

**HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
PASTORAL CARE POLICY MANUAL
PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELING OF PATIENTS BY COMMUNITY CLERGY**

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Effective Date:	March, 1996	Policy No:	8670.019
Cross Referenced:		Origin:	Pastoral Care
Reviewed Date:	2/05, 7/09, 2/16	Authority:	Pastoral Care Manager
Revised Date:		Page:	1 of 2

PURPOSE:

For many patients, pastoral care and counseling, sacramental ministry and other spiritual services are an integral part of healthcare. Additionally, patients often prefer and expect those services from their own congregation or faith community.

POLICY:

Pastoral Care Services encourages and facilitates visitation of patients by their own Clergy and authorized lay ministers from their own congregation or faith group.

PROCEDURE:

Notification:

1. If approved by the patient or family during admitting, or if requested at any time by the patient or family, Pastoral Care Services will notify the patient's congregation that he or she is a patient at Hackettstown Regional Medical Center.

Orientation, Registration & Approval of Designated Representative

2. To enhance the integration of community Clergy as members of the healing team at Hackettstown Regional Medical Center, Clergy are required to register with Human Resources and Pastoral Care Services and review the HRMC Clergy Orientation Packet (see addendum). Area Clergy should approve any designated representative from their congregation. Identification badges must be worn by Area Clergy and their designee during visitation.

Privacy and Confidentiality

3. The community Clergy and designated representatives visiting patients at Hackettstown Regional Medical Center agree to respect the privacy and confidentiality of patients and families:
 - A. All information obtained through the hospital is confidential.
 - B. Information obtained from the patient should be communicated only with the patient's knowledge and permission. (i.e.: communication via a public prayer list or announcement in a service)
 - C. Information obtained through the community outside the hospital is left to the judgment of the Clergy to communicate.

Religious Report

4. Pastoral Care Services provides registered community Clergy and authorized lay ministers (such as Eucharistic Ministers) the Religion Report for the hospital.

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Sign-in and ID Badge

5. Visiting Clergy and authorized lay ministers are required to sign-in and wear the name badge identifying them as such. Nursing personnel have the right to question anyone visiting Hackettstown Regional Medical Center patients without proper identification.

Special Conditions

6. Pastoral visitors have the duty to observe any special conditions placed upon the patient or the visitor by the physician or nursing staff. Examples include:
 - A. Isolation for purposes of infection control. Note: Precaution sign on door which may require gloves, gowns and masks. Please check with nurse.
 - B. NPO, meaning the patient can take nothing by mouth, usually before surgery or a test. This may preclude communion. Please check with nurse.

Handwashing

7. Pastoral Visitors must follow the Standard Precaution of handwashing, the most important single procedure for preventing infection in a hospital. Wash hands before and after patient contact and after personal hygiene (i.e., using the restroom, coughing, sneezing, etc.) (Restrooms are adjacent to the elevators on each floor.)

Scope of Visitation

8. Community Clergy and authorized lay workers are expected to restrict their visitation and the distribution of religious literature to 1) the members of their own congregation and the patient in the bed next to that parishioner (if any), 2) others specifically requesting, or referred to, the Clergy, or 3) in certain instances (such as the provision of communion to Roman Catholic by an authorized Eucharist minister) to members of their own faith group. All other visits such as room-to-room visiting is not permitted.