

## Hospital Visitation Guidelines

- Always call ahead to determine a convenient time for visit.
- Dress appropriately for your important visit.
- Pray before you enter the hospital.
- Depend on God for guidance, understanding and direction.
- Knock and identify yourself at door or at the nursing station, identify that you are from Sugar Creek Baptist Church, here to see Mr. or Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_.
- Make the visit friendly and casual, not stiff and formal.
- Enter the setting because you care and not as an expected obligation.  
(You are a Representative of God!)
- Remember your visit should be **kept confidential\***, uplifting, bring comfort, encouragement and hope. **\*exception granted for report of visit to CARE staff**
- Clean hands or use hand sanitizer upon entering and leaving the room.
- Stand or sit near where the patient has good eye contact without strain; do not sit on their bed or touch equipment in the room.
- Ask permission before you touch, read scripture or pray for the patient.
- Be an active listener and do not ask many questions. Listen for cues and concerns offered by the patient and/or caregivers. Do not be afraid of silence or tears.
- Never say, I know how you feel – you don't. Do not give false hope or promise things that you have no control over, including promising to visit again. Do not give medical advice to the patient. Do not discuss the patient's condition to the doctor or medical staff. Do not awaken a patient unless the staff or family member gives permission.
- Open the conversation to what brought them to need this hospital visit and what's the latest from the Doctors. (Let the patient open up, do not dig deeper)
- Next move your conversation to include the following two questions as a way to get to know them (spiritual background).
  - How long have you been a member of Sugar Creek church?
  - Are you in an Adult Bible Fellowship Class? (So you can contact the class leadership.)
- Once you have covered these two questions, it is now time to open the door to inquire into their relationship with our Lord.
- Excuse yourself when a doctor or hospital personnel enters the room unless the patient or family ask you to stay.
- Limit the length of your visit - under 20 minutes is ideal.
- Be prepared to leave reading materials, Bulletin, The Net, Life Change Track (your card)

- You may close the visit by reading a passage from the Bible and always have a prayer to close.
- “If” your visit was at an inappropriate time, leave a card/note and plan on returning later.

Your visit is not complete until you contact Debbie Perry in Pastoral Care Ministry with your update within 24 hours of your visit ...

- We need to know who you visited and we need to know how the visit went in a nutshell.
- You need to send your update to:  
[gsmith@sugarcreek.net](mailto:gsmith@sugarcreek.net), with a copy to [dperry@sugarcreek.net](mailto:dperry@sugarcreek.net)
- In turn we will continue to follow up on your visit.
- Traditional verses of Scripture to share with the sick:
  - Psalms 23:1-6, John 14: 13-18, Romans 5:1-8, Romans 8:26-27, Romans 8:28-34, James 1:2-6, 1 John 5:1-5

The experience can become a Very Special One!

## Questions that prompt storytelling and healing

- How is this hospital visit interfering with life? What are you missing at home, work ...?
- How is your illness affecting you, your wife, family, work?
- What do you worry about the most while you are in the hospital?
- Tell me how you have gotten through difficult times in the past?
- What gives you the strength to cope with your illness now?
- What are you hoping for at this time?
- Has this illness forced you to re-evaluate what you value the most in your life?
- If you had a chance for life redo are there any areas of your life that you would like to be different?
- What makes you feel the most alive?
- What brings you joy and peace in your life?
- How do prayer, scripture reading, journaling, and relaxation bring peace to your daily life?
- What are you hoping for when you leave the hospital?
- Are you able to ask for help and receive that help graciously?

**Use care and discernment in asking questions. Questions can be tiring to a patient, and it may appear to them as imposing.**

*Every opportunity is a Golden invitation from the Courts of Heaven to be a "Messenger of Encouragement and Salvation."*

*The Very Angels must envy our place of service.*

*Dr. W. A. Criswell*

