

# Visitation change for Novant Health UVA Health System

## Scripts and talking points

**Sample scripts:** Ideally these will primarily be used by guest services, but they may also be used by clinical team members if children arrive on the unit and they are not there to see a critically ill patient.

While we want to do everything we can to implement this new practice, there are a few things to keep in mind:

- We are still here to create a remarkable patient experience. Delivering this message with compassion is important.
- At this time we are not planning to use patient safety to enforce this visitation restriction. Nobody will be escorted from the building for not leaving with their kids. Please do not threaten to call security if people refuse to leave.

**Scenario:** Someone arrives with a child in our hospital lobby. He should be stopped by guest services to see where he is going in the hospital. If the child is there for care, they should be welcomed to the facility and provided directions as usual. If they are there to visit a patient, they should be told:

*“We appreciate you want to visit your (friend, relative, etc.), but due to the significant impact the flu virus is having in our community, this hospital is restricting visitors 12 and under. I am sorry for the inconvenience, but to protect our patients I need to request that you leave with the child. Perhaps you can call the patient or come back another time when you have someone who could watch your child?”*

**Scenario:** Same as above, but the adult is there for patient care (not in the emergency department). They should be told:

*“I am so sorry but due to the flu and in order to protect your child and our patients we, along with the other hospitals in the community, are not allowing visitors 12 and under into the hospital. Do you have somebody that you can contact to take care of your son/daughter?”*

If they do not: *“We don’t want to prevent you from getting care today, so you can still proceed while you are waiting on someone to come for your child, but we appreciate your help with this policy.”* If the child is over six you can ask him or her to wear a mask.

**Scenario:** Same as above, but adult is there for patient care in the emergency department. The visitation policy should not be mentioned until a physician has determined the patient needs to be admitted. At that time, please see the script above.

**Scenario:** Visitors get upset because the patient is lonely, the kids miss the patient and vice versa because they promised the patient they would visit, etc. They should be told something like:

*“We certainly understand and we’re sorry that the flu has caused us to limit visitation. We know how important family and friends can be as part of the healing process. Please have the children call their loved one in their room, we can get that phone number for you. I’d also be happy to call the room for you so you can let the patient know of the change in plans.”*

**Scenario:** Visitors arrive and say the nurse told them they could bring the children to see their grandfather who is critically ill. Guest services will send the patients up and unit team members will need to use the scripts above to manage the situation should the patient not be critically ill.

*“I’m sorry, please go on up to the room. If he is able to wear a mask while in the hallway – we would appreciate it. Also - if there is anything we can do to support you and your family during this time, please let us know.”*

**Scenario:** Pre-registration calls prior to hospital admission:

*“And finally, I want to let you know that due to the flu, the hospital has restricted visitors 12 and under. So if you were planning to bring any children with you, we would request you try and find an adult they can stay with instead.”*