

Here is the latest news from Canberra Health Services.

Further changes to our services

We are implementing a number of changes to maternity, paediatric and community-based services.

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, one person will be allowed to be the support person in labour. This person will remain the designated visitor for the duration of the woman's stay in hospital, in line with previously announced visitor restrictions.

Routine antenatal appointments will continue, but as the situation is evolving this may need to change and any impacted patients will be contacted. Antenatal classes and other group sessions will be provided in an online format.

An early pregnancy and parenting phone line is being established to support with early pregnancy, maternal and child health, breastfeeding and emotional wellbeing concerns.

These services are essential. We are not aiming to reduce these services, rather, we're finding new ways to deliver them to maintain social distancing and keep everyone safe.

These changes are in addition to the reduction in non-urgent and non-essential outpatient and community activity, and the suspension of all elective surgery other than category 1 and urgent category 2, announced earlier this week.

The Acute Surgical Unit has moved

The Acute Surgical Unit (Ward 8B) moved yesterday (Thursday, 26 March) to Ward 4A.

Ward 4A is located on Level 4 of Building 1 at Canberra Hospital.

Visitor restrictions

As you are aware, we have already tightened visitor access to our health facilities. We're making these changes to ensure that people who don't need to be on site aren't on site. This will help protect our patients and staff.

I ask you to actively communicate the message of one visitor per patient allowed on each site per day.

Moreover, visitors must not enter if they:

- Are unwell with a fever, cough, sore throat or shortness of breath
- Have been overseas or on a cruise ship in the last 14 days

- Have been in close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case in the last 14 days.

Visitors will be asked to visit a hand hygiene station upon entry and encouraged to contact their loved ones by calling them directly, rather than visiting the hospital.

We are now also asking that wherever possible visitors do not bring children with them when they visit our health facilities.

We're looking at special circumstances such as visitors for patients at end of life. We'll continue to keep you up to date with advice and guidance.

Thank you for your assistance in getting these messages to consumers.

Kind regards,

Bernadette McDonald
Chief Executive Officer