

SODUS REHABILITATION AND NURSING CENTER

ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

DEPARTMENT: INTERDISCIPLINARY

EFFECTIVE DATE: 3/15/2021

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NEW: REVISED: X

POLICY: X PROCEDURE: X

SUBJECT: VISITATION AND ACTIVITIES

PURPOSE and APPLICATION: On February 23, 2021, the Department of Health (“Department”) issued guidance and recommendations regarding general nursing home (NH) visitation. The information contained in this directive supersedes and replaces previously issued guidance and recommendations. This information is consistent with CMS and CDC guidelines on such topic. Nothing in this directive should be construed as limiting or eliminating a nursing home’s (NH’s) responsibility to ensure that resident and family communication is ongoing and supported by virtual visits, whenever possible, nor does it change the guidance previously issued relative to visitation for medically necessary or end-of life services.

Based on the needs of residents and a facility’s structure, visitation can be conducted through a variety of means, such as in resident rooms, dedicated visitation spaces and outdoors weather permitting. Regardless of how visits are conducted, there are certain core principles and best practices that reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission and must be followed.

POLICY: It is the policy of Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center, pursuant to the most recent New York State Department of Health directives issued on February 23, 2021, to permit visitation/activities if/when Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center meets specific conditions.

PROCEDURE: Beginning **February 26, 2021**, nursing homes may expand visitation and/or activities under this revised guidance if able to continue following the core principles of infection control and prevention, under the following conditions:

1. Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center is in full compliance with both state and federal reporting requirements including COVID-19 focus surveys, daily HERDS, weekly staff testing surveys, and the federally required weekly submission of COVID-19 data to the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN).
 - Pursuant to NYS DOH Visitation Q A 3.9.2021, there is no guidance indicating late HERDS submission citations state visitation is to shut down.
2. The operator or designee must retain a copy of the revised facility’s visitation plan at the facility where it is easily accessible and immediately available upon request of the Department or local health department. The plan must clearly articulate the space(s) to be used for visitation (outdoors and indoors) including the number of visitors and residents which could be safely socially distanced within the space(s). The plan must reference relevant infection control policies for visitors.
3. There has been no new onset of COVID-19 cases in the last **14 days** and Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center is not currently conducting outbreak testing as reported on daily HERDS submissions. Please be advised that the Department reserves the right to verify such accuracy of reporting as part of its routine surveillance activities.
 - “New Onset” is defined as a facility-onset COVID-19 case, i.e., a case that originated in the nursing home, as defined by CMS in QSO-20-30 and includes both staff and residents.

4. Visitors must be able to adhere to the core principles, including infection prevention and control policies, and staff are expected to provide monitoring for those who may have difficulty adhering to core principles including infection prevention and control policies being followed. Visitation can be conducted through a variety of means, such as in resident rooms, dedicated visitation spaces and outdoors.

The facility reserves the right to restrict visitation at any point for failure to follow core infection prevention and control principles.

5. Applicable floor markings to cue social distancing delineations **must be in place at all times** in areas where visitation is being conducted
6. Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center must communicate policies that limit the number of visitors per resident at one time and limit the total number of visitors in the facility at one time (based on the size of the building and physical space) to residents, staff and visitors.
7. Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center will communicate to resident families/resident representative of the procedure for scheduling indoor visitations with residents. Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center requires ALL visits be prescheduled through the Activities department.
8. Visitation days and times are subject to change based on current health conditions, community threat level, staffing and weather conditions.
9. Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center will schedule visits for a specified length of time to help ensure all residents are able to receive visitors.
10. Residents will be permitted one visit per day, unless there is an available time slot for an additional visit. Visits will not exceed 2 in a 24-hour period.
11. Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center will limit movement in the facility, including limiting visitors from walking around different halls of the facility. Instead, visitors will be assigned a visitation area to utilize and will be escorted directly to the assigned designated visitation area. All visitors are required to stay in the designated area throughout his/her visit. Visits for residents who share a room will not be conducted in the resident's room unless the roommates are spouses.
12. Adherence to written screening protocols for all staff during each shift, each resident daily, and all persons entering the facility or grounds of such nursing home, including visitors, vendors, students and volunteers.
13. The number of visitors to the nursing home must not exceed **twenty percent (20%)** of the resident census at any time and the number of visitors and time allocated to visitation should take into consideration that many residents and their loved ones will want to avail of such visits.
 - Pursuant to NYS DOH Visitation Q A 3.9.2021, the number of visitors to the nursing home must not exceed twenty percent (20%) of the resident census (Page 2, #8 of February 23, 2021 DAL). This percentage does not include members of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.
 - Pursuant to NYS DOH Visitation Q A 3.9.2021, the 20% rule includes those that are end of life or compassionate care visitors.

