

To: All staff and physicians
From: Geri Geldart, VP Clinical
cc: Margaret Melanson, VP Quality and Patient-Centred Care
Date: April 29, 2021
Re: **Designated Support Person Program**

Because of COVID-19, support to hospitalized patients from family or friends has been considerably restricted. We recognize this has impacted the mental and physical health of patients.

To address this impact, New Brunswick's Regional Health Authorities developed provincial [guidelines](#) to provide a balanced approach for managing support to patients from family or friends in a way that minimizes risk while respecting the needs and rights of vulnerable patients to have support from others, as defined by them, to be involved in their care.

At Horizon, individuals who meet the eligibility requirements can become Designated Support Persons (DSPs). This term emphasizes that they are respected as an essential member of the care team and are "more than a social visitor."

DSP eligibility will be determined based on the specific care needs of the patient and includes patients in hospital longer than 14 days.

To balance the benefit between patient care and the risk of COVID-19, the number of DSPs will be limited to two per patient, with only one DSP permitted at a patient's bedside at a time.

Horizon introduced Phase I of the program in Alternate Level of Care (ALC) units at Horizon's The Moncton Hospital, Horizon's St. Joseph's Hospital and Ridgewood Veterans Wing in Saint John on March 25.

Phase II is set to launch on May 3 for all other Horizon ALC units, the Veteran's Health Unit in Fredericton and a medical unit at Horizon's Miramichi Regional Hospital.

Phase III will be rolled out to all remaining Horizon units on May 31.

Detailed information will be provided to Phase II and Phase III staff who are directly involved in the implementation of the DSP Program. More information for all staff is available [here](#).

We recognize that this is a change in the way Horizon supports family presence and we thank staff for their patience as we continue to strive to provide safe and quality care to our patients and their families.