to restrict whanau/family & friends**

- A patient has the right to choose who is involved in their care and who may visit them.
- In discussion with the patient who has requested no visiting or restricted visiting, nursing staff will manage this on the patient's behalf.

### **Responsibilities of Whanau/Family and Friends**

- Please don't touch any equipment or tubing associated with the patient's treatment or care. If you have concerns, please ring the bell for the nurse.
- Any incidents or accidents must be notified to staff who will complete an incident report.
- Whanau/family or friends requiring medical attention shall be directed to their GP, after-hours service or in an emergency, to the Dunedin Hospital Emergency department.
- Where a person's behaviour creates a direct risk or threat or is disruptive of the functioning of the ward, they will be asked to leave the premises. Security and/or NZ Police will be notified and may be asked for support, depending on the situation.
- Mercy Hospital is a smoke and vape free campus.

### **In the event of an emergency**

- On the activation of the fire alarm, visitors in the ward or DSU will be asked to remain with patients unless they have a mobility impairment. In this case they will be assisted by non-nursing staff to leave the building. (Mercy Hospital has a 'horizontal evacuation' plan and patient areas are not evacuated unless there is a fire in the immediate area).
- Following activation of the fire alarm, no one is permitted to enter the hospital until the 'All Clear' has been given.

**We thank you for supporting your whanau/family member during their stay in hospital and for working with staff to ensure the safety and privacy of all patients.**