14. Visitors under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult 18 years of age or older.
15. Current COVID-19 positive residents, residents with COVID-19 signs or symptoms, and residents in a 14-day quarantine or observation period remain ineligible for in-person visits. In these instances, every effort will be made to accommodate visits using electronic devices and alternative visitation techniques.
16. Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center will use the COVID-19 county positivity rates, found on the CMS COVID-19 Nursing Home Data site (link can be found at: <https://data.cms.gov/stories/s/COVID-19-Nursing-Home-Data/bkwz-xpvg>) to determine when visitation should be paused. When the county positivity rate is high (>10%), visitation must only occur for compassionate.
 - Pursuant to NYS DOH Visitation Q A 3.9.2021, visitors are expected to present a negative COVID-19 test prior to commencement of such visit in the nursing home. Visitors must either: present a negative COVID-19 test result from the last seventy-two hours (72) or facility may utilize rapid testing to meet the testing requirement.
 - Pursuant to NYS DOH Visitation Q A 3.9.2021 and in accordance with EO 202 as modified by EO 202.82, non-licensed individuals with proper training can collect nasal specimens for rapid testing under the supervision of a nurse when visitors who may otherwise be unable to secure testing or results of testing in a timely manner.
17. Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center will accommodate and support indoor visitation, including visits for reasons beyond compassionate care situations, when the COVID-19 county positivity is less than 10%, based on the guidelines above.
 - Pursuant to NYS DOH Visitation Q A 3.9.2021, compassionate care situations may be considered by the facility on a resident specific basis. While CMS acknowledges and DOH guidance recently clarified that compassionate care situations may extend past end of life situations, these visits should not be routine and should be allowed on a limited basis as an exception to restricting visitation.
18. Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center will use the CMS COVID-19 county positivity rate, found on the COVID-19 Nursing Home Data site (link available at: <https://data.cms.gov/stories/s/COVID-19-Nursing-Home-Data/bkwz-xpvg>) as additional information to determine how to facilitate indoor visitation, and must abide by the following:
 - a. Low (<5%) = Visitation should occur according to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention and facility policies (beyond compassionate care visits). For county COVID-19 positivity rates below 5%, visitor testing is **strongly encouraged** to ensure resident and staff safety and continuity of facility operations; and facilities may utilize rapid testing.
 - b. Medium (5% – 10%) = Visitation should occur according to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention and facility policies (beyond compassionate care visits). **Visitor testing is required.** Visitors must either: present a negative COVID-19 test result from within the past seventy-two hours (72), or facilities may utilize rapid antigen testing to meet the testing requirement. Alternatively, the visitor(s) may provide proof of having completed the COVID-19 vaccination series no less than 14 days prior to the date of the visit but also within 90 days of the last vaccination. However, proof of vaccination is not a guarantee that a visitor is not transmitting COVID-19, so testing is still recommended, and facilities may choose to require testing for these individuals. Additionally, all visitors must adhere to all infection control practices.
 - c. High (>10%) = **Visitation must only occur for compassionate care situations** according to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention and facility policies. Facilities should offer rapid testing whenever possible, even for such compassionate care visits.

- Pursuant to NYS DOH Visitation Q A 3.9.2021 and in accordance with EO 202.72, Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center will report the results of testing conducted of visitors to ECLRS.
- Pursuant to NYS DOH Visitation Q A 3.9.2021 Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center will report visitor positives to the local health department to ensure resident and staff safety and continuity of operations.

County Positivity Rate will be logged for validation and reference **(Attachment 1)**

19. While taking a person-centered approach and adhering to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention, outdoor visitation can be conducted in a manner that reduces the risk of transmission. Outdoor visits pose a lower risk of transmission due to increased space and airflow. Therefore, all visits should be held outdoors whenever practicable. Aside from weather considerations (e.g., inclement weather, excessively hot or cold temperatures, poor air quality), an individual resident's health status (e.g., medical condition(s), COVID-19 status), or a facility's outbreak status, outdoor visitation should be facilitated routinely. Facilities should create accessible and safe outdoor spaces for visitation, such as in courtyards, patios, or parking lots, including the use of tents, if available. When conducting outdoor visitation, facilities should have a process to limit the number and size of visits occurring simultaneously to support safe infection prevention actions (e.g., maintaining social distancing). We also recommend reasonable limits on the number of individuals visiting with any one resident at the same time.

