

Best Practices for Sensitive Exams

DEFINITIONS

1. **SENSITIVE EXAMS:** include Pelvic (rectal, vaginal, testicular) or breast exams.
2. **CHAPERONE:** a third party, preferably a health care professional, who is present in the room during a sensitive exam. The chaperone should be positioned such that they can observe the exam. the chaperone may be the preceptor.

PRINCIPLES AND GUIDANCE

1. All Family Medicine Residents must be supervised by a faculty member for any sensitive exams, until that sensitive exam is directly observed by faculty and signed off as meeting expectations.
2. A chaperone should be offered to all patients for all sensitive exams, regardless of sex or gender of the patient and the resident. The use of a chaperone is strongly encouraged for all sensitive exams regardless of the time needed to wait for a chaperone to be available.
 - a. If the patient declines the offer of a chaperone this should be documented in the medical record.
 - b. Patient, resident and chaperone sex and gender should be considered when choosing a chaperone.
3. A chaperone is required for any sensitive exam when the gender or sex of the patient differs from the gender or sex of the resident.
4. Both the patient's consent to the use of a chaperone and the identity of the chaperone should be documented in the medical record. Consent may be implied if the chaperone is present to perform required clinical functions such as assisting with a procedure or delivery.
5. If the patient does not consent to the use of a chaperone in a situation where either a chaperone is required or the resident is uncomfortable performing the exam without a chaperone, the resident should notify their preceptor prior to proceeding with the exam.
6. The preceptor should be informed immediately of any concerns raised by the patient or any unexpected events during the exam.
7. Clinical imperative shall be considered. For instance, urgent or emergent interventions requiring a sensitive exam should proceed following the above guidance to the degree reasonable for the context.