

For immediate release

HSC Winnipeg introduces additional measures to enhance safety in hospital

New initiative to better control after-hours access

Winnipeg, October 30, 2018 – Continuing to put patients first and improve safety for all, HSC Winnipeg will begin to better control access to the hospital by public and visitors after 8:30 p.m. On a trial basis, after-hours visiting to adult medicine, surgery, rehab and addictions inpatient care units will be limited. Adult and Children's Emergency departments (EDs) will remain open-access 24/7.

With more than four million square feet of space (37 buildings on 39 acres of land) and more than 100 exterior doors, HSC's size presents unique security and safety challenges. To control access, exterior doors at HSC lock at 8:30 p.m. Beginning Wednesday, October 31, trial inpatient care units will also be locked at that time. Per current practice, HSC's security team will screen anyone requesting access via locked exterior doors prior to entry into the building. Visitors will then again be screened by the patient care team at the inpatient care unit. All visitors will be logged.

"This measure, which is similar to ones already in place at other WRHA facilities, will respect the importance of family presence, as well as unexpected and critical changes in patient conditions. Common sense and compassion will be applied to individual situations to ensure we balance access, safety and patients' need for rest," said Ronan Segrave, interim chief operating officer, HSC Winnipeg.

After-hours visiting on HSC's trial units will be limited to palliative, end-of-life and critical changes to patient conditions, as well as to designated family support people. Patients will be asked to designate one or two people as their family supports; these people are not considered visitors, and may be present at HSC at any time of day. Given that most inpatient rooms at HSC are shared, staff may need to limit the number of people at the bedside out of respect for all patients' care requirements and need for rest.

The trial joins other security initiatives HSC and WRHA have introduced to enhance safety at the hospital:

- **Increased security presence in Adult Emergency:** HSC has the two busiest emergency departments in the province (120,000+ visits annually by adults and children). Security officers have always played an important role at HSC and in the EDs. Recent incidents of individuals presenting with aggressive and unpredictable behaviours demonstrated a greater need for these resources. Effective October 16, security assignments were reinforced to provide additional support and safety to patients, staff, and people waiting for care in the ED.
- **Increased mobile security patrols of the campus and parkades:** As of October 12, additional mobile security units patrol the HSC campus and parkades 24 hours a day. Officers continue to be available to escort staff after dark to their car or bus stop on HSC premises.

- **Implementation of the Provincial Healthcare Violence Prevention program.** Developed in collaboration with the Manitoba Nurses Union, this program’s goal is to eliminate or reduce all forms of violence in workplaces where healthcare services are provided. All staff are required to complete this program. Originally launched in 2016, additional training modules will be provided to all staff, with those in high-risk areas like emergency and mental health receiving it first.

“The safety of patients, staff, visitors and everyone at HSC and in all our care facilities is of paramount importance,” said Real Cloutier, president and chief executive officer, WRHA. “We continue to work as a health-care system with government and partners in the community to enhance and improve security across our facilities. We appreciate the public’s support and cooperation in creating safe, secure spaces for everyone.”

General visiting hours for these areas at HSC will be 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. during the trial. All other Winnipeg hospitals currently have established visiting hours, depending on the unit, patient acuity, and patient needs.

The trial will run for several weeks, with assessment following to determine if permanent controls on access or additional security measures are required.

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