

Infection Control
HA Visiting Policy Implementation

HA SARS 29/03

6 August 2003

SARS Expert Committee
Request for Submissions from Hospital Authority (HA)

The SARS Expert Committee has requested for information on Visiting Policy (Paragraph 1 (d) in Annex to letter of 21 July 2003 from Secretary, SARS Expert Committee):

" It is noted that on 3 April 2003 HA implemented no visiting policy for all acute wards and restricted visiting policy for convalescent and psychiatric wards in all hospitals. However, some individual hospitals has actually implemented no visiting or restricted visiting policy to medical wards or even all wards before 3 April. For easy reference, please provide information on date of implementation of no visiting or restricted visiting policy in individual hospital in the performa at Appendix B. please also indicate whether the implementation of the enhanced measures were related to the development of circumstances particularly the occurrence of an outbreak in hospital."

The HA hereby submits the following response.

Restriction of visiting to cohort wards and SARS ward was formally announced to the public by HA on 27.3.2003. The HA implemented no visiting policy for all acute wards on 3 April 2003. For non acute wards, two hours per day was designated as visiting hours. Only one visitor was allowed for one patient during the designated visiting hour. Detail records for each visitor were made; and if necessary, the ward staff would check the visitor for symptoms of respiratory illness.

Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH), as the designated hospital for SARS, implemented no visiting for all the acute wards on 28.3.2003. PMH was designated to be a hospital for SARS patients commencing 29.3.03.

The Prince of Wales of Hospital imposed restricted visiting policy at its wards 8A on 11 March 2003 because of the outbreak of staff infection at that time. Appropriate and strict infection control measures for visitors to the ward were instituted before entering the wards.

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