

Visitors' Policy

Salford Royal 
NHS Foundation Trust

University Teaching Trust

safe • clean • personal

Classification: Policy

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Who should read this document?

This document is applicable to all members of staff at Salford Royal.

Key points

The purpose of this policy is to ensure there is no risk to the safety and security of patients and staff arising from visits to Salford Royal by approved or invited visitors such as VIPs and celebrities.

This policy does not relate to visitors visiting their family / friends in hospital. There is also a separate policy relating to the handling of the media.

The policy requires that approved official visitors are always accompanied throughout their visit to the Trust, especially where there is a possibility of contact with lone staff or patients/visitors. As VIPs / celebrities are often accompanied, this entails all supervising and chaperoning any guests / accompanying party they may bring with them.

When approved official visitors are in the Trust for extended periods of time, eg a celebrity linked with a particular service or a celebrity volunteer, and they are likely to be unaccompanied, advice will be sought from the Trust's Human Resources Team about what checks / authorisations will be required.

Any requests for celebrity or VIP visits must be referred to the Communications Team. The Communications Team may not be responsible for organising every visit but they can advise on the arrangements team must make.

Visit supervision can be delegated to clinical teams if appropriate, with a recommendation that at least one person is responsible for supervision and chaperone – with more chaperones required if the visiting party is larger.

If a visit occurs outside normal working hours and especially at weekends, the person leading the visit must notify the Senior Manager On Call to reassure them that the visit is approved, advise of the arrangements and confirm that they will be supervising the visit.

If a VIP or celebrity attends the Trust without any prior notice and is not on a private visit to see a relative or friend who is a patient, the Communications Team must be notified immediately. If this is out of hours, this should be the Senior Manager On Call and Exec On Call. The visitor should be held in reception / nursing station until a member of the Communications Team / Senior Manager On Call / Exec On Call arrives to determine the nature of their visit and whether it is appropriate to go ahead.

A central register of visitors will be maintained by the Communications Team. For locally arranged or supervised visits, a member of the organising team will ensure that appropriate details of the visit are notified to the Communications Team for recording, using Appendix A of this policy.

Background & scope

The Trust arranges visits by celebrities and VIPs from time to time and these visits typically involve access to a range of services and departments, either on the main Salford Royal site or off-site at one of our community venues. Celebrity and VIP visits play a significant role in promoting our services, enhancing patients' experience and motivating staff.

The Trust aims to support and accommodate such visits wherever possible, whilst recognising our responsibility to protect the safety and security as well as the privacy and dignity of patients, families and staff. We also recognise the need to ensure any such visits do not have a detrimental effect on the running of clinical services. Therefore, the Trust will take practical measures to ensure robust arrangements are in place to organise and manage external visits safely and minimise disruption.

The vast majority of VIP / celebrity visits to the Trust are "one-off" events, which means that standard safeguarding arrangements such as Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks may not be appropriate. However, it also covers circumstances where individuals or groups have long term or ongoing relationships with the Trust, such as volunteering.

Policy/ Guideline/ Protocol

The policy requires that one-off or very short-term approved official visitors are always accompanied throughout their visit to the Trust where there is a possibility of contact with lone staff or vulnerable patients/visitors.

Approved official visitors who are in the Trust for extended periods of time, such as volunteers, or who are here on repeated occasions, such as a charity patron or celebrity linked with a particular service, and are likely to be unaccompanied, may be subject to checks / authorisations – but in these circumstances, advice will be sought from the Trust's Human Resources department.

All visits by VIPs or celebrities are to be handled and managed by the Communications Team. Any requests for celebrity or VIP visits must be referred to the Communications Team and must be approved by or organised by the Communications Team. Visit supervision may be delegated to local clinical teams if appropriate. It is highly likely one or more of the Trust's Executive Team will be present during the visit too.

Access by other approved visitors may be authorised and overseen by local clinical leaders, for example, Matrons or Ward Managers or managed by relevant Trust staff. In such cases full details of the visit are to be notified to the Communications Team.

There is already a process for authorising volunteers on site. This policy highlights the responsibility of Trust staff to check the identification and authorisation of such people in clinical and patient areas.

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Arranging a visit

Before arranging or approving a visit to the Trust by a celebrity / VIP, the Communications Team will check with the clinical service(s) that will be visited to ensure they feel the visit is appropriate and would not affect the smooth running of the ward / service etc.

The Communications Team will alert a relevant member of the Executive Team to all planned celebrity / VIP visits as soon as details are known, as it is likely the Trust would wish to ensure that one or more of the Executive Team are present at the visit.

Whilst preparing for the visit, the Communications Team are likely to have to make a number of arrangements, including alerting Security to the visit, ensuring the area is clean and tidy, sorting out parking arrangements and briefing the visiting VIP / celebrity regarding our infection control procedures, eg hand washing, bare below elbows etc.

Arrival at Trust premises

Upon arrival at Trust premises, approved official visitors will be met by a member of staff. This would be a member of the Communications Team, local clinical leader or perhaps an Executive Director.

Approved visitors should be greeted at a main reception area when they visit the hospital site or other Trust premises and then escorted to the pre-arranged clinical area where the visit will take place.

If a VIP or celebrity turns up without any prior notice and is not on a private visit to see a relative or friend who is a patient, the Communications Team must be notified immediately. The visitor should be held in the reception or at the ward nursing station until a member of the Communications Team arrives.

