

CHAPERONE POLICY

It is the policy of CMMC to provide and utilize chaperones during intimate examination. For the protection of the patient and the Healthcare Provider, any patient or provider may request that an additional healthcare employee be present to serve as a chaperone during any medical examination or treatment. The request for a chaperone is to be documented in the medical record and communicated to the next care provider. If a chaperone is requested, the presence and name of the chaperone is to be documented in the medical record.

Patient examinations require an atmosphere of sensitivity, caring and support with respect for dignity, privacy, and patient autonomy. While all patients may be sensitive to a physical examination, the following groups of patients are identified as being vulnerable and a chaperone must be in attendance with any healthcare provider during intimate examinations except during a life-threatening emergency when immediate medical interventions are necessary:

- Minors
- Patients unresponsive or sedated lacking decision-making capacity
- Patients with cognitive impairment
- Patients with known mental health diagnoses who lack the capacity to give informed consent.
- Patients presenting with or history of sexual abuse.
- Patients with a language barrier, religious, or cultural considerations

A chaperone also provides a safeguard for both patient and provider and can discourage unfounded allegations of improper behavior. Document the presence of the chaperone.

In cases where patient abuse is suspected, great care and sensitivity must be used to allay fears.

If at any time the chaperone observes inappropriate conduct, they are to request that the examination be stopped, and report the event immediately to their supervisor, the Administrator on Duty or the Medical Service Chief of Staff. Failure to comply with this policy, including the reporting provision, may constitute a breach of CMMC Code of Conduct. If anonymity is desired, the Ethics Compliance Hot-line can also be called at (877-508-LIFE).

An emergency medical examination to rule out an emergent medical condition is not to be delayed awaiting a chaperone.

The patient and their designated support person will be provided information upon admission that includes their rights as a patient and the process for obtaining assistance at any time they do not feel safe.

For more details and procedure for implementation – refer to the Chaperone use policy on Policy Stat.