



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Office of the Chief Clinical Officer
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Oifig an Phríomhoifigigh Clínicíúil
Ospidéal Dr Steevens|Lána Steevens|Baile Átha Cliath 8|D08 W2A8

BY EMAIL ONLY

Deputy Richard Bruton
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

19/11/2021

PQ 53799/21-Deputy Richard Bruton: To ask the Minister for Health if his Department has sought to enunciate general principles which should apply in relation to patient visiting opportunities; if particular considerations are suggested in circumstances in which the patient's vulnerability may call for greater family support; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Bruton,

Many thanks for your representation.

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) practice is critical to the safe operation of acute hospital and residential care services. The focus on the rigorous application of IPC measures is increased in the context of a public health emergency such as the current pandemic, but must be balanced with regard for the needs of patients for access to people who are important to them. Vaccination of the majority of the population has been associated with a striking reduction in the risk of severe COVID-19 in patients, residents and staff resulting from exposure to the SARS-CoV-2 virus in the healthcare setting. There are however still significant risks in particular for many of those who use our services.

AMRIC Guidance to support visiting and/access in acute hospitals (including children's hospitals, rehabilitation units, specialist palliative care inpatient units and maternity services) and long term residential care facilities is regularly reviewed and published to www.hpsc.ie.

The most recent updates to this guidance can be found on the following links:

V1.2 COVID-19 Guidance on Access to Acute Hospitals for Nominated Support Partners, Accompanying Persons, Visitors and External Service Providers published on 19/11/2021 (For implementation on 29.11.2021)
<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/guidanceforhealthcareworkers/acutehospitalguidance/>

V1.1 COVID-19: Normalising Visiting in Long Term Residential Care Facilities (LTRCFs) 10.11.2021 (For implementation November 15th 2021).
<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/infectionpreventionandcontrolguidance/residentialcarefacilities/Normalising%20visiting%20in%20LTRCF.pdf>

I hope this provides you with assistance.

Yours sincerely



Sharon Hayden
General Manager
Office of the CCO