**Chaperone Policy for Colby Sports Medicine**

**(Governing All Non-Physician Care)**

This policy applies to all sports medicine providers, including athletic trainers, physical therapists, and massage therapists who have direct patient care services at Colby College. Sports medicine physicians and all other health care providers on campus are governed by the College’s Health Services Chaperone Policy.

1. **Definitions**
2. *Sensitive Health Care Interactions*

A sensitive health care interaction involves a patient’s intimate body parts, defined as genitalia, breasts, anus, groin, and buttocks. A health care interaction is also considered sensitive when the patient is under the age of 18 or is unable to give full informed consent or protect themselves from abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

1. *Chaperone*

A chaperone may be any authorized health care team member who has received the College’s chaperone training, including health care professionals and trained unlicensed staff members (e.g., coaches or administrative staff). Students and Athletic Trainer student interns cannot be chaperones.

1. **Policies**
2. *Opt-in interactions:* A patient or their legal representative may request a chaperone for any health care interaction at any time. Providers may also request chaperones for any health care interaction.
3. *Must-offer interactions:* A chaperone must be offered to the patient for all sensitive health care interactions.
4. *Mandatory interactions*: Any sensitive health care interaction involving a minor or a patient without the capacity to give consent requires a chaperone. The patient may not decline a chaperone in this case. A health care interaction taking place in a provider’s hotel room requires a chaperone that may not be declined.
5. All requests for chaperones must be documented in the patient’s health care record.
6. Patients are entitled to bring support people (e.g., friends, family, etc.) to health care interactions. A non-chaperone support person cannot serve as a chaperone.
7. For any health care interaction, if the patient and provider do not agree on the need for a chaperone, a solution that satisfies both must be found before the interaction occurs: either a new provider will be found or the interaction postponed. Patients may request a preferred gender for their chaperone, which should be accommodated whenever possible. No part of the chaperone policy should impede emergency care.
8. Chaperones must:

* Adhere to this policy
* Be present for the entire time that the patient and provider agreed upon
* Be positioned where they can actively observe the patient, provider, and execution of the health care interaction at all times
* Maintain patient privacy, dignity, and confidentiality
* Be familiar with what sensitive health care interactions entail
* Report good-faith concerns of sexual or other misconduct, potential misconduct, patient discomfort, and anything else they deem important immediately after the interaction
* Stop an interaction if sexual misconduct happens and immediately report it to an appropriate party, as defined by this policy

Chaperones may also assist providers during health care interactions and assist patients, if they request, with personal needs like hygiene, using the bathroom, and dressing and undressing.

1. Sports Medicine care may be administered in enclosed spaces, but every effort should be made to conduct it in open, accessible areas if possible and appropriate, the second-best option being an enclosed space with the door open. The doors of enclosed spaces where health care interactions occur must always remain unlocked and unblocked.
2. When Sports Medicine care is provided away from campus, health care providers should first try to find a space to use that is not a hotel room. A hotel conference room may be a suitable alternative. A hotel room may be used if no other space is available or suitable. If a health care interaction takes place in a hotel room, a chaperone is required and cannot be declined.
3. The patient must be properly clothed during the health care interaction. Clothing should only be removed as necessary and only with the patient’s express verbal consent.
4. The health care provider must verbally explain to the patient what will happen in the health care interaction, ensure that the student understands, and get the patient’s verbal consent to proceed.
5. Students should be educated about what to expect during routine health care interactions.
6. Sports Medicine’s shall provide notice to patients about their ability to request a chaperone during exams through signage in exam areas and notices in Sports Medicine’s webpage and Athletics’ annual agreement to participate in sports.
7. If a chaperone notices sexual misconduct, a potential for sexual misconduct, or patient discomfort, they must tell the provider to stop the interaction and immediately report it to the Director of Sports Medicine and the Title IX Coordinator. If the Director of Sports Medicine is a subject of the incident requiring a report, the report shall be made to the Title IX Coordinator.
8. Patients and other parties seeking to make a report may do so through the Title IX Coordinator. The Director of Sports Medicine and Title IX Coordinator shall be notified of any patient reports pursuant to this policy.

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