

Chaperone and Sexual Abuse Prevention Policy

I. PURPOSE

To create a policy guiding clinicians on circumstances that warrant an in-room chaperone be provided during a physical exam.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

A. When are chaperones provided?

- All patients visiting the Student Health Center will be informed of this policy and that they have a right to request a chaperone at any time prior to or during a medical visit that will require the patient to be partially or completely disrobed.
- A chaperone will be provided without request and in all cases for patients who require genital, rectal, pelvic or breast exams [“intimate examinations”].
 - A patient has the right to decline a medical chaperone during an intimate examination. Clinicians are not required to proceed if they do not feel comfortable performing the exam without a medical chaperone. If a clinician is not comfortable proceeding without a medical chaperone, they will discuss and document alternatives acceptable to both patient and clinician.

B. Who can serve as a chaperone?

- A chaperone may include any non-student staff member of the Student Health Center.
- A chaperone will be present during an intimate examination even if the student is accompanied by a trusted companion.

C. How is a chaperone request handled?

- The request for a chaperone will always be honored.
- Clinicians will explain to patients the role of the medical chaperone in the examination.
- In the event there is no staff member available to chaperone, the examination will be rescheduled.

D. What is the role of the chaperone?

The chaperone will:

- be sensitive and respect the patient's dignity and confidentiality
- reassure the patient if necessary
- be familiar with the procedure involved in a routine intimate examination

- stay throughout the examination and be able to see what the clinician is doing, and
- be prepared to raise concerns about a clinician's behavior or actions.

E. How is an exam with a chaperone conducted?

- The attending clinician will provide opportunity for private conversation with the patient before or after the examination without the chaperone present. Clinicians should minimize inquiries or history taking of a sensitive nature during a chaperoned examination.
- If and when it is necessary to undress, the student will be given adequate time and privacy to do so, and the staff member will knock on the door before re-entering the room.
- The student will be examined by the nurse practitioner with a nurse or other staff member present to chaperone. Unless assisting with the procedure, it is recommended that the chaperone stand near the head of the bed of a recumbent patient, or behind the standing patient.
- Efforts will be made by all clinicians to ensure patients are appropriately draped and/or gowned during their examinations.
- The presence and name of the patient chaperone, or that a chaperone was offered but declined, should be documented in the patient's medical record by the clinician.

III. CONTACT

For more information or if you have question about this policy, please contact the [Student Health Center](#).

IV. HISTORY

Adopted April 4, 2019

Updated October 2019