I. **Background / Purpose:**
MTSU Student Health Services is committed to providing a comfortable and safe environment for patients and staff. The presence of a Chaperone during sensitive examinations (SE) or sensitive procedures (SP) can provide both protection and reassurance for patient and provider alike regardless of the gender of either.

II. **Definitions:**

**Sensitive Exam:** Examination of a patient by a provider to the following areas:
1. Female breast(s), pelvis
2. Male genitalia
3. Female or male perineal area

**Sensitive Procedure:** Procedure performed on a patient by a provider to the following areas:
1. Female breast(s), pelvis
2. Male genitalia
3. Female or male perineal area

**Chaperone:** A clinical staff member who has been trained to assist and observe the patient and/or provider during a SE and/or SP.

III. **Policy:**
A Chaperone will be provided to all patients during all SE and SP. All staff members serving as a chaperone will receive training on appropriate procedures for SE and how to report SE concerns. The presence and identity of a chaperone will be documented in the electronic health records (EHR).

Patients and providers have the right to have a chaperone present during any examination (sensitive or non-sensitive), treatment, or procedure, regardless of their gender. At any time during an office visit, the patient or the provider may request an assistant or chaperone. A patient may refuse the presence of a chaperone. However, no Health Service provider shall be required to perform a SE or SP without a chaperone. If a chaperone is unavailable, or the patient refuses the presence of a chaperone, the patient or provider has the right to refuse the SE or SP and rescheduling of the patient or assisting of the patient in finding alternative care arrangements may occur.

The use of a family member or friend as a chaperone is not permitted. If a patient insists on a family member’s presence during an encounter, Health Service Staff will still ensure that an authorized Health Service professional attends the SE/SP to serve as the Chaperone. For any concerns of staff misconduct, students are encouraged to report the incident in writing to the administrative director of MTSU Student Health Services, Richard Chapman. Staff should report any violations in writing to their supervisor.

IV. **Procedure:**

SHS will provide a Chaperone that will:
1. Be trained as a Chaperone
2. Be familiar with the procedure involved in routine SEs/SPs
3. Provide clarification, additional information, support to the patient
4. Stay throughout the examination
5. Be an advocate for the patient before, during, and post SE/SP
6. Be sensitive and respect the patient’s dignity and confidentiality
7. The Chaperone shall stand in a location to which they can observe full examination (include point of contact and patient face)
   a. Chaperone to adjust position as needed to maintain sightline of full examination
   b. Pelvic exam: Chaperone stands diagonal to provider’s shoulders. Chaperone stands at the 4 or 8 o’clock position.
   c. Female breast SE: Chaperone stands diagonal to provider’s shoulder if patient is sitting; move to patient’s lateral side if patient is lying down.
   d. Male SE: Chaperone stands diagonal to provider’s shoulders. The Chaperone stands at 4 or 8 o’clock position.
   e. Female/male rectal SE: Chaperone stands at provider’s shoulders
8. Assist the provider with the examination and procedure including set-up, specimen collection, labeling, and processing, and clean up provided that such assistance does not detract from their Chaperone responsibilities.

B. SHS provider will document the presence of the Chaperone and their name in the EMR
C. If a patient declines the use of a Chaperone, the patient can be referred to an outside provider
D. Patients will be made aware of the MTSU Health Service’s Chaperone policy. Chaperone policy will be published on the MTSU Health Service website and intake staff shall review this information with patients as need.
E. Signage noting the availability of chaperones shall be posted in all patient evaluation and treatment areas, particularly areas wherein a patient may be requested to disrobe.
F. Patients shall not be requested to remain disrobed any longer than is required to accomplish the purpose for which the patient was asked to disrobe.

V. References:
   Code of Medical Ethics 1.2.4 AMA.
   SHS Trained Assistant for Sensitive Exams and/or Procedures SOP