

**Adventist HealthCare, Inc.**  
**AHC Clinical Policy**  
**Access to Support Persons for Individuals with Disabilities**  
**in Health Care Settings During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

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**Effective Date:** 10/01/20

**Cross Referenced:** AHC CP 180.0, AHC 1.14

**Reviewed:**

**Revised:**

**Policy No:** AHC CP 209.0

**Origin:** IP

**Authority:** CSB

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**SCOPE:**

All AHC entities

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Disability-** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a person with a disability as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. (42 U.S.C. § 12102) - The term “disability” means, with respect to an individual—

(A) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual;

(B) a record of such an impairment; or

(C) being regarded as having such an impairment (An individual meets the requirement of “being regarded as having such an impairment” if the individual establishes that he or she has been subjected to an action prohibited under this chapter because of an actual or perceived physical or mental impairment whether or not the impairment limits or is perceived to limit a major life activity.)

**Support Persons** – Family member, personal care assistant, similar disability service provider, or other individual knowledgeable about the management or care of the patient who is authorized to assist the patient in making decisions. (State of Maryland, Department of Health & Department of Disabilities, September 24, 2020)

**POLICY:**

1. Patients with Disabilities are authorized to designate support persons who may accompany, visit, and stay with individuals with disabilities during their visits to healthcare providers.
2. Support persons are authorized to:
  - A. Accompany, visit, and stay with individuals with disabilities during their visits
  - B. Access restrooms, food and drink
3. All support persons shall be subject to screening for COVID-19 symptoms upon arrival at the hospital and periodically during their stay, if appropriate
  - A. persons with COVID-19 symptoms shall not be permitted to serve as a support person and must immediately leave the hospital.
  - B. AHC entities/health care providers shall provide appropriate PPE.
  - C. all support persons shall be required to don appropriate PPE and comply with AHC policies regarding use and conservation of that PPE.
  - D. individuals with disabilities may propose other reasonable accommodations that comply with AHC infection prevention policies.

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**PROCEDURE:**

1. In the event that a patient with a disability does not have a support person present during the patient's visit, AHC entities/health care providers will facilitate communication between the patient and their families or caregivers (e.g., using a telephone and/or tablet with relevant applications). (If the patient requires interpretation services (e.g., sign language interpreter), team members will secure an interpreter in accordance with AHC 1.14 Communication and Interpreter Services.)
2. AHC entities/health care providers shall provide a copy of their policies regarding support persons for those with disabilities to all patients.
3. AHC entities/health care providers shall explain these policies to patients' support persons, preferably before the patients arrive at the entity/health care provider.
4. AHC entities/health care providers shall post a copy of the NOTICE - Access to Support for Patients with Disabilities in Health Care Settings (September 24, 2020) in an area accessible to all patients.
5. AHC entities/health care providers shall provide a copy of the NOTICE - SUPPORT PERSONS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES (SEPTEMBER 24, 2020) regarding remedies for violation of this notice to all patients.
6. AHC entities/health care providers shall be capable of processing support person requests during all operational hours.
7. The support person point of contact information for AHC entities/health care providers is listed in the gray box below.
8. All support persons will be screened at point of entry with the following questions, and a facemask will be provided once the screen is completed:
  - A. Questions on the screen: Have you experienced fever, abdominal pain (unrelated to labor), nausea, vomiting, loss of ability to smell, chills, flu-like symptoms, headache (unrelated to labor), muscle pain, sore throat, unprotected contact with a known COVID-19 case, or a recent diagnosis of COVID-19?
  - B. Support persons that screen negative for COVID-19 symptoms must sign an attestation.

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GRAY BOX AREA		
Support Person Point of Contact for AHC Entities/Health Care Providers		
Adventist HealthCare Entity	Position/Role	Phone Number
Adventist Medical Group (AMG)	Director of Physician Practice Operations	(o) 301-315-3507
Fort Washington Medical Center (FWMC)	Hospital Clinical Administrator	(o) 301-203-2955 (c) 301-602-6339
Rehabilitation (Rockville Inpatient)	Charge Nurse	(o) 240-864-6150
Rehabilitation (Takoma Park Inpatient)	Charge Nurse	(o) 301-891-5560
Rehabilitation (Outpatient)	Call the Scheduling line and ask for the Director of Outpatient Rehabilitation	(o) 240-864-6202
Shady Grove Medical Center (SGMC)	Hospital Clinical Administrator	(o) 240-826-7522 (c) 240-620-6387
Urgent Care	Director of Operations	(o) 240-665-6144
White Oak Medical Center (WOMC)	Hospital Clinical Administrator	(o) 240-637-4000

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**RESOURCES:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act National Network. <https://adata.org/faq/what-definition-disability-under-ada>

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

State of Maryland, Department of Health & Department of Disabilities, September 24, 2020.  
NOTICE – Access to Support for Patients with Disabilities in Health Care Settings.

State of Maryland, Department of Health & Department of Disabilities, September 24, 2020.  
NOTICE – Access to Support for Patients with Disabilities in Health Care Settings-Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).

State of Maryland, Department of Health & Department of Disabilities, September 24, 2020.  
NOTICE – Support Persons for Individuals with Disabilities.