

Title

Visitors to the Operating/Endoscopy Suite Guideline

1. Context

Patient safety and continuing professional development of staff are the key focus to consider when visitors are requesting access to the Operating/Endoscopy Suite.

Only authorised persons, including visitors, are permitted entry to Eastern Health Operating Theatres, Holding Bay, Post Anaesthetic Care Unit (PACU) and Endoscopy Suites to provide support to the treating team or to the patient

Minimising access to persons entering:

- Decreases the risk of surgical wound infection by minimising bacterial count
- Prevents crowding which can impede the ability of staff to perform their clinical responsibilities
- Promotes the interests of patients' welfare, rights, privacy and confidentiality
- Restricted in space and contains specialist equipment that may pose hazards to visitors with limited expertise

2. Definition of terms

Visitors may include (but are not limited to):

- Non-accredited and visiting medical and nursing personnel
- Interpreters
- Midwives
- Medical, nursing and allied health students
- Medical, surgical and pharmaceutical company representatives
- Support personnel for patients (parent/guardian, carer, spouse or significant other)
- Correctional Services (Police)

3. Name of Standard to which Guideline, Procedure or Protocol relates

Partnering with Consumers Standard

4. Processes

All Visitors must comply with the Hand Hygiene Practice Guideline when entering the Operating Suite.

In the event of an emergency, all visitors must abide by instructions given by the staff member in-charge.

Visitors (other than patient family/support persons) must sign in at theatre/endoscopy reception prior to entering the Operating/Endoscopy Suite

- Visitors must enter the date, Name, Organization, Reason, Theatre Number, Time In, Time Out, ID Tag number, ID returned and Signature. Visitors will be provided with an Eastern Health numbered visitors tag that must be pinned to the scrub top to identify the person as a visitor.
- They must sign out of the logbook and return the tag when they leave the department.
- Visitors, including the patient family/support person, must have the permission of the Floor Coordinator to enter the Operating/Endoscopy Suite.
- All members of the operating team are informed by the Floor Coordinator of the identification, background knowledge and purpose of the visitor. The visitors name must be recorded on the whiteboard in theatre/suite.
- Visitors must be identified at Team Time Out
- Visitors are to be supervised at all times by the appropriate discipline and nursing staff.

- Visitors are to wear appropriate protective attire as per EH Operating Suite Attire guideline: 115.

Visiting Medical, Nursing and Allied Health personnel (including students)

- Medical Students must be directly supervised by the approving surgical/anaesthetic specialty
- There must be a clinical reason that will directly benefit the patient outcome for entry into the Operating/Endoscopy Suite
- Credentials/identification must be present at all times
- All non-Eastern Health medical staff require permission from EH Chief Medical Officer or Director of Medical Services to be present and/or participate in a procedure.
- Permission must be obtained from the Surgeon, the Anaesthetist, the Floor Coordinator and/or the Nurse Unit Manager for the visitor to be present.
- Permission is required from the patient if practicable.
- Work experience students are not permitted

Family member and/or support person

- The presence of family members and/or support persons in the Operating/Endoscopy Suite is limited to one person at any one time
- If supporting the patient into the Operating Theatre/Endoscopy Suite, the family member or support person must:
 - i. Wear appropriate protective attire
 - ii. Be escorted in and out of the operating room/anaesthetic room
 - iii. Be closely supervised at all times and leave when requested
 - iv. Obtain approval from appropriate surgical/anaesthetic and nursing staff

Company Representatives

Company representative should be permitted to attend the Operating Suite for;

- Complex cases and procedures that are performed infrequently
 - Stock take purposes and
 - When new technology and new equipment is introduced.
 - Company representatives are not permitted to participate in direct patient case except when specialist expertise is required such as when equipment is new or being demonstrated.
- Attendance of company representatives should be requested on a case by case basis and should be the exception.
- Must be properly supervised at all times
 - Must be properly identified at all times
 - Must only be allowed into the operating environment where permission/consent has been sought and granted by the patient and treating surgeon
 - Must leave when requested
 - Must have read and agreed to abide by the Code of Behaviour for both their company and Eastern Health.
 - Must sign Visitor Statement of Confidentiality and Code of Conduct form as well as the visitors sign in record/log book at theatre/suite reception. They must sign out when they leave the department.

Other visitors

Members of the retrieval teams and transplant teams, Paramedical personnel, Police and Mental Health Nurses may be required to visit the Operating/Endoscopy Suite. In these cases, prior approval must be obtained from the floor coordinator in consultation with the Hospital Nurse Coordinator and a clinical reason established. If there is any doubt, the final approval is required from the Associate Program Director.

Personnel Numbers in each theatre/suite

The number of visitors permitted may vary depending on the individual situation. The Australian College of Operating Room Nurses suggests that the number of visitors should be kept to a minimum. Approval for visitors will be subject to workload at the allocated time and the availability of staff to supervise visitors. To minimise increase in bacterial count in theatre, the number of personnel shall be monitored.

Standard theatre staffing and no more than two students and one company representative/visitor are to be present in any theatre at one time. Staff shall monitor and escalate to the Nurse Unit Manager, Perioperative Service Manager or Associate Program Director if breaches occur.

5. Scope

All Clinical Staff and Visitor to the Operating Suite

6. Tools & Techniques

Visitor Statement of Confidentiality and Code of Practice - Form

7. Level of Supporting Evidence Available

8. References

Australian College of Perioperative Nurses, Standards for Perioperative Nursing in Australia 15th Edition

9. Development

Developed September 2011 to replace individual site policies

Revised August 2012

Revised April 2013 as a result of RCA recommendations

Revised April 2016

Revised May 2020

10. Attachments

Att 1 – Visitor Confidentiality form