

## UTSHC Policies and Procedures

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| <b>Policy 1-200</b><br><b>Pages 1-2</b><br><b>Patient Rights and Responsibilities</b><br><b>Use of Chaperones</b> | <b>Effective: 4/24/2018</b><br><br><b>Revised: 9/10/2018</b> |
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### Policy

As the Student Health Center is committed to providing a comfortable environment where patients and staff can feel safe, the use of a Health Center appointed chaperone is available for all examinations, particularly those wherein a patient is required to disrobe.

Patients and providers have the right to have a chaperone present during any examination, treatment, or procedure, regardless of their gender. At any time during an office visit, the patient or the Health Center provider may request an assistant or chaperone.

### Procedures

Patients shall be made aware of the SHC Chaperone Policy. Student Health Center office literature shall highlight the availability of chaperones, and intake staff (*e.g., Appointment Clerks, Triage Nurses, and Clinic Nurses*) shall review this information with patients as needed.

Signage noting the availability of chaperones shall be posted in all patient evaluation and treatment areas (*e.g., Appointment Clerk cubicles, Triage Nurse station, and Exam Rooms*), particularly areas wherein a patient may be requested to disrobe (*e.g., for breast, genitourinary, buttocks, and rectal examinations and procedures*) (*See Appendix 1*).

Patients shall not be requested to remain disrobed any longer than is required to accomplish the medical purpose for which the patient was asked to disrobe.

Only Health Center professionals will serve as chaperones. As healthcare professionals are held to a higher confidentiality standard and can reaffirm the formal, professional nature of the examination, treatment, or procedure, the use of a family member or friend as a chaperone is not permitted. If a patient insists on a family member's presence during an encounter, Health Center staff will still ensure that an authorized Health Center professional attends the examination, treatment, or procedure to serve as the chaperone.

Chaperones shall be available to:

1. Reassure a patient if he/she shows signs of distress or discomfort during the examination,
2. Witness the entire exam and see what the provider is doing, and
3. Voice any concerns he/she has with a provider's behavior or actions.

The name of the attending chaperone shall be documented in the patient's medical record.

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The patient or provider may request a chaperone of the opposite gender from the medical provider.

During examinations of female patients by a male provider wherein the patient is required to disrobe, such as examinations involving the genitalia, buttocks, rectum, or breast(s), a female chaperone shall be present. There may also be circumstances when a female provider should have a male chaperone with her during examination of a male patient.

A patient may refuse the presence of a chaperone. However, no Health Center provider shall be required to perform an examination without a chaperone when the provider feels one is necessary.

When a patient refuses the presence of a chaperone, the health care provider shall document the refusal, discuss alternatives, and document the situation.

In the event that a chaperone is unavailable, then the patient or provider has the right to refuse the examination, treatment, or procedure and reschedule.

In the event that a patient and/or chaperone experiences or witnesses a questionably inappropriate action during the chaperoned exam, an incident report (see *Policy 5-120 App1., SHC Adverse Incident Report Form*) shall be completed and submitted to the SHC administration for Risk Management Committee review.