



(Times Photo by Lloyd Stille)
Visiting Hours
 ... 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Area Hospitals Establish Visitor Control Program

By MARGARET MARTIN
 Times Medical Writer

Standardized Hospital Visiting Rules:

Visiting periods: 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
 Minimum age of visitors: 12 years.

Number of visitors per patient: Limit of two.

Area hospitals and citizens will enter a new era today as a new set of uniform rules and regulations affecting hospitals Northwest Louisiana Hospital Association become effective.

UNANIMOUS VOTE

The new rules were approved unanimously by members of the association which stretches from the Texas state line to Arcadia and from the Arkansas state line to Natchitoches.

And the new visitor control program has been officially endorsed by the Shreveport Medical Society and unofficially applauded by hospital patients.

Shreveport and Bossier City hospitals affected by the new regulations are Bossier City General Hospital, Doctors Hospital, Fairfield Hospital, Highland Hospital, Physicians and Surgeons Hospital, Schumpert Hospital and Willis-Knighton Memorial Hospital.

Medical centers which were in accord with the new rules, but not participating because regulations are already established and enforced are the Barksdale Air Force Base Hospital, Confederate Memorial Medical Center, the Veterans Administration Hospital and Shriners' Hospital for Crippled Children. Prospective visitors should check with those individual hospitals concerning their rules.

THREE MONTH STUDY

The district association unanimously approved the restrictions after a three-month study and a series of meetings by a special committee headed by James K. Elrod, administrator at Willis-Knighton.

The special study included a survey of member hospitals in the association. Seventeen out of 24 hospitals responded and the committee took the present most prevalent visiting hours listed at the various hospitals in determining the rules.

Twelve years was the most consistent age limit, but ages ran from no age limit to 15.

The survey showed that: nine hospitals limited ages of visitors to 12 years; four hospitals, 14 years, one hospital listed the age at 16 and another at 10 and two hospitals had no age limit.

Visiting hours ranged from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in one hospital to 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. in another hospital and

many varied times between the two extremes.

Elrod emphasized that the rules did not, of course include members of the patient's immediate family or "accompanists" staying with the patient, "but in some areas the routine of individual hospitals may dictate additional rules."

PIONEER IN FIELD

The Northwest Hospital District is considered a pioneer in the field of visitor control since it is one of the first such groups to work out a program acceptable to all hospitals in a particular area.

Elrod said that the rules, especially visiting hours, are considered a major problem in most hospitals across the nation and enforcement of such regulations "are pertinent to good patient care and a smooth running hospital."

"In addition," he added, "such uniform rules in one area will make it easy for people will only have to know one set of rules, instead of one for each hospital. The consistent visiting hours also will make it easy for people to go from one hospital to another in a set time."

"Visitors can easily upset the routine of the hospital.

"For instance, there is a set time for meals, medications, treatments and doctor's visits. When visitors interrupt a routine — at meal time, for instance — the whole thing can be upsetting to the patients as well as hospital personnel and the doctor, and, can, in fact, interfere with the patient's recovery.

"Some patients have even said they will be grateful for the rules," he added.

In a letter to the Shreveport Medical Society, Elrod pointed out "there is no doubt but that a brief visit from friends and loved ones can lift the spirits of a person who is hospitalized and help speed him toward recovery; but that at the same time such visits, if too frequent and too long can be detrimental to the health of the patient. Unrestricted visiting can have an adverse effect on the quality of care a hospital can give.

HOSPITALS ACT

"To lessen the chance of such detrimental effects upon patients, all of the private, general hospitals in the Shreveport area have agreed to participate in the visitor control program sponsored by the Northwest Louisiana Hospital District . . ."

The Shreveport Medical Society's Board of Directors, in a letter to Elrod, unanimously endorsed "Such a visitor control program in the Shreveport area. The board was pleased to know that all Shreveport hospitals have agreed to participate.

"I extend to you the Shreveport Medical Society's best wishes for early implementation of this program."

Working with Elrod on the committee were Dick Hermann, administrator at Bossier General Hospital; and Capt. Lewis Thrasher of the Barksdale Air Force Base Hospital.

Officers of the Northwest Louisiana Hospital District are president, R. E. Blue, assistant administrator at Willis-Knighton; vice president, Kennie Bowman, administrator at Minden Sanitarium, and secretary-treasurer, Robert Hall, associate administrator at Confederate.

BABY'S FIRST SHOES ARE PRICELESS

DON'T THROW THEM AWAY

Preserve them forever in bronze, during our **MOTHER'S DAY SPECIAL**

STYLE 74