

Chaperone guidance for Dentists in training

All Dentists who are undertaking training must be aware of the potential need for a chaperone when undertaking examinations of patients. Although this may appear to have more relevance to those individuals training within hospital departments eg OMFS, all trainees should make themselves aware of the local policies and necessity for documentation in the patient records where appropriate. The standards that apply to Doctors in training as detailed by the General Medical Council (GMC) in *Good Medical Practice* also apply to Dentists.

To ensure that the required standards are maintained and to reduce the risk of complaint to trainees and host organisations it is recommended that you ensure you read, understand and follow this guidance.

- That you are aware of read and understand the host chaperone policy at the beginning of each post in your programme track or rotation. This may include how the use of chaperones is documented in the clinical record.
- When moving between host organisations do not assume the policies will be the same – this is particularly important when moving between secondary care hospital placements.
- Ensure that you understand the definition of intimate examinations and how this is applied locally. Intimate examinations are not confined to male and female genital and rectal examinations (which Dentists are not likely to carry out) but may include abdominal and chest examinations which Dentists may be doing as part of an operative pre-assessment.

Be aware of higher risk examinations where a chaperone should be considered such as:

- Cardiovascular and respiratory examinations – for example if listening to heart sound requires you to touch or move the breast. Both a clear and thorough communication with the patient about what you are doing and why is helpful together with the use of a chaperone.
- Generally children should not be examined in the absence of a parent and where an intimate examination is required (for any child including teenagers) a chaperone should be used.
- Vulnerable patients such as those with mental health problems, learning difficulty, domestic violence or abuse.

Please ensure that you are familiar with the guidance as set out in the GMC *Good Medical Practice* and update regularly.

http://www.gmc-uk.org/guidance/ethical_guidance/21168.asp

HENW 28/5/15