



Chaperoning Children and Young People Under 16 Years

We want all our patients to have safe and comfortable environments when undergoing investigations and treatments.

It is important for our youngest patients, and the staff who care for them, that children and young patients have a chaperone present when undergoing physical examinations.



What is a chaperone?

A formal chaperone: A healthcare professional with chaperone training.

An informal chaperone: A parent or guardian, legal guardian or a non-clinical staff member.

Having chaperones helps us to follow NHS best practice guidelines. Declining chaperones can delay examinations.

If a child or young person requires an intimate examination (for example, of genitalia, rectum or breasts) a formal chaperone will be present. We encourage parents and guardians to also be present when appropriate.

The only exception to the requirement for a chaperone for intimate examinations is during routine newborn and infant examinations on the postnatal ward or Neonatal Unit, or for babies seen in the clinic before the age of one year old. Genital examination is an essential part of the routine newborn screening examination, particularly assessing for undescended testes in males.

The clinician performing all intimate examinations should inform the parent, and child/young person where appropriate, of the need for the examination and check that they are happy for the clinician to proceed. This can help them through what can otherwise be a distressing experience. Verbal consent is documented.



What to expect: Intimate examinations

Examinations should take place in a closed, well-lit room or well-screened bay that cannot be entered without consent while the examination is in progress. 'Do not enter' or 'Examination in progress' signs will be used, and the chaperone must be present.

The chaperone will:

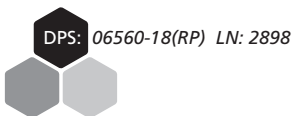
- ensure that the child's/young person's privacy, dignity and interests are protected at all times throughout the examination, procedure, treatment or care
- provide emotional comfort and reassurance to the patient and assist a patient as required with, for example, dressing and undressing. The healthcare professional undertaking the examination should offer assistance with undressing only if absolutely necessary
- maintain communication and, if appropriate, eye contact with the patient, whilst the healthcare professional's attention is focused on the examination, procedure, treatment or care
- provide protection to the healthcare professional undertaking the intimate examination, procedure, treatment or care, against unfounded allegations of improper behaviour
- act as the patient's advocate throughout the intervention/procedure
- stay for the whole examination.

If concerns or issues are raised during or after an examination or procedure, the chaperone is expected to report this immediately.

If you feel specialist arrangements need to be made prior to your child's appointment or admission, please contact the clinic number on your appointment letter.

Please ask if you need this leaflet in an alternative format.

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