St. Michael's House

Visitors Policy

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		Signed: 
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Distributed To:	**....**	**All Organisation**
Monitoring Mechanism:	**....**	**Quality and Safety Director**

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All Policies and Procedures are in line with *St. Michael's House* ***Values***

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Versions of Policy

Version	Date	Amendments	Written By / Reviewed by
4.0	October 2022	New format Infection control measures	Gráinne Bourke
4.1	January 2025	Added National Guiding Principles Separated subsections Whole organisation approach	Donnchadh Whelan

St. Michael's House Visitors Policy

The National Guiding Principles Group, under the auspices of the National Quality Improvement Office, HSE Disability Operations, has identified eight guiding principles

Guiding Principles:

1. Choice – Adults have the right to make their own choices in relation to all aspects of their life including decisions around visitors coming to their homes. Therefore, staff members should provide all necessary support to enable individuals to decide who visits their home.

2. Environment – A private space where family members and visitors feel comfortable and secure when visiting, i.e., bedroom, and where visitors for one person are not infringing on the rights of others who live in their home (for example, watching TV or using the kitchen)

3. Communication – visiting arrangements should be with respect to other individuals living in the home. Frequency of visits should also be respectful of other individuals in the house.

4. Time of Visiting - respect should be shown for the time of visit to take in the needs and wishes of others living in the home.

5. Respectful – Visitors must be respectful to all people living in the home and of the home itself.

6. Visitors having meals – It is important that the person's home is a place where they can invite family and friends over for meals/parties but this needs to be done in consultation with other people who live in the home.

7. Safeguarding - Individuals and their visitors have a right to be and to feel safe and secure in their homes, therefore it is important to ensure that visitors are respectful of people living in the home and those working there, at all times.

8. Children visiting – It is important the children are well supervised when visiting a person's home, so that they are not too noisy and disruptive of other people sharing that home

Visitor Policy in Practice

1. **We recognise** the importance of **supporting, developing, and maintaining positive relationships** with family and friends. We **value the role these relationships** play for service users.

2. We **support service users** to invite family and friends to attend events and meals that may be planned. Such invites **will always be extended in consultation with all service users**

3. Family and friends **are welcome to visit at all reasonable times** that suit the service user. We encourage **all residents to make their own choices** including decisions regarding visitors coming to their home.

4. **We recognise** the importance of ensuring that **those supported by the service** and their visitors **feel safe and secure.**

5. **Ordinarily,** there are no set visiting hours and no restrictions on family or friends visiting, **once visitors are always respectful of people living in the home, and of those working there.** A private area for service users to meet with visitors is available.

6. **Visitors** who may **pose a risk to the service users** in our services **or the staff team that supports them, will not** be allowed access. This includes someone who presents as intoxicated or under the influence of drugs, or **someone who is verbally or physically abusive**. The Service Manager and Nurse Manager on Call are available to support frontline staff and the person in charge if this situation arises. If a service user does not wish to see a visitor, then the visitor will not be allowed access to the centre.

7. If a **large group of visitors** are coming to the centre, we will **require enough notice** to ensure there is **adequate space available** to meet with the service user in a comfortable environment, so as **not to impact the other residents**. Some centres **may not be able** to accommodate groups with large numbers and **alternative suggestions** will be made by the centre staff.

8. If there are **visiting restrictions** in place through a **court order**, these will be upheld.

9. We operate a **no smoking campus** policy and **ask all visitors** to kindly respect this.

10. **We always check for ID** if there is a visitor that we don't recognise or know. Staff from utility companies (such as Gas, ESB, Telephone companies,) HIQA, Doctor on Call, etc. are not permitted access without a valid ID.

11. **Visitors to our services are covered under our Safety Statement.** Potential risks to visitors will be pointed out and all visitors are required to follow the direction of staff in the event of an emergency.

12. **Visitor access** to services **will always be facilitated as far as is practicable**, however **access may be limited** for a **specific time period** when dealing with **an issue requiring an infection control intervention.**