

## **The Pembroke Regional Hospital Is Gradually Lifting Visitor Restrictions While Continuing To Work With Families To Facilitate Other Forms Of Connection**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**June 19, 2020**

**PEMBROKE –** Just in time for Father’s Day weekend, and consistent with new guidance from Ontario’s Chief Medical Officer of Health, the Pembroke Regional Hospital is welcoming back visitors classified as “family caregivers or care partners”.

**Family caregivers or care partners include, but are not limited to those who provide:**

- **Assistance with meals, mobility and personal care**
- **Communication assistance for patients with hearing, visual, speech, cognitive, intellectual or memory impairments**
- **Assistance as the designated representative for patients with disabilities**
- **Emotional support**
- **Supported decision making**

**“Family caregivers or care partners can include a loved one, a friend, a religious or spiritual care provider, or other support person of the patient’s choosing,”** said Sabine Mersmann, Vice-President of Clinical and Support Services / Partnerships and Integration, adding that only one family caregiver or care partner will be permitted at a time per patient and must wear a mask and any additional personal protective equipment deemed necessary.

**In addition, all family caregivers or care partners must pass the hospital’s entrance screening criteria in order to be allowed to visit.**

**At this time, those classified as “general” visitors are still not permitted in hospitals.**

**“We recognize the impact that visitor restrictions have had on our patients and their family members while we have been doing all we can to ensure the safety of those in our care and our staff,”** Ms. Mersmann said, noting that, throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, visitors classified as “essential” were allowed to visit on compassionate grounds.

**In addition, the hospital worked to ensure that families and loved ones could remain connected with patients by helping to facilitate other forms of communication like “virtual” visits.**

**This Sunday, the hospital will once again be working to ensure that those who are not eligible to visit will still be able to share messages and gifts with fathers who may be in hospital this Father’s Day weekend.**

**To assist with this, the Pembroke Regional Hospital will accept Father’s Day gifts for inpatients on June 21<sup>st</sup> and these can be dropped off to screeners at the Tower B (Emergency Department) entrance.**

**The following items will be accepted:**

- **New or freshly laundered clothes**
- **Packaged items such as chocolates**
- **Plants and non-scented flowers**
- **Other items so long as they can be disinfected with hospital grade disinfectant**

**Gifts will be thoroughly wiped down and disinfected before being delivered to the inpatient units. Please have the patient's name clearly marked on the package and maintain appropriate physical distancing during delivery.**

**In the days and weeks ahead, PRH anticipates that additional amendments will be made to the hospital's Visitor Policy based on new guidance from Ontario Health or in order to create consistency with practices in other hospitals in our region.**

**Any changes will be communicated to the public through local media and the hospital's social media channels.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**

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