

# Hospital Support Persons

A person with a disability has a right to support persons if they are in an emergency department or admitted to the hospital. By state law, St. Charles will welcome support persons for patients with disabilities even if visitors are not allowed. Visitors and support persons are different under Oregon Revised Statute 441.049.

**Document Accessibility:** For individuals with disabilities or individuals who speak a language other than English, St. Charles can provide the following information in alternate formats such as translations, or large print.

Support persons assist patients with disabilities who are admitted to the hospital or are in the emergency department who need help:

1. Communicating
2. Making health care decisions
3. Understanding health care information, or
4. Engaging in daily living activities

St. Charles allows eligible patients to designate at least three support persons and always allows at least one support person with the patient, except for circumstances where restrictions may apply including areas where care is rendered in a congregate setting and/or in a locked unit with psychiatric populations.

The patient's designated support person may be present as need for any discussion in which the patient has asked to elect hospice care or to sign an advance directive or other document allowing the withholding or withdrawing of life-sustaining care, unless the patient specifically requests to have the conversation without the designated support person.

Support persons must comply with existing St. Charles policies and procedures. St. Charles may impose conditions to ensure the safety of patients, support person(s) and caregivers such as:

1. Wearing personal protective equipment provided by the hospital,
2. Following hand washing and other protocols to prevent the potential spread of infections,
3. Being free of any symptoms of viruses or contagious diseases, and
4. Submitting to screenings for viruses or contagious diseases upon entering and exiting the hospital.

If an eligible patient's request to have a support person is denied or limited, the patient, their family, or their support person can request a support care conference to discuss this decision with hospital staff.

If you or your support person has additional questions or concerns, please bring it to the attention of your nurse, a nurse leader or the following:

- St. Charles Patient Experience Department at 541-706-6316.
- Contact Disability Rights Oregon at 503-243-2081.
- Contact Oregon Health Authority, Health Care Regulation and Quality Improvement Division at 971-673-0540.