

Department/Category: <b>NM AT STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES</b>	Page <b>1 of 6</b>	Protocol # <b>XX.XXXX</b>  Version: <b>X.X</b>
Title: <b>SENSITIVE EXAMS</b>	Revision of:	Effective Date: <b>02/25/2021</b> Next Review: <b>02/25/2024</b>

**SCOPE:** Applies to entities indicated below as well as their subsidiaries and affiliates

<input type="checkbox"/> NM – Northwestern Memorial Hospital	<input type="checkbox"/> NM – Lake Forest Hospital
<input type="checkbox"/> NM – Northwestern Medical Group	<input type="checkbox"/> NM – Central DuPage Hospital
<input type="checkbox"/> NM – Regional Medical Group	<input type="checkbox"/> NM – Delnor Hospital
<input type="checkbox"/> NM – Kishwaukee Hospital	<input type="checkbox"/> NM – Valley West Hospital
<input type="checkbox"/> NM – Marianjoy Rehabilitation	<input type="checkbox"/> NM – Home Health & Hospice
<input type="checkbox"/> NM – Huntley / <input type="checkbox"/> NM – McHenry / <input type="checkbox"/> NM – Woodstock Hospitals	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NM – Other **See “Scope/Persons/Areas Affected” Section below**	

**I. PURPOSE:**

1. This protocol establishes guidelines for a consistent and safe environment for students presenting to NM RMG at NIU Student Health Services.
2. To promote respect for student dignity while minimizing risk associated with these exams.

**II. SCOPE/PERSONS/AREAS AFFECTED:**

- A. NIU Student Health Center

**III. DEFINITIONS:**

- A. Sensitive exam- an assessment or procedure, but not limited to an exam, evaluation, palpation, placement of instruments in, or exposure of the genitalia, rectum, and/or breast
- B. Chaperone- a trained person who acts as a support and witness for a patient and a provider during a sensitive exam or procedure. This person may also assist the provider with equipment and/or specimen handling provided it does not distract from his/her ability to support and witness important aspects of the exam.

**IV. CLINICAL PROTOCOL:**

- A. Patients with the following conditions can be assessed and/or treated using this protocol:
  1. Students requiring a sensitive exam or procedure
  2. Students with cultural backgrounds which consider sensitive exams or procedures to involve partial exposure or palpation of body parts near sensitive areas (eg: exposure of undergarments, palpation of the groin or buttocks, or auscultation near the breast).

3. Students who are by Illinois state law defined as minors

**V. PROCEDURE AND THERAPEUTIC GUIDELINES:**

- A. Chaperone and provider will undergo training upon hire and then annually. Training will include, but not be limited to:
  1. Who may serve as a chaperone
  2. Who may be present during a sensitive exam
  3. Expectations of chaperone and clinician
  4. Student and clinician rights should student choose to decline chaperone and/or exam
  5. Communicating with student about why the exam is needed
  6. Educating patient before and during exam to define expectations and procedures
  7. Ensuring patient comfort during exam
  8. Setting up patient and room for exam/testing/procedure
  9. Documenting education provided, student declination of any part of exam (if applicable), chaperone who was present for exam
  10. Positioning of chaperone
  11. How chaperone may intervene or stop an exam if they are concerned about patient distress or inappropriate steps during exam by use of neutral terms
  12. Two staff (one of which acts as chaperone) to be provided to patients who need assistance with dressing/undressing or toileting before or after an exam.
  13. Reporting concerns and/or non-compliance with policy.
- B. The student presents to the clinic.
- C. ROS and HPI are obtained by clinician.
- D. Student is verbally educated in regards to the sensitive exam, testing, and/or procedure recommended to be performed as well as the role of the chaperone and how to report concerns or violations of policy.
- E. If a student declines a chaperone, the provider retains the right to not perform the task and to refer the student to another clinic.
- F. If the student consents to the recommended exam, test, and/or procedure, the clinician will provide privacy for the student to disrobe and provide necessary supplies to protect the student's privacy (ie: gown, cape, drape, etc.).
- G. Clinician will alert chaperone that sensitive exam, test, and/or procedure is needed.
- H. Chaperone will accompany clinician into exam room.

- I. Chaperone will place themselves in a location that does not interfere with clinician’s ability to perform the task while maintaining visual field to fully observe the exam, test, and/or procedure.
- J. Chaperone and clinician exit the room simultaneously.
- K. Clinician includes documentation of chaperone use in encounter.
- L. Concerns or compliance issues can be reported
  - 1. through NMI Incident Reporting then “Compliance Report”
  - 2. by calling 844-339-6271 or 312-926-4800
  - 3. by e-mailing [compliance@nm.org](mailto:compliance@nm.org)

**VI. CLINICAL PROTOCOL UPDATE SCHEDULE:**

This protocol is reviewed or updated every 3 years or more often as appropriate.

**VII. RELEVANT REFERENCES:**

- A. *Best Practices for Sensitive Exams*. (2019 October). American College Health Association. [ACHA Guidelines Best Practices for Sensitive Exams](#)
- B. [EthicsPoint - Northwestern Medicine](#)

**VIII. APPENDICES:**

- A. Insert text

**APPROVAL:**

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**IX. REVIEW HISTORY:**

Written: 2/25/21

Revised:

Reviewed: xx/xx/xxxx



