

MEDIA RELEASE

KHSC restricts family presence in response to coronavirus

Kingston, ON – March 14, 2020 – Kingston Health Sciences Centre (KHSC) is putting limits on family presence in response to COVID-19, the new coronavirus.

Starting Saturday March 14, 2020, each hospital patient – including those in the emergency department at the Kingston General Hospital (KGH) site, in the Urgent Care Centre at the Hotel Dieu Hospital (HDH) site, and attending appointments at either site or the Cancer Centre – will be limited to one visitor at a time.

Families and visitors who are unwell are asked to avoid visiting or accompanying patients at both hospital sites.

“We recognize how important families and friends are as partners in care with patients in the hospital,” says Dr. David Pichora, KHSC president and CEO. “This is why we consulted with our patient experience advisors as it became clear that we needed to take these temporary precautions to help keep people safe, including staff and patients.” He added that “this is a dynamic issue and we will revisit this change as the situation evolves.”

“As patient experience advisors at KHSC, we understand how difficult it will be for patients and families to choose just one individual to accompany them,” says Kerry Stewart, chair of the KHSC Patient and Family Advisory Council. “However, we believe this is the right thing to do to protect patients, families, staff and our community from the potential spread of the virus that causes COVID-19.”

Exceptions to these visitor restrictions may be made on compassionate grounds on a case-by-case basis for vulnerable populations, including patients in palliative care. Patients and loved ones should speak to their care teams about this.

For up-to-date recommendations on precautions, screening, self-isolation, travel advice and public gatherings, please consult the Public Health Ontario website at www.publichealthontario.ca.

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