



MU Australia
Part of the World Wide Mothers' Union

Diocese of Sydney
Level 1
St Andrew's House
SYDNEY SQUARE 2000
Phone 9267 8372

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF OUR HOSPITAL VISITORS

MU Visitors are guests in our hospitals and must only visit with the permission of their branch and strictly comply with the times recommended by each particular hospital.

They must always wear a 'readable' name tag and if their hospital supplies a compulsory 'Visitors Badge', this must be clearly visible too.

The only literature visitors should carry is our 'Welcome to Baby' cards, signed on the back with branch stamp imprinted on it or branch name printed beneath the visitor's signature if your Branch doesn't have its own stamp.

If you visit mothers who haven't had their babies, a 'While you are Waiting' card should be included also. 'Prayers for Little Children' and 'Born for You' gospels may also be carried if your hospital allows this.

Visitors **may** travel in pairs, but **must** only visit **one to a patient**. (This is an MU Australia Council's ruling and has been in place for approximately 10 years now.) This is important especially if you visit all patients, which may include families of many different cultures.

Privacy Legislation requires that you **must not** write anything down and **must not** discuss any patient, baby, family, or staff member.

BASIC RULES FOR VISITING

When reaching your hospital, it may be their system for you to sign a Visitor's book, or report to the Chaplain's Dept. for a visiting list and sign in, (please double check that the list is correct for that day as with mothers who are waiting, anything can happen overnight) please also print your Branch name when signing in, then proceed to the Maternity Unit.

If it is your hospital's practice, go directly to the Maternity Unit, but in all cases advise staff you are visiting.

It is very important to ask, "Whom should I NOT visit", rather than "Is it OK to visit everyone?" The Hospital staff should then write down the bed numbers excluded from visits for that day.

Never visit where a "Sleeping" sign or "Treatment in Progress" sign is displayed.

Visits to new mothers should be brief, friendly, positive experiences, eg Every baby is beautiful, every mother is very clever, and we are honoured to be able to share in this special time with them. Discretion should always be a major consideration in what we say or do.

WE ARE NOT Chaplains or Counsellors. We are there to quietly demonstrate our mission statement of "Sharing Christ's love by encouraging, strengthening, and supporting marriage and family life" so we should not give advice or talk of our own varied experiences.

It is only appropriate **if you are asked by a family** to pray with them and only if you are comfortable with that. There are some wonderful prayers in our MU Service and Prayer Book very suitable for this purpose, eg Prayer 93, 95, 97, and 108 in "Special Prayers" section. This is just a suggestion but again be discreet and considerate of other patients.

It must be stressed that it is very important that **WE NEVER TOUCH A BABY OR PLACE ANYTHING IN THE BABY'S CRIB**. In fact we really shouldn't be touching anyone. After welcoming the baby and some small talk, we should just ask Mum or Dad to select a gift, offer them our card, and move on.

If appropriate you may like to offer a "Prayers for Little Children" card or a Gospel but please be discerning as we don't want to offend anyone. Also if the mother has someone with her, Dad, a visitor, or staff member, please shorten your visit and move on quickly. Similarly, if it's obvious the mother is away somewhere and will be coming back, just leave the gift and card on her bed. Please don't leave anything with staff at the nurses' station – it is not their role and we shouldn't be giving them extra work.

When leaving the hospital, please thank staff at the desk and if appropriate for your hospital, return to the Chaplain's Department or sign out and quietly leave.

MU HOSPITAL VISITOR'S STANDARDS AGREEMENT

I have been instructed in the above requirements for MU Hospital Visiting, and agree to follow these directives.

NAME _____ BRANCH _____

DATE _____ SIGNED _____

Issue Date 1/7/03

Office Use Only

Date Rec'd:
Renewal Date:
Deanery:
Hospital:
Computed:
Initial: