



Guidelines for the Use of Medical Chaperones

Through their presence, Medical Chaperones can verify the content of clinical conversations and physical exams, provide documentation regarding clinical encounters and most importantly, protect the interests and well-being of patients as well as the health care provider.

The following guidelines are intended to provide best practice strategies to incorporate the use of a Medical Chaperone for those licensees under a Board Order or Consent Agreement in which a Medical Chaperone is required.

The Election of a Medical Chaperone:

The licensee must submit a Medical Chaperone Application and Acknowledgement form for each person they wish to have serve in the role of a Medical Chaperone in advance for approval by the Board. Preference will be given to those with formal medical chaperone training and completion of a HIPAA compliance course.

A licensee may wish to elect multiple Medical Chaperones in an effort to provide patients with the gender they feel most comfortable with.

The Medical Chaperone(s) must review this document and sign a copy of the Medical Chaperone Agreement and Acknowledgment form.

Employer Notification

The licensee must provide their employer (group practice, health system, or hospital system) with this document and sign a copy of the Medical Chaperone Agreement and Acknowledgment form. The licensee must work with their employer to ensure access to adequate staff to serve as a meaningful chaperone in accordance with the guidelines listed below.

Patient Notification of the Use of a Medical Chaperone:

In order to promote respect for patient dignity, all patients must be notified of the Medical Chaperone requirement either verbally, in writing, or both **prior to the visit**. Efforts should be made to determine the patient's gender preference of the Medical Chaperone at the time the visit is scheduled. This information must be appropriately documented in the patient chart.

Should the patient refuse the presence of the Medical Chaperone, the patient should be notified of the need to reschedule the visit with another health care provider. This notification must be appropriately documented in the patient chart.

Family members or friends are not to be substituted for a Medical Chaperone, even at the request of the patient.

The Role of the Medical Chaperone:

The Medical Chaperone must be present during all medical appointments as outlined in the licensee's Board Order or Consent Agreement. Their location in the exam room should be conducive with assisting the clinician as needed, as well as observing the examination, therapy or procedure without distraction, obstruction or interruption. Appropriate charting to reflect the presence of the Medical Chaperone should be done at or near the time of the completion of the visit.

The Medical Chaperone must not leave the examination room at any time during the entire patient visit, for any reason. The Medical Chaperone has the right to stop a sensitive procedure or examination if they feel that the health care provider's behavior is inappropriate or unacceptable.

During telehealth appointments, the Medical Chaperone is required to host the appointment, thus in charge of when each party enters and exits the online visit. At no time should the patient and health care provider be alone during any part of a telehealth appointment. Best practice is that the health care provider and Medical Chaperone are in the same location. If that is not practical, the Medical Chaperone must make sure the camera is situated so they can see and hear the entire visit. The Medical Chaperone is responsible for observing with the visit without distraction, obstruction or interruption.

The Medical Chaperone should maintain a log of each patient visit separate from any other patient chart. This record must be kept in accordance and compliance with all HIPAA guidelines and mandates.

If at any time the Medical Chaperone is asked to leave the room (for any reason), if the health care provider sees a patient without a Medical Chaperone, or if the Medical Chaperone is told they are not needed for a patient visit, a report must be made to the Compliance Officer at the State Medical Board of Ohio as soon as possible.

If the Medical Chaperone suspects or observes inappropriate behavior a complaint should be filed with the State Medical Board. If the Medical Chaperone believes a crime has been committed, they should contact local law enforcement.