

**Checklist and Guidelines for Hospital Visiting by Clergy or Officially
Recognised Lay Ministers/ Ministry Team Members**

1. Please observe your professional or pastoral care code of conduct in the hospital or healthcare institution and be identifiable or wear a badge.
2. Please be affirmative and sensitive in your approach to members of staff, relatives and patients, and listen and observe courteously and thoughtfully.
3. Please observe ward etiquette, by making yourself known to the members of staff, asking permission to visit, in case there are treatment factors you should be aware of and by leaving contact details, which may be entered near the patient's religious affiliation on the patient's notes by a member of hospital staff.
4. Infection control: it is a requirement to cleanse your hands with the special liquid supplied on the wards in dispensers, and this must be done before and after visiting each patient in order to prevent cross-infection. Please also observe any special requests on side room doors, which may be indicated by coloured cards, and which may require gloves and protective gown to be worn. If in doubt, ask the staff.
5. Please do not administer Holy Communion to patients, who are 'nil by mouth'; exceptions may be agreed by the medical staff. Sometimes with permission it is possible to administer a small fragment of wafer moistened with water, on a spoon, or a small amount of wine diluted with water. Alternatively, if appropriate the minister may receive on behalf of the patient, and the patient may make their spiritual communion at the same time. This needs to be explained and agreed carefully with the patient in advance.
6. Please observe hand-washing rules before baptising and do not touch an infant (or adult) if advised not to do so, but administer a drop of water, as appropriate. Water can be administered by being absorbed by a small wad of sterile cotton wool, which can then be applied to a baby.
7. Please create privacy as far as possible by drawing the curtains around the bed for the administration of religious rites, prayers and scripture readings; on occasion a member of staff may make a room available.
8. Please use the chapel where possible for quiet, prayer or conversation and leave a record of your use of the facility when you can.
9. Please advise the chaplain of your visit and your contribution to the holistic care of the patient, provided the patient consents to this. You may do this by leaving a message on the chaplain's telephone extension, or by leaving a note at the chaplain's office, or by emailing the chaplain subsequent to your visit.
10. Regular lay hospital visitors are accountable to their Incumbents, and appropriate CRB checks should be in place.

Please commit your visit to God, and continue to take time to look after yourself by reflection, prayer and support.

*Developed by the Diocesan Council for Health and Healing
in conjunction with Bishop Michael Nazir-ali and ACMT
November 2007*