

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

Pandemic Declaration Accountability
and Oversight Committee



Restrictions on hospital visitation under Pandemic Orders

Questionnaire

Purpose of questionnaire

The Pandemic Declaration Accountability and Oversight Committee, as part of its functions issued under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, is conducting a review of the Pandemic (Visitors to Hospitals and Care Facilities) Orders (Nos. 1 to 5) and the Pandemic (Public Safety) Order.

The Committee has issued this questionnaire to all Victorian hospitals to understand how the Orders has been implemented and to identify any issues hospitals have experienced related to the Orders.

The Committee notes that as of 11.59 pm 22 April 2022, restrictions on hospital visitation (except for the requirement to wear masks) were revoked. However, the Committee still wishes to understand the experience your organisation has had with the Orders, including the implementation of previous orders. In particular, challenges faced in enforcing the Orders and managing exemption requests.

Please note, this information may be used and published by the Committee as part its reporting.

Response

Please provide a response to the questionnaire by **9 May 2022**.

The completed questionnaire should be sent to: pdaoc@parliament.vic.gov.au.

Questions

1. Has your organisation implemented visitor restrictions that are in excess of the restrictions detailed in the orders? If so, when did this occur and in what circumstances?
Orbost Regional Health did not have visitor restrictions in excess of restrictions detailed in the orders.
2. Has your organisation received any complaints about visitor restrictions? If so, what were the outcomes of these?
No complaints received at Orbost Regional Health
3. Have there been instances where your organisation has misinterpreted the restrictions under the orders (e.g., when orders have changed or through confusing language in the content of the orders)?
No, we may have taken time to read the orders thoroughly to ensure that we understood the intent and restrictions being applied, but do not believe we have misinterpreted the restrictions
4. How many applications for visiting exemptions has your organisation received and how many been approved?
We have only received 1 application for a visiting exemption and it was approved.
5. What staff member of your organisation has assessed applications for exemptions?
The CEO in consultation with Clinical Directors and NUM
6. What steps were taken to inform all visitors and their relatives of visiting rules and capacity to apply for an exemption?
Signage was posted at the health service, facebook posts and information on the ORH webpage
7. What steps were taken to advise staff of the availability of the exemption process when dealing with the public and visitors to patients?
Weekly communications to staff informed them of the process of exemptions and this was reinforced at the daily operating system meeting and ward meetings and handover time.
8. What was your overall impression of the system, and could it have been improved?
Not sure how it could be improved. For a small rural health service with limited staffing resources and a mixed ward of acute and aged care, the differences in restrictions between the two areas caused some confusion for staff initially. It also required us to allocate a staff member to a concierge role to meet and greet visitors and go through the registration process with them. Not always easy to find someone to fill this role, particularly on weekends and public holidays.