

## **Chaperones**

We are committed to developing a culture that promotes the privacy and dignity of all our patients. We seek to provide a safe, comfortable environment where patients and staff can be confident that best practice is being followed at all times and the safety of everyone is of paramount importance.

Intimate examinations and treatments can be embarrassing or distressing for some patients. A chaperone may assist in supporting and reassuring a patient during an examination or procedure. The healthcare professional may also require a chaperone to be present for certain consultations in accordance with the Chaperone Policy.

### **What to expect?**

You can request a chaperone be present during any examination or procedure that you feel uncomfortable with. Expect the role of the chaperone to be clearly explained to you and the person introduced to you by the healthcare professional who is to undertake the examination or procedure.

### **Arranging a chaperone**

If you would like to arrange a chaperone in advance please inform the receptionist when you book your appointment so they can arrange for a chaperone to be available. If during your consultation the clinician feels a chaperone is needed, they will attempt to arrange this, if possible, during the consultation. In the unlikely event a chaperone cannot be arranged you may be asked to arrange another appointment.

### **What is the chaperones responsibility?**

- Ensure that their conduct is sensitive and respectful of your privacy and dignity
- To reassure you if you are distressed or experiencing any discomfort and to communicate this, if appropriate, to the clinician
- Ensure that they can communicate with you a way that you can understand
- Be familiar with the procedures involved in a routine intimate examination
- Stay for the whole of the examination and be able to see what the doctor is doing, if practical
- Practical help to the clinician e.g. handing instruments, etc.
- Be prepared to raise concerns if they are concerned about the doctor's behaviour or actions

### **Can a family member act as a chaperone?**

Your family member cannot act as a formal chaperone. You can however request that a member of your family or a friend be present as an informal chaperone during the examination.

### **Can I refuse a chaperone?**

You have the right to decline a chaperone; in this instance we will document the reasons for your refusal and the healthcare professional will discuss with you as to whether the examination should proceed.

### **Confidentiality**

All our staff and clinicians are trained to a high level on the laws and policies relating to data protection and confidentiality. Your chaperone will not disclose any information obtained during your examination or procedure. In all cases where the presence of a chaperone may intrude in a confidential clinician-patient discussion, their presence will be

confined to the physical examination only. One-to-one communication with the clinician will continue once the chaperone has left.

**Who can be a chaperone?**

In most cases, a chaperone is a qualified nurse or healthcare assistant. In some circumstances a non-clinical member of staff may be asked to chaperone. All clinical and non-clinical staff have received chaperone training.