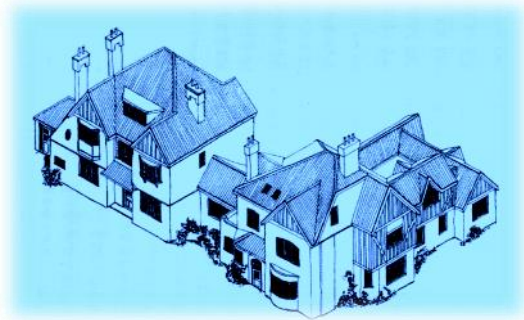


Parkbury House Surgery

Chaperone Policy



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Chaperone Policy

1. Purpose

Our chaperone policy upholds the practice's policy on equity and diversity. A chaperone may be required in the following situations:

- Intimate examinations. These are examinations of rectal, genital or breast area.
- For patients with certain cultural or religious beliefs any examination requiring removing of clothing. This alone may be abhorrent and when dealing with such patients GPs need to approach the subject with particular sensitivity.

2. Patients with disabilities

A patient with a severe mental or physical disability is unlikely to attend surgery unaccompanied. GPs should endeavour to communicate with the patient with the assistance of the relative or carer accompanying them. Particular care should be taken to ensure the patient is not made to feel that their wishes are being ignored.

3. Examinations by a member of the opposite sex

Examinations done by member of the opposite sex are in some religions effectively taboo. Ideally this will be established during the booking or triage of the appointment.

4. Examinations on patients with poor English

It would be unwise to proceed with any examination unless the GP is satisfied that the patient understands and can give informed consent. If an interpreter is present they may be able to double as a chaperone. If an urgent clinical need for an examination is evident, every effort should be made to communicate with the patient by whatever means are available before proceeding with the examination

5. Examinations on children

Children are expected to be accompanied by a parent or adult relative to whom the need for the examination will be explained and consent obtained. They will be expected to remain with the child during the examination, so a further chaperone will not normally be necessary. The GP will obviously seek to reassure the child and explain the examination if appropriate to the child.

Teenagers aged 13 and upwards can consent to examinations provided the GP is sure that they have sufficient competence to understand the nature and purpose of the examination. It would be advisable for a chaperone to be present or in the case of a female patient for the examination to be carried out by a female doctor.

Under all these situations the doctor or nurse will

- Explain why the examination is needed and what it will involve.
- Obtain the verbal expressed permission before proceeding.
- Use competence assessment to assess decision.
- Give the patient privacy to dress and undress
- Allow the patient to postpone or decline to be examined.
- If appropriate offer a chaperone and document the fact that the patient has been offered a chaperone and that permission has been given or declined

6. Who should act as a chaperone?

There is no common definition of a chaperone and their role varies considerably depending on the needs of the patient, the healthcare professional and the examination being carried out.

In the first instance a nurse/HCA should be used as a chaperone. When a nurse or HCA is not available to act as a chaperone all team members who are DBS checked and have completed Bluestream training and read our policy can act as a chaperone.

The doctor/nurse must always check with the patient whether they are comfortable with a non-clinician to act as a chaperone if a nurse/HCA is not available this must be recorded on the patient's records by the doctor/nurse seeing the patient.

The chaperone must identify themselves by name and role in the practice before carrying out the role of chaperone (This must also be recorded on the patient notes). The Chaperone must stand inside the examination curtain and at the head of the patient and remain vigilant and aware at all times of the intimacy of the examination.

Sometimes the patient's friend or relative may be thought appropriate but if the doctor/nurse feels uncomfortable for any reason they can request the presence of a chaperone themselves.

7. Read Codes and recording information

- The following read codes should be used by all clinicians to record information into patient electronic records after consultation in regards to Chaperone.
 - Z1821- Chaperone Offered
 - Z1822- Chaperone Present
 - Z1823- Chaperone Refused
- The clinicians should also record in patient's records the name of the person who assisted as a chaperone.
- The chaperone should record in the patient's notes (under their own EMIS log in).
- If any intimate examination has been carried out the clinicians should record this information in details.

8. Examinations on home visits

GPs are at an at an increased risk of their actions being misconstrued or misrepresented if they conduct intimate examinations at patient's homes and it would be better to encourage these to be done at the surgery if at all possible.

A chaperone for a home visit will be made available if required.

9. Appendix 1 Patient Information displayed on notice boards, plasma screen and on website

Chaperone Support

During your care, a clinician may need to examine you. Occasionally this may involve an examination of intimate areas. We understand that this can be stressful and embarrassing. If this sort of examination is necessary:

- We will explain to you why the examination is necessary and give you the opportunity to ask questions;
- We will explain what the examination will involve;
- We will obtain your verbal permission before we carry out the examination;
- You will be offered a chaperone to be present during the examination or you may ask for a chaperone (a chaperone is a member of the practice who is trained to accompany you whilst you are being examined);
- At all times we will respect your privacy during the examination and while dressing and undressing;
- Your clinician will be happy to discuss any concerns you have about this.

Confidentiality - The chaperone will only be present for the examination itself, and most discussion with you will take place while the chaperone is not present. Please be assured that all practice staff understand their responsibility not to divulge confidentiality information and they are bound by our confidentiality policy.

You can refuse a chaperone, and if you do so this will be recorded in your medical records.