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| ***Incorporating St Patrick’s University Hospital, St Edmundsbury Hospital and Willow Grove Adolescent Unit*** |
| **Policy Name:** Policy on Visiting and Invited Guests |
| **Policy No:** COM 0006 | **Department (*if applicable)*:** All |
| **Date Implemented:** 01/01/2015 | **Policy Updated:** | **Revision Date:**01/01/2018 |
| **Authorisation/Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ SARAH SURGENOR, COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER |

1. **Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there is no risk to the safety and security of service users, visiting celebrities and invited guests and staff arising from visits to the service by approved or invited visitors. An invited guest (an invited guest is a person who has been extended an invitation for a specific purpose) could include, but is not exclusive to, members of the media, VIP’s, Celebrities and Costume Characters. This policy complements other service visiting policies which are concerned with people visiting family and friends in the service. All visits to St Patrick’s Mental Health Services (SPMHS) by approved official visitors must be organised and managed in accordance with this policy.

1. **Objectives**

St Patrick’s Mental Health Services aim to advocate on behalf of people with mental health issues. It is also the aim of St Patrick’s Mental Health Services to provide an excellent service and to promote best practice. Visiting and invited guests can play a significant role in promoting the aims of the service because positive media coverage is important in increasing the awareness of mental health issues and in highlighting recovery principles.

St Patrick’s Mental Health Services recognises the responsibility to protect the safety, security, confidentiality, privacy and dignity of service users, families and invited visitors. SPMHS will take practical measures to ensure robust arrangements are in place to organise and manage these visits safely with minimal disruption.

SPMHS recognises that “approved visits” are often organised as one off events so that standard safety arrangements may not be appropriate or adequate. This also covers circumstances where certain groups or individuals have long term or ongoing relationships with the service such as, fundraisers / campaigners, charity patrons or documentary film crews.

1. **Practice**

The purpose of any visit by any visiting or invited guest should be clearly stated at the beginning of a visit and a record should be made of the purpose of the visit.

Visiting and invited guests must always be accompanied by SPMHS staff at all times if visiting residential/treatment areas. The Communications Department will decide in advance of a visit whether or not invited guests should be accompanied by SPMHS staff if visiting public areas.

Where approved visiting and invited guests, who will be attending SPMHS for extended periods of time and are unlikely to be accompanied must comply with SPMHS HR practices.

All visits and invited guests will be managed by the Communications Department. Any requests for visits or guests must be referred to the Communications Department. Visit supervision may be delegated, by the Communication Department to clinicians, where appropriate.

**Before Visit:**

In advance of any invited guest visit, the Communication Department will liaise with the relevant clinical areas to ensure that it is appropriate to visit the area on the proposed dates.

For celebrity visits, the Communications Department will work with the relevant clinical team to ensure that the proposed visiting/invited guest is appropriate and relevant to the age and interests of the service users and their health care needs.

The Communications Department will notify the Chief Executive Officer of all approved invited guests as soon as details are known or any request is made.

**Arrival at SPMHS Campus**

Upon arrival at SPMHS campus, the approved invited guest will be met by a member of staff, usually a member of the Communications Department. Approved visitors should be met at the main reception area and then escorted to the pre-arranged clinical area where the visit will take place. A member of the Communications Department may delegate the supervision of the visit to another member of staff who has been given responsibility to conduct the visit for a particular reason and know that they must adhere to this policy.

A member of the Communications Department/delegate must arrange for the completion of the Register of Visitors (Appendix 1).

If a visitor arrives at the SPMHS Campus without prior approval and the purpose of the visit is not to visit a service user in a private capacity, the Communications Department must be notified immediately. The guest should be asked to remain at the Reception area until a member of the Communications Department arrives.

Any visits arranged for out of office hours should be communicated by the Communications Department to the ADON. The ADON should follow this policy and also complete the visiting record.

**During Visits:**

A member of the Communications Department/delegated staff member should remain with the approved invited guest at all times during their visit until he/she has left the SPMHS campus.

It is imperative that approved invited guests are not left unaccompanied at any time especially when meeting with service users / visitors.

**Register of Visitors:**

A central Register of Visitors will be maintained and monitored by the Communications Department. This Register must be completed for all invited guests to SPMHS. (Appendix 1)

**Confidentiality / Consent:**

All approved invited guests must be advised by the Communications Department that services users / visitors are entitled to full confidentiality. Unless specific written and signed consent is given by the service users / visitor, information and identities should not be made public upon leaving the SPMHS campus. Service user / visitor consent and confidentiality procedures will be included in any written agreement with documentary production companies or other long term or frequent official visitors.

Staff, as employees and representatives of SPMHS, are expected to behave professionally at all times. During visits of approved invited guests, staff should continue in their roles as usual while supporting the management of the visit where appropriate.

**Invited / Visiting Guests Events – Record of Arrangements**

*One form to be completed for each approved visit of an invited guest.*

*******To be completed by the Communications Department or nominated delegate*.

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| Name of Invited Guest |  |
| Purpose of Visit |  |
| Date of Visit |  |
| Location of Visit |  |
| Details of Visit |  |
| Meeting with Services Users / Visitors? |  |
| Consent received, where appropriate? |  |
| Time of Arrival  |  |
| Time of Departure |  |
| Name of Communications Team / Delegate to accompany guest throughout visit (1)  |  |
| Name of Communications Team / Delegate to accompany guest throughout visit (2) |  |

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_