
Essential Care Partners FAQ

Q: Which patients are eligible to have Essential Care Providers (ECP)?

A: It's important to recognize that not all patients will be eligible/ will benefit from the presence of an ECP. The clinical team will identify if a patient should designate an ECP given potential improvements to their emotional, cognitive or physical state.



Q: What are some examples of emotional, cognitive or physical state situations that could qualify a patient for having an ECP?

A: Some situational examples where the presence of an ECP would be beneficial are:

- Life altering events (i.e. absence of certain visitor could result in long term health effects, emotional or psychological)
- Vulnerable patients who may be unable to communicate effectively or suffering from cognitive impairment
- Patients that require a caregiver to prevent physical hardship or support for transitions in care

Areas eligible for an Essential Care Partner:

- Admission into inpatient bed
- Preplanned surgeries
- Preplanned outpatient visits

Please note: Patients in the Emergency Department **are not** eligible to have an ECP.

Q: How does this affect the safety of everyone in the hospital? Are we expecting to have more people present in the hospital at any given time?

A: The safety of everyone at the hospital remains the top priority at OSMH and this program was created with patient safety in mind. Anyone who wishes to become an ECP will be required to complete IPAC training and abide by our safety protocols at all times as a member of the care team. We are still allowing only one person at the bedside at any given time, ECPs are not granted an exemption to this rule.

Q: How do inpatients begin the process to designate an ECP?

A: Patients wishing to designate an Essential Care Partner should make the request through their care team.

Q: How many ECPs may a patient have?

A: Each eligible patient may designate up to two ECPs. The ECP(s) will function in their role for a minimum of two weeks. At that time patients may choose to designate an alternate ECP or continue on with their current partner(s).

Q: When can ECPs visit?

A: Because they function as part of the care team, ECPs will have expanded access to the hospital, including outside visiting hours, to provide care. Only one ECP may be at the bedside at a time. ECPs must pass screening to enter and follow all OSMH Infection Prevention and Control protocols.

Q: How will ECPs be identified?

A: ECPs will wear a special identification badge at all times in the hospital.

Q: Is long-term care included in the ECP process?

A: No, long-term care is separate process and not eligible to designate ECP's to become part of the care team.

Q: Can an ECP enter the hospital during an outbreak of COVID-19?

A: No, ECPs are not exempt from visiting rules around outbreaks at the hospital. Exceptions are made for compassionate reasons in certain circumstances.

Q: Can a visitor enter the building to see a patient when the ECP is present?

A: No, only one person is allowed at the bedside at any given time.