

Setting Boundaries with Visitors Worksheet

This worksheet provides a structured approach to planning and implementing boundaries for visitors of a terminally ill patient.

1. Communication:

CLEARLY communicate the patient's needs and limitations to visitors.

- What are the patient's specific needs and limitations?
- How will you communicate this information to visitors?

(Tips: Use a whiteboard or poster board to list information prominently
Appoint one person to be the "gatekeeper". This person will field visitors and update them on the patient's needs, limitations, visiting rules and boundaries.)

2. Visiting Hours:

Establish specific visiting hours to prevent overwhelming the patient.

- What are the designated visiting hours?
- How will you communicate these hours to visitors?
- Set a time limit. (Tip: Use a timer.)

3. Limiting Visitors:

Restrict the number of visitors at one time to prevent the patient from feeling overwhelmed.

- How many visitors will be allowed at once?
- How will you enforce this limit?

4. Screening Visitors:

Screen visitors to ensure they understand and respect the patient's condition and boundaries.

- What criteria will you use to screen visitors?
- How will you communicate expectations to visitors before their visit?

(Tip: Use your whiteboard! Have a prepared text message with your expectations and requirements.)

5. Respecting Patient's Wishes:

Respect the patient's preferences regarding visitors.

- What are the patient's preferences regarding visitors?
- How will you ensure these preferences are honored?

6. Creating a Calming Environment:

Ensure the visiting area is calm and peaceful.

- How will you create a calming environment for the patient and visitors?
- What resources or support do you need to achieve this?

7. Encouraging Caregiver Self-Care:

Encourage caregivers to prioritize their well-being and set boundaries with visitors.

- How will you support caregivers in setting boundaries with visitors?
- What self-care strategies will you encourage for caregivers?

8. Utilizing Healthcare Professionals:

Seek guidance and support from healthcare professionals.

- Who are the healthcare professionals you can turn to for support?
- How will you involve them in discussions about visitor boundaries?

(Tip: Hospice has Social Workers who can navigate this with you.)

9. Flexibility:

Remain open to adjusting boundaries as the patient's condition changes.

- How will you monitor the patient's comfort and adjust boundaries accordingly?
- What factors might prompt a need to reassess visitor boundaries?

10. Providing Alternatives:

Offer alternative ways for well-wishers to show support.

(Tips: Zoom, Facetime, text message, send a video)

- What alternatives will you provide for those unable to visit in person?
- How will you communicate these alternatives to friends and family?

Action Plan:

- List specific steps to implement each of the above strategies.
- Assign responsibilities to caregivers, family members, and healthcare professionals.
- Set a timeline for implementing these actions.

Follow-Up:

- Schedule regular check-ins to assess the effectiveness of the boundaries set.
- Make adjustments as necessary based on feedback from the patient, caregivers, and healthcare professionals.