

How do I request a chaperone?

To ensure your wishes are met, if you would like a chaperone present at your consultation, please contact the service directly before your appointment or home visit.

You can request a chaperone at any time – please inform a member of staff.

What if a chaperone cannot be offered?

If in the unlikely event a chaperone cannot be offered because of staff availability, we will inform you.

In this instance, you may be asked if you would consent to proceeding with the consultation without a chaperone or rearranging your appointment.

Local Community Pharmacy - Your local community pharmacies offer a wide range of services including information and general advice on symptom relief medicines as well as a prescription collection and delivery service.

For impartial and confidential advice or information on the services provided by Bridgewater or to receive this leaflet in an alternative format call our Patient Services team on 0800 587 0562.

Information for patients and carers

Your right to a chaperone

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Introduction

Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust is committed to developing a culture within the organisation that promotes and champions the privacy and dignity of all patients.

It is recognised that how care is delivered can directly influence a person's self-image.

Some healthcare consultations and treatments, particularly where they involve intimate parts of the body and state of undress, can make patients feel vulnerable or distressed.

The presence of a chaperone may assist in supporting and reassuring you during the healthcare interaction.

The healthcare professional may also require a chaperone to be present for certain consultations in accordance with the Trust's chaperone policy.

We believe respect, explanation, consent and privacy are paramount to ensuring you receive a positive patient experience.

What are my rights?

You can request a chaperone to be present for any consultation, examination or procedure where you or your carer feels you would like one.

You should expect to be offered a chaperone for any intimate examinations that are requested as part of your treatment plan.

The role of the chaperone should be clearly explained to you and the person introduced to you by the healthcare professional involved in your care.

You have the right to decline a particular person as a chaperone; in this instance, a member of staff will document the reason you declined, and your care will be reviewed.

Another chaperone will be offered, where possible.

In all cases where the presence of a chaperone may intrude in a confidential clinician-patient discussion, their presence will be confined to the physical examination.

One-to-one communication between the patient and their healthcare professional can continue afterwards.

Who can be a chaperone?

- A member of staff can be a chaperone, such as a nurse or allied health professional or a member of Trust staff such as a health care assistant who has been trained.
- You can request that a member of your family or a friend be present as an informal chaperone during the examination procedure.
- It is the Trust's policy that a child must be aged 18 years or over to act as chaperone if a parent is undergoing an intimate examination.

What is the chaperone's responsibility?

- To ensure the person undertaking the procedure or consultation is sensitive and respectful of your dignity and confidentiality.
- To reassure you if you are distressed or experiencing discomfort and to communicate this to the member of staff undertaking the procedure.
- To ensure they can communicate with you in a way that you can understand.