If the facility falls out of compliance with requirements listed in this advisory, Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center immediately halt visitation.

In addition, Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center will follow the additional guidelines outlined below which include ensuring each of the following:

- Adequate staff present to allow for personnel to help with the transition of residents, monitoring of visitation, and cleaning and disinfecting of areas used for visitation after each visit using an EPA-approved disinfectant.

It is the assigned supervisor's responsibility to ensure safe distance and appropriate masking is in place throughout the visit. With that said, the supervisor should do so in the least intrusive way possible so as to ensure maximum privacy in a safe fashion. Supervision should be explained beforehand – to all parties – by the Activities Director so that all understand the goal of the supervision is to help avoid possible accidental COVID-19 transmission.

- Appropriate signage regarding facemask or face covering utilization and hand hygiene, and applicable floor markings to cue social distancing delineations must be in place at all times.
- Screening for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 prior to resident access.
- Documentation of screening must be maintained onsite in an electronic format and available upon the Department's request for purposes of inspection and potential contact tracing. Documentation **must** include the following for each visitor:
 - First and last name of the visitor;
 - Physical (street) address of the visitor;
 - Daytime and Evening telephone number;
 - Date and time of visit; and
 - Email address if available

- Adequate PPE must be made available by the nursing home to ensure residents wear a face mask, if medically able to utilize a face covering during visitation. Visitors must wear a facemask or face covering at all times when on the premises of the nursing home and maintain social distancing. The nursing home must have adequate supply of masks on hand for visitors and make available to visitors who lack an acceptable face covering.
- Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center to provide alcohol-based hand rub to visitors or representatives of the long-term care ombudsman visiting residents and those individuals are able demonstrate appropriate use.
- Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center will develop a quick, easy to read fact sheet outlining visitor expectations including appropriate hand hygiene and face coverings. The factsheet must be provided upon initial screening to all visitors **(Attachment 2)**
- Small group activities will be permissible when the facility is not experiencing an outbreak and when space allows for appropriate social distancing, however, **no more than 10** residents and staff will be permitted to engage in such activities at any one time.
- Weather permitting, residents may also be assisted to go outdoors with staff supervision and the appropriate infection control, safety and social distancing requirements maintained.
- All non-essential personnel are subject to the same infection control requirements as staff, including but not limited to testing for COVID-19 with the same frequency as for staff; screening, wearing a mask, performing hand hygiene, maintaining social distancing.
- Sodus rehabilitation and Nursing Center will allow students and trainees enrolled in programs to become licensed, registered, certified, board eligible or otherwise to complete a program for health care professionals to receive training and otherwise participate in duties relevant to their program of training provided the nursing home environment is appropriate to the student's education, training and experience. Students should follow the guidelines established in their agreement between the nursing home and academic institution.

Compassionate Care Visits:

This guidance further clarifies that Compassionate Care Visits are permitted when visitation may not otherwise be permitted in accordance with the Department's current visitation guidance, and facilities may waive requirement of a visitor presenting a negative COVID-19 test prior to commencement of such visit under any of the below circumstances.

Compassionate care visits should include:

- Newly admitted residents with difficulty adjusting to the facility environment and lack of in-person family support.
- Residents recently grieving the loss of a friend or loved one.
- Residents who previously received in-person support and/or cueing from family for eating and drinking and are now experiencing dehydration and/or weight loss.
- Residents who are exhibiting signs and symptoms of emotional distress including, but not limited to, seldom speaking or crying more frequently (when the resident had rarely cried in the past),

refusing to participate in an activity or activities, staying in bed longer than usual, or exhibiting behavior considered abnormal for the individual.
- Residents who receive religious or spiritual support from clergy or another layperson.

The situations above are not intended to be an exhaustive list. Additional compassionate care situations may be considered by the facility on a resident-specific basis. Testing should be encouraged, or facilitated wherever possible, using rapid antigen testing provided for such purpose.

Window Visits

1. Window visits will take place in the Administrative Wing.
2. Windows must remain closed for the duration of the visit.
3. Visits will be limited to 15-20 minutes.
4. To allow for proper cleaning techniques in between window visits, we are limited on how many visits we can allow per day. Please be patient with us – we understand your excitement to see your loved one, but we must be extremely careful and cautious during the pandemic.
5. Please always remain outside and do not attempt to enter the building at any time during scheduled window visits. Your loved one will be just inside the window and we understand the desire to hug and kiss them, but it simply is not safe at this time.
6. Please do not leave your home and come visit if you are experiencing ANY symptoms of illness.
7. Please do not bring any items to give to your loved one. We are still being cautious of outside items and deliveries due to reports that COVID-19 may last on certain surfaces for long periods of time.

