**PURPOSE**: To ensure a formal chaperone is offered to all patients.

**POLICY**: Watkins Health Services (WHS) will offer a chaperone to all patients.

**PROCEDURES**:

1. It is the responsibility of all health care providers to:
   1. Ensure all patients are:
      1. Offered a chaperone for any visit, regardless of whether it is expected to be sensitive.
      2. Informed they may request a chaperone at any point during their visit at WHS.
      3. Informed they may request a chaperone when receiving care in any ancillary areas at WHS.
   2. Document in the EHR when a chaperone has been offered:
      1. If the chaperone was declined.
      2. If the chaperone was accepted, include the name of the chaperone.
2. The provider may request a chaperone at their professional discretion, even if the patient has declined the initial offer.
   1. If the patient continues to decline, the provider may assist the patient in making arrangements to receive care with another WHS provider.
3. It is the department supervisor’s responsibility to:
   1. Ensure staff are trained in department procedures for chaperoning.
   2. Ensure staff are available to serve as a chaperone when needed.
   3. Ensure signage is posted in relevant patient care areas to facilitate awareness of patient rights to have a chaperone present during an examination.
4. It is the chaperone’s responsibility to:
   1. Be sensitive, professional and respectful of the patient’s dignity and confidentiality.
   2. Provide reassurance to the patient if necessary.
   3. Be familiar with any planned procedure.
   4. Stay throughout the duration of the visit in a position where the procedure can be observed.
   5. Understand their responsibility to raise concerns about a patient’s or provider’s behavior or actions.
5. Formal chaperone versus emotional support
   1. A formal chaperone is considered to be a trained WHS staff member.
   2. Per patient request, WHS will allow a friend or relative throughout the visit to provide emotional support.
      1. The patient’s emotional support person cannot act as a formal chaperone.
      2. If a patient requests an emotional support person be present, WHS will, in addition, provide a formal chaperone.

**REFERENCES:**

Code of Medical Ethics / AMA – American Medical Association, Copyright 1995-2017, retrieved April 12, 2018; [https://www.ama-assn.org/sites/default/files/media-](https://www.ama-assn.org/sites/default/files/media-browser/code-of-medical-ethics-chapter-1.pdf) [browser/code-of-medical-ethics-chapter-1.pdf](https://www.ama-assn.org/sites/default/files/media-browser/code-of-medical-ethics-chapter-1.pdf)

College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario: Maintaining appropriate boundaries and preventing sexual abuse, 2008. Retrieved April 12, 2018 from : <http://www.cpso.on.ca/Policies-Publications/Policy/Maintaining-Appropriate-Boundaries-and-Preventing>

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