
SUBJECT: SENSITIVE PHYSICAL EXAMS AND MEDICAL CHAPERONES

DATE: 12/12/18

POLICY: University Health Services is committed to providing safe and welcoming patient care that reflects patients' preferences. As such, patients are afforded the opportunity to have their medical interactions conducted with appropriate privacy and confidentiality protections.

Medical chaperones are available for any consultation, examination, treatment or procedure where the patient or clinician requests it.

PURPOSE: All medical interactions have the potential to be uncomfortable or difficult for patients. Sensitive examinations, treatments or procedures may predispose patients to feelings of vulnerability and emotional discomfort. Patient response to those feelings will vary based on individual beliefs, religion, culture, and experience. Attention to privacy offers important benefits to both patients and clinicians.

DEFINITIONS

1. Clinician: a MD/DO, NP, PA or RN.
2. Sensitive examinations, treatments or procedures: those that occur with the patient, whether disrobed, partially disrobed or in street clothing, involving the genitalia or rectum (regardless of gender) or female breast. Examples include: breast exams, procedures of the pelvic floor or urogenital diaphragm, vaginal or rectal exams.

PROCEDURE / GUIDELINES:

1. Always employ appropriate disrobing and draping practices to respect the patient's privacy.
2. Notification to patients of availability of medical chaperones will be posted in examination rooms and included on the website.
3. A clear, verbal explanation of the nature of any examination or treatment must be provided to the patient before and during the sensitive exam or treatment. A written description of the sensitive exam protocol is made available on the UHS website.
4. Medical chaperones are available for all sensitive exams, treatments or procedures. The medical chaperone:
 - a. Assists the patient and the healthcare provider in completing sensitive exams and procedures in a safe and respectful manner.
 - b. Should promote and enhance the patient's comfort, safety, privacy, security, and/or dignity during sensitive exams or procedures.
 - c. Provides protection to the healthcare professional against false allegations of improper behavior.
 - d. Will stand in a location where they are able to observe the exam or procedure, and assist as needed.
 - e. May provide support to the patient with personal hygiene, toileting, or dressing

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requirements if the patient requests or needs it.

5. For any sensitive exam of a minor a medical chaperone will be present.
6. A medical chaperone will be made available to any patient upon request. If one is requested and none is available at that time, the patient must be given the opportunity to reschedule their appointment within a reasonable timeframe.
7. The medical chaperone's name and title is documented in the encounter note.
8. If a patient declines/refuses a medical chaperone for a sensitive examination, the clinician must document in the record that an offer was made and declined. The clinician retains the final decision whether to proceed without a medical chaperone.

Annual Review

	Signature	Date
Reviewed:	REM	5/31/19
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