

## A Welcome Letter to the New Family's Visitors

*Dear Friends of the New Family:*

Welcome! Your visit reflects a loving community of support. However, it is important to balance the need for support with a new mother's need for adequate rest and recovery.

### **PRIVACY MATTERS:**

- Families quickly lose a sense of privacy when staying in a hospital. Checking for the best times to visit shows respect for their family time. We recommend that you make arrangements with the family ahead of time for when you may or may not visit.
- Talk with the family regarding their wishes in regards to Social Media posts (Twitter, Facebook...).

### **AT THE HOSPITAL:**

Consider keeping your **visit brief**. This has several benefits: new parents will be less exhausted, nurses can spend more time teaching infant care, and babies can be fed when hungry. Breastfeeding is a learning experience for both baby and mother and breastfeeding can be difficult in a room full of people.

The Maternity units are often full and busy at all hours. New parents and babies need to rest and sleep whenever they can have a bit of quiet time.

Please keep your voices low and calm to avoid disrupting the families around you.

The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) recognizes the importance of family contact in the growth, development, and well-being of neonates; however, visitors other than parents should be kept to a minimum due to infection risk to these babies.

Ask the new family how you can help them when they return home. Here are a few ideas:

- Prepare meals that can go from freezer to oven.
- Offer to do a few household chores, such as laundry, grocery shopping, lawn mowing, housecleaning, or walking dogs.
- If there are other children in the family, offer to take care of the other children for a few hours.

### **AT HOME, WHEN YOU CALL OR VISIT:**

- Please be respectful and **do not visit us** if you or a member of your family is unwell.
- Please ensure **proper handwashing or use of hand sanitizer** prior to holding our baby.

- Ask the new family how they are doing? As well as how the new baby is doing?
- Offer lots of words of praise for the good job they are doing. All new parents need support in the hard work of taking care of their baby.
- Stress to parents that this is *their* special time to “be taken care of” by others; they should not have to care for anyone but the baby.
- It is usually best to offer advice only when asked for advice. New parents get so much advice they often feel overwhelmed. Support them as they learn about their role and this new and unique baby
- If concerns are expressed about the health of the mom or baby, encourage the parents to call their doctor for guidance.

We hope these suggestions have been helpful to you.

***Thank you.***

***The Maternal Services Staff.***