

Media Release

Visiting to be re-introduced at Trust hospitals

Friday 29 April 2022

In-patient visiting is to be re-introduced at the Royal Shrewsbury and Princess Royal Hospitals from Tuesday 3 May, after it was previously suspended in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Visitors will be asked to continue to help restrict the spread of the virus by following some key requirements, including wearing face masks and observing social distancing when in the hospitals.

Throughout the pandemic, and in line with national guidelines, The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust (SaTH), which runs the county's two acute hospitals, has needed to restrict visiting to adult wards to just compassionate visiting and for those patients with specific needs.

This will now change from Tuesday 3 May, with all adult in-patients allowed one visitor per day, as well as continuing to provide the additional flexibility and support needed for compassionate visiting. Separate arrangements remain in place for Critical Care, Maternity, Children's wards, and the Neonatal Unit.

COVID-19 numbers in the hospitals remain at significant levels and – in order to protect those being cared for, visitors, and staff – visitors will be asked to not attend if they are COVID-19 positive, are showing relevant symptoms, or have been in contact with someone who is COVID-19 positive. Full details of the new arrangements in place for visiting can be seen on SaTH's website: www.sath.nhs.uk and visitors are asked to please check the website before coming to the hospitals.

Hayley Flavell, Director of Nursing at SaTH, said: *"Suspending visiting was a very difficult decision to make as we know how important it is to patients, and friends and family alike, but it was a necessary one given we care for some of the most sick and vulnerable in society. We are very pleased now to be able to welcome visitors back into our hospitals and will continue to do everything we can to ensure those we care for are supported by their own loved ones.*

"We recognise the real impacts the restrictions had on those staying in our hospitals and we'd like to again thank our communities for their patience and understanding during this time.



COVID-19 remains a very real issue for us, and the wider health system, and we ask that people continue to help us help our patients by following the new guidelines in place.”

Whilst the visiting restrictions have been in place, the Trust has provided a range of other options and alternatives to allow patients and their friends and families to keep in touch. These options will remain in place and include support from our Chaplaincy Team; access for patients to ward iPads/mobile phones if they do not have a mobile phone; and the ability to send a message to those in hospital through our website.

The visiting arrangements and remaining restrictions will be kept under constant review in line with national guidelines.

ENDS

Notes for Editors:

- The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust runs the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital and the Princess Royal Hospital, Telford, and is the main provider of acute hospital care for almost 500,000 people from Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and mid Wales. Patients come to us from Telford, Shrewsbury, Ludlow, Oswestry, Bridgnorth, Whitchurch, Newtown and Welshpool in Powys.
- The Trust continues to work with its partners in health and social care in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and mid Wales to develop patient-focused services that meet the needs of our communities.
- If you have any feedback about local healthcare, independent support and signposting is available from Healthwatch Shropshire, Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin and Powys Community Health Council (CHC):
 - Healthwatch Shropshire: 01743 237884 or email the team via enquiries@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk
 - Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin: 01952 739540 or email info@healthwatchtelfordandwrekin.co.uk
 - Powys CHC: 01686 627632 or email enquiries.powyschc@waleschc.org.uk

For more information contact: Lisa Bailey, Senior Communications Specialist at The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust, on 07784 015889 or email lisa.bailey28@nhs.net