Outdoor Visitation Booths (Weather Permitting)

STAFF:

1. Staff is to be present throughout the entire visit to monitor compliance with procedures and assist the resident if needed.
2. Staff is to wear a face mask at all times.
3. Staff is to avoid close contact with the visitors.
4. Staff is to sanitize the resident's hands before and after each visit.
5. Once the resident has left the area, staff is to sanitize the resident and visitor touch points prior to the next visit.

RESIDENT:

1. The resident has the right to refuse the visit.
2. The resident will be transported by staff along a predetermined route that avoids contact with any outside individuals.
3. The resident will wear a face mask during transport to and from the visitation booth.
4. The resident will sanitize their hands before and after the visit.
5. The resident will enter and exit the visitation booth through the rear and avoid the sides and front of the booth.
6. The resident may remove their mask while in the visitation booth.
7. If the resident has difficulty hearing, a 2-way speaker may be utilized.
8. The resident will be transported out of the visitation area immediately after visit.

VISITOR(S):

1. Visitors are limited to two (2) individuals from the same household.
2. Visitors must be at least 16 years of age and anyone under 18 must be accompanied by adult.
3. Visitors agree to be Rapid tested by facility staff and must have negative result to visit.
4. Visitors are to sanitize their hands before and after the visit.
5. Visitors are to wear a face mask at all times.
6. Visitors are to park in the main parking lot and limit their foot travel to a direct path from their car to the visitation starting at front door.
7. Visitors are not to bring gifts or food during this visit.
8. Visitors are to leave the campus immediately at the end of their visit.
- 9.

VISITS:

1. Staff will make every effort to accommodate visits, as well as special visits from out of town visitors, special occasions, etc.
2. All visits are by appointment only to ensure appropriate staff availability and taking into account the resident's routine and weather conditions.
3. Visits are scheduled and limited to 45 minutes. This gives staff time to sanitize the area before the next visit.
4. Visits are scheduled through the Life Engagement (Activities) Department ONLY.

Attachment 2

FACILITY NAME Visitors Expectations Fact Sheet

- Visitors must present a verified negative test result within the last 3 days and visitation must be refused if the individual(s) fail to present such negative test results, exhibit any COVID-19 symptoms or do not pass screening questions. A copy of each visitor's test results will be maintained for reference and validation.

Special Considerations:

- End of life and compassionate care visits are not subject to a verified negative test result but are subject to all other COVID-19 screening requirements.
- Visitors are screened for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 prior to resident access and visitation will be refused if the individual(s) exhibits any COVID-19 symptoms or do not pass the screening questions.
- Screening shall consist of both temperature checks and asking screening questions to assess potential exposure to COVID-19 which shall include questions regarding international travel or travel to other states designated under the Commissioner's travel advisory.
- Documentation must include the following for each visitor to the nursing home: first and last name of the visitor; physical (street) address of the visitor; daytime and evening telephone number; date and time of visit; and email address, if available.
- Limited visitation, including, but not limited to, family members, loved ones, representatives from the long-term care ombudsman program (LTCOP).
- No more than 20 percent (20%) of the residents shall have visitors at any one time and only two visitors will be allowed per resident at any one time.
- At this time, visitation is strictly prohibited in resident rooms or care areas with the exception of parents and immediate family members visiting a bed bound resident or end of life.
- Visitation should be limited to outdoor areas, weather permitting. Under certain limited circumstances, as defined by the facility, visitation can be inside, in a well-ventilated space with no more than 10 individuals who are appropriately socially distanced and wearing a facemask or face covering while in the presence of others.
- Visitors under the age of 18 are allowed but must be accompanied by an adult 18 years of age or older.
- Visitors must wear a face mask or face covering which covers both the nose and mouth at all times when on the premises of the NH/ACF's.
- Visitors must maintain social distancing, except when assisting with wheelchair mobility.
- Facilities will provide alcohol-based hand rub, consisting of at least 60 percent (60%) alcohol, to residents, visitors and representatives of the long-term care ombudsman prior to visiting the residents. Rub hands together using friction.
- Visitation hours are by appointment only. A copy of the NH's/ACF's formal visitation plan is posted on the website and broadcasted via email.
- The staff is required to monitor the visitation process. If any visitor fails to adhere to the protocol, he/she/they will be prohibited from visiting for the duration of the COVID-19 state declared public health emergency.