



Dr. Wayne Cottrell

Your Private GP | Canary Wharf London

## **Chaperone Policy**

- We are committed to providing a safe comfortable environment, where patient and staff can be confident that best practice is being followed at all times
- The safety of everyone is of paramount importance
- A formal chaperone is a person who serves as both a witness for the patient and the medical practitioner, as a safeguard for both parties during a medical examination or procedure and is a witness to continuing consent of the procedure. Family members or friends cannot act as a formal chaperone
- An informal chaperone is still acting as a witness during a medical examination/procedure, however with written consent from the patient and clinician they can be a family or staff member that has not received training

There are two considerations involved in having a chaperone:

- to assist during intimate examinations: namely for the comfort of the patient and
- the protection of the doctor or nurse from allegations of impropriety

### **What is an intimate examination?**

- Obvious examples are examination of the breasts, genitals and the rectum, but it also extends to examinations in dimmed lighting such as eye exams, taking blood pressure or palpating apex beat, as this involves touching or being close to a patient

### **The rights of the Patient**

- All patients are entitled to have a chaperone present for any consultation, examination or procedure where they feel one is required
- Patients have the right to decline the offer of a chaperone
- However, the clinician might feel that it would be wise to have a chaperone present for their mutual protection, for example and intimate exam in a young adult of the opposite gender
- If the patient still declines the doctor will need to decide if they are happy to proceed in the absence of a chaperone. This will be a decision based on both clinical need and the requirement for the protection against any allegations of improper conduct

### **Appropriately trained chaperones**

- Appropriately trained chaperone is defined as a member of staff who has completed the practice training program and has been assessed as a competent member of the practice clinical team

### **Consultations involving intimate examinations**

- Establish if need for intimate exam and discuss with patient
- Give patient opportunity to ask questions
- Obtain patients consent
- Offer a chaperone for intimate examinations and if declined record in notes

### **The patient can expect the chaperone to be:**

- Available if requested
- Pleasant approachable professional in nature able to put them at ease
- Competent and safe
- Clean and presentable
- Confidential

### **Where will the chaperone stand?**

- This depends on several factors, the nature of the exam and whether or not the chaperone will be helping
- The clinician will explain this to the patient

### **Should you have a concern re the chaperone**

- Patients should report this via the clinic complaints procedure

### **When a chaperone is not available:**

- We try and avoid this happening. Patients are asked at time of booking if they require a chaperone
- Otherwise, if a chaperone is not available we will reschedule

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