

Farnham Road Medical Group



Organisational Policy

Patient Dignity Policy

Person responsible for review of this policy: Registered Manager

Introduction

This policy sets out the Farnham Road Medical Group (FRMG) provisions to ensure that patients are afforded privacy and dignity, and are treated respectfully in circumstances where there is the potential for embarrassment, loss of confidentiality, and/ or for the patient to feel 'ill at ease'.

The requirement to respect patients is the responsibility of all staff, not just those in direct clinical contact with the patient.

Provisions

Patients will not be discriminated against for any reason.

All staff must give all patients respect and not stereotype anyone, irrespective of any perceived characteristics.

All staff should be particularly aware of and alert for vulnerable patients. These patients might need additional help and support:

- With using the telephone and/ or and routes of accessing appointments or practice systems
- Communication difficulties:
 - Hearing impairment
 - Visual impairment
 - Functional illiteracy in written English (they might need literature or written communication in another language or not have any written communication from us)
 - No broadband access
 - Not possessing a Smart Mobile Phone

- Financial difficulties
- Disabilities that make access to the surgery and our services more difficult
- House bound patients
- Trans and gender fluid patients
 - Staff should be particularly aware that patients' health needs might not match their gender (for example Trans Men with a cervix still need to be invited for a cervical smear)
 - Patients might prefer to use pronouns such as "they/ them", xe/xem/xyr" or they might change day-to-day

Reception

- Patients will be referred to with respect even in private discussions in the surgery
- Patients will be addressed by their preferred method and titles (e.g. Mr, Mrs, etc.)
- Patients will be offered, where available, the choice of a private space in which to hold confidential discussions
- A sign will be displayed in reception to offer the facility of a private discussion with a receptionist if required
- Guide dogs will be permitted in all parts of the building. See Guide Dogs Policy
- A hearing loop will be available, and staff trained in its use
- Under no circumstances will staff enter through a closed consultation room/ treatment room door without first knocking and waiting for permission to enter (if occupied), or pausing to determine that the room is empty

Consultations

- Patients will be allowed free choice of gender of doctor and nurse, where available, and will be able to wait or delay an appointment to see their choice of clinician. When clinically urgent patients will be encouraged to see a clinician appropriate for their 'best care' however undue pressure is not appropriate
- Consultations will not be interrupted unless there is an emergency, in which case the clinician in the room will be telephoned as a first step, before knocking at the door and awaiting specific permission from the clinician to enter
- A Chaperone will be offered where an examination is to take place. See Chaperone Policy
- Clinical staff will be sensitive to the needs of the individual and will ensure that they are comfortable in complying with any requests with the potential to cause embarrassment

- Patients will be afforded as much time and privacy as is required to recover from the delivery of 'bad news', and clinical staff will, where possible, anticipate this need and arrange their appointments accordingly
- Patients will be able to dress and undress privately in a treatment room or, where a separate treatment room is not available, a screen will be provided for that purpose. Patients using this facility will be requested to advise the clinician when they are ready to be seen, and they will be afforded sufficient time to do this bearing in mind infirmity etc.
- A clean single-use sheet will be available in each examination/ treatment room, changed after each patient, and the patient will be advised of its availability
- Washing facilities will be offered to the patient if required
- Clinicians and staff will allow 'personal space' where possible and respect this
- Patients will be given adequate opportunity, time and privacy for the provision of samples on the premises without feeling under duress or time limitation (where possible given any appropriate infection control measures in place at the time)
- The area used for dressing/ undressing will be equipped with coat / clothes hangers, pegs, or similar for clothes, and will have a chair with arms at a suitable height and design available and suitable for the patient to use
- Patients with difficulty in understanding due to language may have a family member or friend available to assist. FRMG will offer the services of an interpreter where requested or required
- Communication by staff with patients will be individual according to the needs of the individual patient (e.g. those with speech difficulties, hearing, or learning difficulties may need specific approach)
- Areas used by patients for dressing/ undressing will be secure from interruption or ingress (i.e. there will be no unlocked door to either a corridor or to any room not occupied by the consultant who is attending that patient)
- Patients who may have difficulty in undressing may be offered the services of a second (same gender) clinician or trained Chaperone to assist
- Patients will be requested only to remove a minimum of clothing necessary for the examination
- Consultations in the patient's home will be sensitive to the location and any other persons who may be present or may overhear

Post - Consultation

- Clinicians and staff will respect the dignity of patients and will not discuss issues arising from consultations, procedures, documentation, etc. unless in a confidential clinical setting appropriate to the care of the patient (respectful of the patient even when not there)

Last Review Date	February 2024	SP
Next Review Date	February 2026	