If a visit occurs outside normal working hours and especially at weekends the local clinical leader should check with senior ward / service staff and the Senior Manager On-Call to ensure it has been authorised and that arrangements for accompanying have been made. They should also check that the visit remains clinically appropriate.

During visits

A Trust representative, who will normally be a member of the Communications Team or local clinical leader, should remain with the approved visitor throughout the visit until they are escorted from the building.

If it is necessary for another representative to take over, this fact must be logged as part of the formal record of the visit. Where approved visitors have undergone appropriate checks and have been authorised they may be unaccompanied in clinical or otherwise restricted areas only under the terms of a signed agreement which will be specific to the circumstances.

Approved visitors who do not have appropriate checks and authorisation must not be left unaccompanied. In addition, any time they are in a patient's room

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there will be a chaperone who should be a member of the Communications Team or member of staff from the ward.

A Trust representative will ensure that all appropriate ward protocols including infection prevention and control are observed by the VIP or celebrity visitor.

Raising concerns about a visitor

If during a VIP / celebrity visit, the behaviour of the visitor or a member of their accompanying party gives cause for concern, then this should be raised at the time with the member of staff who is supervising them. If the behaviour is of a highly inappropriate nature, for example causing upset or distress to patients, then the person supervising the visit may, in conjunction with others present, take the decision to bring the visit to an end. Following this, follow up action may be required, for example, incident reporting.

Register of Visitors

The Communications Team will hold a central register of VIP / celebrity visits. If a visit is not organised by the Communications Team, visit details must be notified to the Communications Team. A copy of the Register of Visitors can be found at Appendix A.

Confidentiality / Consent

Any patients who may be involved in a VIP / celebrity visit, eg they are an in-patient on a ward being visited, will be asked in advance of the visit whether they mind being potentially approached by the visitor. If there is likely to be photographs, the patient will be asked if they consent to being photographed and will be asked to sign a photo release form.

Staff behaviour

Staff are representatives of the Trust and are expected to behave professionally at all times. During VIP and celebrity visits, staff should continue in their roles as usual while supporting the management of the visit where appropriate.

Approved official visitors to ward areas should always be greeted appropriately by staff and treated respectfully throughout their visit. Staff must not approach celebrities on wards, corridors or other areas of the hospital unless advised to do so by the Communications Team.

Explanation of terms & definitions

Approved visitors - individuals or groups who are invited or who have approval to be on Salford Royal premises for an official purpose or for the benefit of patients, staff, the Trust or the NHS. These may include:

VIPs - key stakeholders including Ministers, elected representatives, overseas dignitaries, members of the Royal Family.

Celebrities - famous/high profile figure who might be well known to the public and therefore to patients and their families; also includes costumed characters as these would be well known to children and young people.

Volunteers / Fundraisers – people who are working in the Trust on a paid or voluntary basis to support the business of the Trust or to generate financial support or present funds raised for the benefit of patients, staff or the Trust.

Public areas - any location in the hospital that is accessible by the general public and does not have secure entry. These would include reception areas, catering and retail areas.

Clinical or restricted areas - any area of the hospital in which clinical care is provided to inpatient or outpatients. This would include all wards, theatres, departments and clinics. It also includes any area associated with healthcare or the business of the Trust which has a secure door or requires a hospital pass or staff member to gain entry.

References and supporting documents

There is a separate policy: Managing the Media TC34(06).

There are also two separate policies relating to Volunteering at Salford Royal: Protocol for the Registration of Trust Volunteers HR9(11)

Management of Volunteering HR8(11)

Roles and responsibilities

Head of Communications

- Maintains the Trust Register of approved official visitors and is responsible for ensuring other relevant parts of the Trust are made aware of their responsibility to notify the Communications Team of any visits covered by this policy
- Ensures all media and celebrity / VIP visits are handled effectively and responsibly
- Provides briefing to Executive Team and other internal and external stakeholders, as appropriate, on media activity and celebrity / VIP visits
- Alerts Executive Team, Trust security and relevant teams to all media and VIP / celebrity visitors to the Trust
- Monitors the implementation of this policy.

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Security

- Provide support during visits as required and as agreed with the Communications Team.
- Together with the Communications Team, carry out risk assessments prior to the visit, if appropriate or liaise with local police or Royal Protection Officers. Assessment will determine the appropriate level of additional resources or control measures, if required. Risk assessment should include the likelihood of uninvited photographers and followers or fans potentially attracted by the presence of a celebrity or VIP.
- If disruption to hospital business or clinical care is judged likely, then senior staff may advise that the visit is inappropriate, suggesting a postponement or cancellation. This would need to be approved by an Executive.

All staff

- Must act in accordance with this policy and support visits to their areas by representing the Trust properly and acting professionally at all times.

Appendices

Appendix 1

PART A – Pre visit

Visitor name	
Date of visit	
Times / duration of the visit	
Location (s) of the visit	
Purpose of the visit	
Clinical lead (eg ward manager) who has approved the visit	
Exec who has approved the visit	
Schedule / itinerary of the visit	
Name(s) of personnel (non-SRFT) accompanying the visitor	
Name of SRFT staff member supervising the visitor	

PART B – Post visit

Names of patients the visitor spent time with	
Did the patients consent to photography? Were consent forms completed?	