



Our ref: CNO correspondence COVID19 2020-22

20 April 2020

To: NHS Wales Nurse Directors  
Cc: NHS Wales Chief Executives  
Via email

Dear colleagues,

### **Update to visitor guidance to in-patient health settings in times of Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

On 25 March, I issued advice on restricting visitors to in-patient healthcare settings during the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

I am pleased to note this guidance is being followed throughout NHS Wales and I am writing today with an update to this guidance. The previous guidance provided the following exceptions to the general restrictions on visiting:

Visiting patients not infected with COVID-19 should be permitted for:

- one parent or guardian for paediatric inpatients and neonates.
- people receiving end of life care, with permission to visit secured in advance from the ward sister/charge nurse and if agreed, this should be one visitor at a time for a specified amount of time.
- women in labour should be permitted a birthing partner [from their household].

On 8 April, NHS England added an additional category of patients/service users to their [visitor guidance](#), which I feel should be included in the above list and applied to NHS Wales:

- someone with a mental health issue such as dementia, a learning disability or autism, where not being present would cause the patient/service user to be distressed.

It is important that, wherever possible and safe to do so, you support families and loved ones to say goodbye to COVID-19 positive patients receiving end of life care; such visits are important both for the patient and their loved ones.

Advice to patients and their families should indicate that permission to visit end of life COVID-19 positive patients should be sought in advance of any planned visit, from the ward sister/charge nurse. If agreed, only one visitor at a time for a specified amount of time should be permitted to visit. PPE should be provided in order to protect the visitor

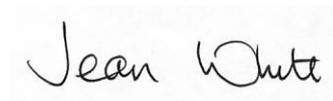


as well as guidance by staff about behaviour while visiting a COVID-19 positive patient. Please ensure pandemic guidance is followed and advice sought from the Infection Prevention & Control team. Visitors with underlying conditions should be advised of the risks to themselves. All permitted visitors should adhere to strict hand hygiene and infection control precautions on arriving and leaving the area.

Finally, I request that you revise your public facing information to take account of the above updates.

This guidance comes in to force with immediate effect. If you have any queries please contact my office.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jean White". The signature is written in a cursive style with a light blue background behind the text.

Professor Jean White CBE  
Chief Nursing Officer  
Nurse Director NHS Wales