
POSITION STATEMENT

Guidelines for Visitors to the Operating Environment

General principles

Health care facilities are, in general, restricted environments. Access to the theatres and staff is a privilege, not a right, and should be approved on an individual basis.

Each health care facility should develop clear guidelines and policies to be followed which manage access to restricted environments on a strictly limited basis.

Only visitors with bona fide supportive and/or educational reasons should be allowed into areas where patient care (including surgery and recovery areas) is being undertaken.

Patients have the right to privacy and confidentiality in all aspects of their medical care.

The Operating Theatre is generally not considered an appropriate site for education or demonstration of new technology during the conduct of a surgical procedure.

All visitors must be closely supervised and take no part in management of patients.

All visitors must sign a register before entry.

Visitors may include (but are not limited to):

1. non accredited (visiting) medical and nursing personnel;
2. medical, nursing and allied health professional students;
3. work experience students;
4. medical and pharmaceutical company representatives; and
5. support personnel for patients with disabilities.

Guidelines for visiting medical and nursing personnel (including students)

1. There must be a bona fide reason for entry into the operating environment.

2. Credentials/identification must be presented.
3. Permission should be obtained from the surgeon, the anaesthetist, the nurse in charge of the operating theatre and the Nursing Unit manager.
4. Permission is required from the patient, where applicable.
5. Identification should be visible at all times.
6. Visitors are to be supervised at all times
7. Visitors are to wear appropriate protective clothing including eyewear.

Guidelines for relatives and/or support personnel

They:

1. May only remain in operating environment when there is a clinical need.
2. Must wear appropriate protective clothing including eyewear.
3. Must be escorted into the operating/ induction/ procedure room.
4. Must be closely supervised at all times and be prepared to leave immediately when asked.
5. Must obtain approval from appropriate medical and nursing staff.

Guidelines for medical company representatives

They:

1. Are not to participate in direct patient care, except where special expertise is required when new equipment is being used or demonstrated.
2. Must be properly supervised at all times.
3. Must be properly identified at all times.
4. Must only be allowed into the operating environment where permission has been sought and granted by all relevant parties.
5. Must leave when asked.
6. Must acknowledge that if a medical company representative assists with equipment preparation or drug preparation and/or delivery, their insurers are responsible for any

- adverse outcome that may arise as a consequence of their activities.
7. Must have undergone instruction in the maintenance of asepsis.
 8. Must have read and agree to abide by the relevant **Codes of Behaviour** for both their company and Medicines Australia.

References

1. ACORN. Policy Document S27 “Visitors to the Perioperative Environment”. Feb 04
2. Medicines Australia. Code of Conduct 14th Edition / Jan 03
3. Position Statement on the Role of Health Care Industry Representatives in the Operating Room. In: Recommended Practices, Standards and Guidelines. Denver: Association of Perioperative Registered Nurses; 2003
4. MayneHealth Policy Number: OT:01:04:080:01P “Operating Theatre Policy: medical Company representatives assisting with procedures”
5. MayneHealth Policy Number: OT:01:06:040:01P “Operating Theatre Policy: Visitors to the OT”
6. Sydney Adventist Hospital THR-PPM-S01-D003-R002 “Visitors to the Operating Theatre”

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