

Unrestricted hospital visiting hours up patient satisfaction

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(HealthDay)—Open visitation improves the patient and family experience and does not cause interference for hospital staff, according to research published in the *Journal for Healthcare Quality*.

David Shulkin, M.D., of Morristown Medical Center in New Jersey, and colleagues compared patient satisfaction scores before and after enactment of a 24-hour visitation policy at a 690-bed tertiary acute care facility and 78-bed rehabilitation hospital.

The researchers found that, for the first eight months of the open visitation policy, the medical center received 14,444 visitors during the after-hours period from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. During this time, there was no change in the incidence of security events and no increase in the number

of complaints from [patients](#) or visitors. Surveys showed an increase in patient satisfaction scores. Staff members received fewer phone calls requesting patient updates and reported that the experience was positive.

"Our experience suggests that implementation of open visitation at [acute care](#) and long-term care institutions can be accomplished with little disruption, is well utilized by visitors, improves the patient and family experience, and is generally accepted by [hospital staff](#)," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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