

Visitor policy and guidelines

We have a duty of care to provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment for all people who come to work at, receive treatment in, or visit a Southern Cross Healthcare facility.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to minimise the risks associated with achieving this duty of care, specifically in relation to visitors accessing Southern Cross Healthcare (SCH) facilities. Risks include (but are not limited to) security, business, health and safety, and infection prevention and control, including Covid-19.

Note: This policy will be regularly reviewed to reflect the latest relevant standards and guidelines

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Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to all workers and visitors to SCH workplaces:

- SCH employees
- Credentialed medical practitioners
- Students or trainees undertaking on-site learning
- Patient's visitors and support persons
- Contractors
- Medical representatives and suppliers
- Lessee/tenants
- Other visitors including government agencies (eg police, WorkSafe), volunteers – qualified or professional, lay persons, employee's personal visitors (friends/family/whānau of employees, breastfeeding situations, Employment Relations Act Bargaining Agent/Representative Visitor)
- Community visitors, including interpreters, advocacy and support.

External parties who are generally not permitted to access a SCH site

- Commissioned sales persons
 - People who have a restraining order in place against them
 - People electioneering
 - People currently trespassed from a SCH facility.
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Procedures

1. Sign-in process

All visitors (except patient visitors) must follow the electronic sign-in process. Patient visitors are managed via a locally agreed approach; specific guidance is provided for common visitor groups in Section 3 (below) of this document.

- All visitors complete a personal health risk assessment and confirm the absence of risk factors using the electronic visitor management system or via SCH front-line staff.

Visitors should not come to a SCH site if any of the following apply:

- They have any acute respiratory symptoms.
- They have any other confirmed or suspected transmissible disease.

Where this does apply:

- Provide the person with a standard mask.
- Ask them to leave the hospital and to contact their healthcare provider.
- If already signed in via the electronic visitor management system, ensure they sign out when they depart the facility.

Privacy Act obligations regarding registers

All staff handling **physical copies** of visitor registration information must read the privacy guidance below to ensure SCH complies with its obligations under the Privacy Act 2020.

- Staff must maintain control over the records and must not leave contact information visible to others. The register information should not be left in a public-facing position where personal information is visible to others.
 - Staff should complete as needed and keep register secure when not in use (eg in locked cupboard).
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2. Maintaining environmental controls

The following guidance is provided to ensure that SCH workplaces are enabled to safely maintain visitor controls and associated procedures.

2.1 Restrict entry points

- A 'primary entrance' is identified for visitors.
- Any other entry points such as loading docks, contractor entrances, and side doors should be secured, and authorised visitors redirected to the primary entrance.
- Where this is not operationally possible, the same primary entrance controls must be in place at any additional entrances.
- A front-line person must be available at the entrance to greet the visitor and implement the required controls. After hours, or where no identified front-line person is available, a notice on front door which directs visitors is required.
 - A front-line person may be a receptionist, facilities manager, procurement staff member.
 - Visits should be pre-arranged where required.
 - Visitors must **state the purpose of their visit** to the front-line person eg receptionist, facilities manager, procurement staff member.

2.2 Maintain hygiene and Infection Prevention requirements

- Ensure hand sanitisers are available in all shared areas including entry and reception areas.
- Perform hand hygiene after each visitor interaction.
- Regularly clean the reception area with approved disinfectant wipes.
- Wear a face mask at all times in patient facing areas.

Note: Where masks are required, if a visitor has a mask exemption this must be provided and checked before entry.

3. Guidance for common visitor groups

3.1 Patient's visitors and caregivers (support person)

Patients should be advised of the visitor requirements in place at the time, prior to admission (where possible) and again, on admission.

- Visitors are required to wear a mask.

Where applicable, see also:

- [Protection from risk of abuse guidelines](#)
- [Child protection policy](#)
- [Restraining order procedure](#)
- [Relatives or support person in theatre or procedure room during the procedure](#)
- [Procedure for gaining informed consent](#)

Designated caregiver or support person rooming-in

Caregivers are required to fulfil the same testing requirements as patients as they often spend extended periods of time in our hospitals.

A double room will be provided if available. If only a single room is available, a reclining armchair may be provided for the accompanying adult.

A fee/charges may apply at the discretion of each hospital General Manager and based on the services and facilities accessed. The designated parents/caregiver should check with their insurer regarding cover for parent accommodation.

3.2 Visitors associated with accessing community support services

There are a range of support services that patients may require access to during their admission including interpreters and advocacy.

Refer to the following guidance:

- [Individual values and beliefs including personal privacy, dignity and respect](#)
- [Recognition of Māori values and beliefs](#)
- [Guidelines for continuous open disclosure](#)
- [Interpreter guidelines](#)
- [Advocacy and support for patients](#)

3.3 Business visitors including suppliers and medical representatives

On entry and sign in through the electronic visitor management system registration, the following checks are required to confirm:

- The required manager/employee/medical specialist is available to receive the visitor.
- Business visitors wear a name label stating their company name.
- Attire and behaviour expectations are appropriate:
 - Where relevant, SCH policies/procedures and best practice process/standards for the work being undertaken are adhered to.
 - For formal patient consent to the presence of a visitor, refer to the below Patient consent for the presence of visitor form.

For filming also refer to [Agreement for filming/recording/photography](#) at a Southern Cross Healthcare, which must be completed by the applicant.

For visitors as observers of a surgery or procedure see [Patient consent for the presence of a visitor](#).

See also [special circumstances access](#).

For medical representatives also refer to [Medical company representatives or technical support persons in the operating theatre policy](#).

3.4 Contractors

All contractor management requirements must be completed in accordance with [Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](#) and our Covid-19 safety precautions.

3.5 Lessees and tenants

Governed by conditions of their lease agreement and advise tenants operating on our sites of their responsibilities including to:

- To ensure attire and behaviour are appropriate.
- To observe SCH policies and procedures where relevant.

- To maintain their practice processes/standards.
- If access is via the hospital, they do not need to sign in/out of the facility.

3.6 Employees (for example local off duty staff, National Support Office staff)

On-duty staff from another location must follow the existing standard processes and precautions. Off-duty staff must report in to and out to person in charge.

References

- Privacy Act and Health Information Privacy Code
- Civil Defence Act 2002 and Regulations
- Employment Relations Act 2000
- [Health and Disability Commissioner \(Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights\) Regulations 1996](#)
- [Health Information Privacy Code 2020](#)
- [Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](#)
- [Health and Disability Sector \(Safety\) Standards](#)
- Professionals' Codes of Practice and Ethical Standards

Associated documents

 **Health and Safety**

 **Adverse event management**

 **Special circumstances access**

 **Workplace vaccination policy**

This policy sets out Southern Cross Healthcare's approach to the vaccinations for our workers.

 **Contractor induction checklist**

A form to use for contractor inductions

 **Hot work procedure**

 **Insurer notification guidelines**

Learn about the types of insurance SCH carries that require notification.

 **Patient consent for the presence of a visitor**

Complete this form to evidence a patient's informed consent where a visitor is to present to observe a procedure or surgery. Examples include may include an observing physiotherapist student or researcher. To be completed by patient and credentialed practitioner.



Authority for filming, recording and photography in hospitals

This form is to be completed by hospital staff or patients to obtain consent for filming, recording or photography at a Southern Cross Hospital.

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