

# The Limes Medical Centre

## Chaperone Policy

The Limes Medical Centre is committed to providing a safe, comfortable environment where patients and staff can be confident that best practice is being followed at all times and the safety of everyone is of paramount importance.

This Chaperone Policy adheres to local and national guidance and policy –i.e.:- ‘NCGST Guidance on the role and effective use of chaperones in Primary and Community Care settings’. <S:\CQC\Chaperone model framework in primary care.pdf>

The Chaperone Policy is clearly advertised through the website, can be read at the Practice upon request, a poster is also displayed in the Practice Waiting Area, Reception Desk and in all clinical rooms.

All patients are entitled to have a chaperone present for any consultation, examination or procedure where they consider one is required. The chaperone may be a family member or friend, but on occasions a formal chaperone may be preferred.

The Healthcare Professional may require a chaperone to be present for certain consultations.

Staff are aware of and have received appropriate information in relation to this Chaperone Policy via Blue Stream E-learning. <S:\CQC\Chaperone Training 2022.xlsx>

All trained chaperones understand their role and responsibilities and are competent to perform that role.

<S:\CQC\Nina-Warner-Chaperoning cert 2022.pdf>

<S:\CQC\Chantel-Jacklin Chaperoning cert Apr 2022.pdf>

<S:\CQC\Alison Franzen Chaperone Certificate 2022.pdf>

<S:\CQC\Julie Haynes Chaperoning Cert 2022.pdf>

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.

Their role can be considered in any of the following areas:

- Emotional comfort and reassurance to patients
- Assist in examination (e.g. during IUCD insertion)
- Assist in undressing
- Act as interpreter
- Protection to the healthcare professional against allegations / attack)

## **Checklist for consultations involving intimate examinations**

<S:\CQC\Intimate examinations and chaperones.pdf>

- Chaperones are most often required or requested where a male examiner is carrying out an intimate examination or procedure on a female patient, but the designation of the chaperone will depend on the role expected of them, whether participating in the procedure or providing a supportive role.
- Establish there is a genuine need for an intimate examination and discuss this with the patient and whether a formal chaperone is needed.
- Explain to the patient why an examination is necessary and give the patient an opportunity to ask questions. The chaperone would normally be the same sex as the patient and the patient will have the opportunity to decline a particular person as a chaperone, if that person is considered not acceptable for any reason.
- Offer a chaperone or invite the patient to have a family member / friend present.
- If the patient does not want a chaperone, record that the offer was made and declined in the patient's notes.
- Obtain the patient's consent before the examination and be prepared to discontinue the examination at any stage at the patient's request.
- Record that permission has been obtained in the patient's notes.
- Once the chaperone has entered the room, they should be introduced by name and the patient allowed privacy to undress / dress. Use drapes / curtains where possible to maintain dignity. There should be no undue delay prior to examination once the patient has removed any clothing.
- The chaperone will attend inside the curtains / screened off area at the head of the examination couch and observe the procedure.
- Explain what is being done at each stage of the examination, the outcome when it is complete and what is proposed to be done next. Keep discussion relevant and avoid personal comment.
- If a chaperone has been present, record that fact and the identity of the chaperone in the patient's notes. If an accusation of improper behaviour is made several years later and there is no record of who acted as chaperone, it would be difficult to recall who witnessed the examination.
- During the examination, the chaperone may be needed to offer reassurance, remain alert to any indication of distress but should be courteous at all times.
- Record any other relevant issues or concerns in the patient's notes, immediately following the consultation.
- Chaperones should only attend the part of the consultation that is necessary – other verbal communication should be carried out when the chaperone has left.
- Any request that the examination be discontinued should be respected.
- Healthcare professionals should note that they are at an increased risk of their actions being misconstrued or misrepresented if they conduct intimate examinations where no other person is present.

- When no chaperone is available or the patient is unhappy with the chaperone offered (for example, if they will only accept someone of the same gender), you can ask the patient to return at a different time, if this is not against their clinical needs.

Try to avoid putting pressure on the patient to proceed without a chaperone or make them feel as if they are inconveniencing you.

### **Covid-19/Pandemics**

The Covid-19 Pandemic accelerated the use of online and video consultations as part of core clinical practice. An online video or telephone consultation does not negate the need to offer a chaperone. The same principles apply as offering a chaperone whilst in the surgery.

<https://www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/ethical-hub/covid-19-questions-and-answers#Remote-consultations>

## Annex A

A chaperone poster is displayed in the Patient Waiting Room, Front Reception Desk, Limes Website and all Clinical Rooms.

### WOULD YOU LIKE A CHAPERONE?

This organisation is committed to providing a safe, comfortable environment where patients and staff can be confident that best practice is being followed at all times and the safety of everyone is of paramount importance.

All patients are entitled to have a chaperone present for any consultation, examination or procedure where they feel one is required. The practice has trained members of staff who would usually act as formal chaperones.

Wherever possible we would ask you to make requests for chaperones at the time of booking appointment so that arrangements can be made, and your appointment is not delayed in any way. Where this is not possible, we will endeavour to provide a formal chaperone at the time of request.

Your healthcare professional may also require a chaperone to be present for certain consultations in accordance with our chaperone policy.

If you would like to see a copy of our Chaperone Policy or have any questions or comments regarding this, please contact the Practice Manager.

