

15 November, 2021

## Keeping you safe is our priority

In response to COVID-19, we have made some important changes – so that everyone is kept safe and no one is placed at risk when coming to Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick or The Children's Hospital at Westmead.

### Safety screening points

When you come to one of our hospitals, you will be asked to check in and show proof of vaccination.\* You will be greeted by a staff member at one of our entry points. They may take your temperature and ask you the following questions:

- Are you a staff member, patient, family member of visitor?
- Are you fully vaccinated?\*
- Are you experiencing any cold-like symptoms?
- Have you been in contact with someone with COVID-19?
- Have you visited a COVID-19 case location?  
Visit <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/latest-news-and-updates> for COVID-19 case locations
- Have you recently travelled overseas?\*\*\*

\*If you are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated and are the only person who can accompany your child, you are permitted to enter but must restrict your movement within the hospital.

\*\*In line with new NSW Government guidelines, unless it is for urgent medical care, returning overseas travellers are unable to enter a health care facility for 7 days. They must also receive a negative COVID test. Patients who have travelled internationally should only attend outpatient appointments 14 days after their arrival, unless deemed urgent by the patient's clinical team.

This screening system is in place to make sure no one enters our hospitals who may have an illness that could be passed on to our patients, families or staff.

### Masks

Wearing a face mask is currently mandatory in The Sydney Children's Hospitals Network's hospitals. Mask exemption letters will not be accepted and entry to our facilities will not be possible. This is to protect our staff and other families and patients. All staff and visitors over the age of 12 years are required to wear a mask inside our hospitals at all times, except while eating, drinking or sleeping. If you don't have a mask, please talk to a member of staff.

In addition to face masks, staff wear protective eye wear during face-to-face contact with patients and families.

Parents/carers are asked to put your mask on properly, including covering your nose, before a staff member enters your child's room or bed space. If you refuse to wear a mask, you will be asked to leave the hospital.

We acknowledge that wearing a mask can be uncomfortable, if you need some tips, please don't hesitate to ask our staff or visit <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/health-and-wellbeing/face-masks/how-to-wear-a-face-mask>.



## Temporary visitor guidelines

Due to the increase in COVID-19 community transmission, visitor restrictions are in place across all NSW Health facilities.

In most inpatient areas, **two fully vaccinated people** over the age of 12 years can visit a patient per day. [Proof of vaccination](#) must be shown upon entry.

- This includes at least one parent/carer.
- If you are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated and are the only person who can accompany your child, you are permitted to enter but must restrict your movement within the hospital. A second person cannot visit with you.

Due to space limitations and the need to maintain physical distancing, **one fully vaccinated parent/carer** can accompany a patient in the below areas. If you are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated and are the only person who can accompany your child, you are permitted to enter but must restrict your movement within the hospital.

- Emergency Department
- Outpatients Department
- Ward C2 North, Short Stay, Surgical Unit, Recovery, Medical Day Unit and COVID wards (Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick)
- Middleton Day Surgery Ward, Recovery, Turner Ward, CHW Radiology and COVID wards (The Children's Hospital at Westmead)

Unfortunately, siblings under 12 years are unable to visit. Siblings of long stay patients (more than nine days in hospital) are welcome to visit, at a time pre-arranged with the ward's nurse leader.

Keeping families connected is important to us. We encourage virtual visits using platforms like Facetime or WhatsApp. If you need access to a tablet for video conferencing, please speak to a member of your child's health care team.

To help adhere to essential physical distancing guidelines, we have also asked our staff to limit the number of team members entering wards and clinical areas to the minimum required.

We do understand that temporarily limiting visitors and minimising staff contact is challenging and we will restrict visitor numbers for as short a time as we can. We also understand that there may be specific circumstances which need further consideration and we will work closely with you to determine the best and most compassionate outcome.

## Changes to clinic appointments

To further reduce the number of people entering our hospitals, we are delivering some clinic appointments via virtual options like Telehealth.

Patients and their accompanying parent/carer coming into the hospital for a face-to-face outpatient appointment are required to obtain a COVID-19 test, 24-72 hours prior to attending their appointment. This test can be done at a testing clinic close to home and shown to staff upon arrival.



### **Elective surgery**

It is mandatory for all patients to obtain a COVID-19 test 24-72 hours prior to attending the hospital for elective surgery. We strongly recommend COVID-19 testing for the accompanying parent/carer. If you haven't had a test or are still waiting for your results, please speak to your child's health care team.

### **Emergency care**

Having a sick child is never easy but it is important to quickly seek medical care, to avoid health complications.

It is completely understandable to feel anxious about catching COVID-19 but our hospitals are safe places, with our experts ready 24 hours a day to care for your kids when they need us most.

If your child is unwell or injured, we're here to help. Don't delay, visit when you need us.

### **Staff, patient and family health checks**

Every family with a booked appointment or procedure is being contacted in advance, to make sure they are not sick with cold-like symptoms. Anyone with symptoms is asked not to come to our hospitals. In addition, any staff member with cold-like symptoms will be tested for COVID-19. They will not return to work until their test comes back negative and they are symptom free.

Anyone who has visited a COVID-19 case location is asked not to come to our facilities until 14 days after they last visited that location.

### **Surveillance testing: COVID-19 testing for parents and carers**

We are requesting that all parents and carers are tested for COVID-19 every three days, while their child is in hospital. You will not need to isolate and can still visit your child while you wait for your result.

For your convenience, testing clinics are available on-site and are open Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Please ask the ward clerk for a medical record number, before you attend the clinic.

- The Children's Hospital at Westmead, Outpatients Department, Level 2, 7.30am - 4.00pm
- Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick, Outpatients Department, Level 0, 7.30am - 5.00pm

When your child is in hospital, if you or a member of your household are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 such as fever, cough or a runny nose, let the nurse looking after your child know and they will organise immediate testing.

### **Physical distancing**

General physical distancing signs are located throughout our hospital, to remind everyone to keep a distance of at least 1.5m from each other, where possible.

Signs are also on our lifts, asking for only two to three people or one family to travel in the lift at a time.

### **Cleaning, hand hygiene and infection control**

We have employed more cleaners and follow strict cleaning and infection control guidelines.

Antiseptic hand sanitiser is available throughout our hospitals, to make sure everyone is able to regularly wash their hands.

## Supporting you in hospital

Keeping families supported and connected is important to us.

- Social workers are available to support your family's physical, emotional and social wellbeing.
- Food and resources – on site cafés, vending machines and pharmacies are available. A fridge and microwave is also available in most wards for your convenience. If you need to order via a food delivery service, please speak to your child's nurse.
- Rest areas – our wards have areas to take a time out in, including parent/carer kitchens. Areas are also available around the Hospital where you can take a moment to yourself.
- Virtual connection – many patient bed spaces have an electronic tablet connected to the internet available for your use. If your bed space doesn't have a built-in device, please speak to a member of your child's health care team.

If you have any questions, please ask your child's health care team for more information.

## For up-to-date information on COVID-19

Call the National Coronavirus Health Information line on 1800 020 080 or visit:

- NSW Health: [www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)
- Australian Government Department of Health: [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)
- Sydney Children's Hospitals Network: [www.schn.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.schn.health.nsw.gov.au)

If you speak another language and need assistance or access to a translator, please speak to a member of your child's health care team. Translated COVID-19 resources are available here: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/Pages/resources.aspx>.

We know this is a challenging, unprecedented time. Rest assured, we are working hard to do everything we can to protect you.

If you need any support or further information, please do not hesitate to speak to a member of your child's health care team.



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