



TITLE

WELL INFANT(S) ACCOMMODATION

SCOPE

Provincial – Acute Care

APPROVAL AUTHORITY

Clinical Operations Executive Committee

SPONSOR

Vice President & Chief Health Operations Officer, Central & Southern Alberta
Vice President & Chief Health Operations Officer, Northern Alberta

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Not Applicable

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NOTE: The first appearance of terms in bold in the body of this document (except titles) are defined terms – please refer to the Definitions section.

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OBJECTIVES

- To support a consistent, safe, and **patient**-focused approach for accommodating a **well infant(s)** who does not require medical care, when his/her parent is admitted as a patient to an Alberta Health Services acute care setting.

PRINCIPLES

To acknowledge the importance of parent-infant bonding, promote breastfeeding and/or to meet the patient's health care needs, Alberta Health Services may accommodate a well infant(s) who does not require medical care, as a 24-hour visitor, when the parent is admitted as a patient to an acute care setting, except:

- when safe accommodation for the well infant(s) is not available;
- where the potential safety risk to the parent and/or well infant(s) outweighs the benefits of keeping the parent and well infant(s) together; or,
- when accommodating the well infant(s) may adversely affect the care of other patients.

The well infant(s) shall be the sole responsibility of the patient, his/her family and the designated alternative caregiver(s).

APPLICABILITY

Compliance with this document is required by all Alberta Health Services employees, members of the medical and midwifery staffs, Students, Volunteers, and other persons acting on behalf of Alberta Health Services (including contracted service providers as necessary) working in Acute Care.

ELEMENTS

1. Well Infant(s) as a 24-hour Visitor

- 1.1 When a parent is admitted to an Alberta Health Services acute care facility as a patient, the patient may request his/her well infant(s) become a 24-hour visitor for the duration of the hospital stay.
- 1.2 Requests shall be directed to the manager or designate of the Alberta Health Services patient care unit where the patient is admitted. Well infant(s) accommodation may be requested:
 - a) prior to admission through the patient's **health care professional**; or
 - b) once the patient is admitted to the acute care facility.
- 1.3 Manager or designate approval is required prior to arrival of the well infant(s) on the unit where the patient will be admitted.
- 1.4 In consultation with the appropriate health care professional(s) and (when possible) in collaboration with the patient and their family, the manager or designate may approve or decline the request to accommodate the well infant(s) for up to 24 hours a day.
 - a) Patient safety and well-being shall be the superseding factor in the decision to accommodate a well infant(s).
 - b) Appropriate sleep accommodations must be available for the well infant(s) and the designated alternative caregiver. In circumstances when appropriate accommodations are not available, the request shall be declined. Refer to the Alberta Health Services Safe Infant Sleep Policy.
 - c) The manager or designate may approve well infant(s) accommodation but may limit visitation to less than 24 hours a day in accordance with section 1.4 a) of this policy.
- 1.5 At any time after approval of the well infant(s) accommodation, if patient safety or well-being becomes a concern, the manager or designate may without any notice, limit or suspend visitation or ask that the well infant(s) be taken home.

2. Acknowledgment of Responsibility

- 2.1 The care of the well infant(s) is the sole responsibility of the patient and her or his designated alternative caregiver(s).
- a) The patient must designate an alternative caregiver (“Designated Alternative Caregiver”) to be available 24 hours a day, seven (7) days a week in order to assist with the care of the well infant(s) whenever the patient is not able to independently provide all care necessary (refer to Alberta Health Services ***Well Infant Acknowledgement of Responsibility Form***). Although the patient may list more than one designated alternative caregiver, only one shall be present with the patient at any time.
- b) To facilitate safe accommodations, Alberta Health Services shall, when available, provide an infant bassinet/bed and linen. In circumstances when an infant bassinet/bed is not available, the request shall be declined. All other supplies needed to care for the well infant(s) shall be provided by the patient and her or his family. Refer to the Alberta Health Services *Safe Infant Sleep Policy*.
- 2.2 The Alberta Health Services patient care admitting unit shall be responsible for informing the patient of her or his responsibility for the well infant(s) and the process to be followed in the event that the well infant develops a health concern.

3. Documentation

- 3.1 Acknowledgement of responsibility shall be documented by the appropriate health care professional (e.g., admitting nurse) through obtaining the signature of the patient on the Alberta Health Services *Well Infant Acknowledgement of Responsibility Form*, which shall then be attached to the patient’s **health record** and a copy given to the patient.
- 3.2 The Alberta Health Services *Well Infant Acknowledgement of Responsibility Form* shall document:
- a) Health Services patient care admitting unit.

4. Well Infant(s) Health Concerns

- 4.1 Alberta Health Services assumes no responsibility to monitor or assess the health of the well infant(s) on the admitting unit.
- 4.2 For all non-life threatening health concerns, the family shall make arrangements for the well infant(s) to be assessed through the well infant’s primary health care provider (e.g., family physician, pediatrician, nurse practitioner, midwife), Health Link Alberta or other care providers.
- 4.3 In the event that the well infant develops a life threatening medical emergency, the appropriate emergency procedure (e.g., Code Blue) shall be followed in accordance with established Alberta Health Services protocols.

DEFINITIONS

Designated Alternative Caregiver means the person assigned by the patient for the primary care of the well infant(s) while the patient is unable to fulfill this role during the stay in the Alberta Health Services acute care setting.

Health Care Professional means an individual who is a member of a regulated health discipline, as defined by the *Health Disciplines Act* (Alberta) or the *Health Professions Act* (Alberta), and who practises within scope or role.

Health Record means the Alberta Health Services legal record of the patient's diagnostic, treatment and care information.

Patient means all persons who receive or have requested health care or services from Alberta Health Services and its health care providers. This term is inclusive of residents and clients.

Well Infant(s) means a child aged six (6) months or less, who does not require acute medical care or investigation.

Well Infant Acknowledgement of Responsibility Form means an approved form of documentation that can be used to provide evidence of understanding and agreement to assume all responsibility for the care of the well infant(s).

REFERENCES

- Alberta Health Services Governance Documents:
 - *Safe Infant Sleep Policy (#PS-27)*
- Alberta Health Services Forms:
 - *Well Infant Accommodation Acknowledgement of Responsibility Form (#18191)*

VERSION HISTORY

Date	Action Taken
Click here to enter a date	Optional: Choose an item
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