

PRESS RELEASE



Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
1 Lower Navy Hill Road, Navy Hill, Saipan, MP 96950



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHCC updates visitation policy, caregiver protocol, ER patient admission

The safety and the well-being of our patients, visitors, and employees are important the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC). To ensure safer visitation rights for the patients of the Commonwealth Health Center (CHC) Hospital, the following visitation policy will be enforced immediately.

All visitors, whether vaccinated (no testing required), or unvaccinated and with negative antigen test result, are allowed a MAXIMUM of ten (10) minutes visiting privileges FOR COVID-NEGATIVE PATIENTS. This policy is intended to protect our patients due to the current spread of COVID-19 in the community. Labor and Delivery, Obstetrics, and the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit are excluded from this visitation limit (due to breastfeeding and bonding requirements for a newborn), as well as the Emergency Department.

Antigen test results for unvaccinated visitors are valid for 24 hours only. Should an unvaccinated visitor return after 24 hours to visit a patient, they will be retested and so on.

Additionally, family members or caregivers requested by patients needing moderate to maximum assistance during hospitalization should be fully vaccinated and have a negative antigen result before they are allowed into the room. Only one (1) identified caregiver will be allowed in the room the whole time. Switching of caregivers will not be allowed unless approved by the attending physician, must also be vaccinated, and tested negative on antigen testing.

Furthermore, all patients admitted due to reasons unrelated to COVID-19 (including pediatric and obstetrics patients) will be tested on a PCR COVID-19 testing platform on the 3rd or 5th day of admission to ensure early COVID-19 detection, and that necessary precautions are taken and treatment of anti-viral medication is administered.

The visiting hours are 9 – 11 a.m. and 3 – 5 p.m. All visitors are reminded to properly use face masks while in the facility. Hospital visiting hours must be adhered to and frequency of visits may be further limited on a case-by-case basis. If a patient has clinical reasons to be denied visitation rights (e.g., the patient is COVID-19 positive), specific policies related to the respective unit will apply.

For patients visiting the emergency room, a screening process for COVID-19 will take place. Symptomatic patients or patients with a recent high-risk COVID-19 exposure will be escorted to the Medical Care and Treatment Site (MCATS) for assessment, while asymptomatic patients will be able to head straight into the waiting area for assessment. All patients will be treated accordingly.

Getting vaccinated is the best protection against COVID-19. Individuals can register for vaccinations by visiting www.vaccinatecnmi.com, or calling (670) 682-7468.

While we are in a pandemic, the community is reminded to live COVID-19 safe: practice the 3 W's (wear a mask, wash your hands, and watch your distance); avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces; cover coughs and sneezes; clean and disinfect high touch surfaces daily; be alert for symptoms daily; and get tested for COVID-19. Learn more at www.staysafecnmi.com/livecovidsafe.

For more information about CHCC programs, follow @cnmichcc on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter; visit www.chcc.gov.mp; or call (670) 234-8950.

This press release may be found online at <http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html>.