

## **CHAPERONE POLICY**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that clients are aware that a chaperone is available, if required. This will be particularly relevant to intimate examinations.

By offering a chaperone, Home Visit Doctor aims to protect a patient's dignity and reduce the risk of complaints.

Where possible, same sex doctors will be used to negate this but even so, a chaperone should still be offered if indicated or required.

### **Scope of Policy**

Chaperoning procedure is as follows:

- The doctor will try to anticipate if an intimate examination may be needed at the point of triage on the phone:
  - The patient will then be offered a same sex doctor, if available.
  - If same sex doctor is not available at a suitable time for the patient, the patient can:
    - Request a chaperone from 'Home Visit Doctor' if available
    - Choose to have a friend or relative present
    - Request a visit is made but delay any intimate examination to a further appointment. This can be discussed with the doctor.\*
- If the doctor is already present at the patients house without having ascertained the need for an intimate examination on the triage. The patient may:
  - Choose to have a friend or relative present
  - Request a further visit is made when a 'same sex' doctor is available.\*
  - Request a further visit is made when a chaperone can be arranged.\*

\* Note: in these circumstances, the patient may need to pay for a further visit

### **Process for an Intimate Examination:**

- When an intimate examination is deemed necessary, the 'Home Visit Doctor' will:
  - ◆ Explain, in patient-friendly terms, what the examination involves, so that the patient has a clear idea what to expect, including the possibility of any pain or discomfort.
  - ◆ Give the patient an opportunity to ask any questions.
  - ◆ The doctor must then obtain the patient's permission before the examination (verbal or written, depending on the procedure) and be prepared to discontinue the examination if the patient asks.
  - ◆ The patient will be given privacy to undress and dress. The patient will provide a drape in their home to maintain their dignity. The doctor will not assist the patient to remove clothing unless they have indicated that they require assistance and they are happy this is provided.
  - ◆ It will be recorded on the patient notes that permission has been obtained.

### ➤ NOTES:

- Although the patient may be happy without a chaperone, the 'Home Visit Doctor' has the right to refuse examination without a chaperone being present.
- If the patient does not want a chaperone, it will be recorded that an offer was made and declined.
- If a chaperone or friend or family is present, the chaperone's identity will be required to be documented in the patient's notes.

### **Policy Monitoring and Review**

Policy will be reviewed every 3 yearly or when legislation or Department of Health Guidelines requires.

### **Compliance with Statutory Requirements**

- National Care Standards Commission Core Standard C2.