



Use of chaperones

Kathleen Collins

to:

ChaperoneReview@nhpopc.gov.au

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Cc:

Kathleen Collins

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From: Kathleen Collins <[REDACTED]>

To: "ChaperoneReview@nhpopc.gov.au" <ChaperoneReview@nhpopc.gov.au>,

Cc: Kathleen Collins <[REDACTED]>

I agree that there is a need for chaperones for those attending medical appointments or allied services, based on the number of cases of abuse which have occurred.

I have had one experience with this when I attended an appointment with a specialist. I had previously attended an appointment with the specialist. I was very surprised to see someone else in the room and showed my surprise. Only then was it explained that the person was a chaperone. No other explanation was given

I would suggest that those attending appointment be given the opportunity to have a relative or friend attend the appointment with them. Only when this is not possible should arrangements be made for another person to act as a chaperone. Needless to say, when attendee is comfortable with the practitioner, the attendee should be given the option of not having chaperone present.

There will be an extraordinary cost to this process unless the practice is able to have employees rostered as chaperones. The process could be as simple as a client being asked when making an appointment whether they would like a chaperone.

In my case I was a little annoyed that I was not given that option.

My background is a mother of 3 and grandmother of 7. I have just been returned to Blacktown City Council following a four year break from a 16 year stint on the Council. I worked closely with many in the community and did not hear of anyone who had issues with practitioners.

I am a volunteer with Cancer Council NSW and again have not heard of complaints against practitioners.

From 2014 I have been a Consumer representative with the Western Sydney Local Health District (WSLHD). In that time I have heard many complaints regarding a variety of issues but not 1 against a practitioner in relation to sexual abuse. I am a consumer representative on the Westmead Patient Care Committee, Blacktown Mt Druitt Hospitals (BMDH) Policy and Procedure Committee and the Planning Stage 2 for BMDH. The Consumer representatives belong to the WSLHD Consumer Forum. I have not heard the issue of sexual abuse by a practitioner raised at any of the committees.

Having raised I realise that I really need to see whether there is a Policy and Procedure for dealing with complaints of Sexual Abuse by practitioners.

Very clearly, under age children should always be accompanied. I would also strongly suggested

that that older youth should also be attended by a chaperone or friend/family member.

I would also strongly suggest that those attending appointments who are not able to speak English or who are less than fluent in English should be accompanied to appointments. This could be a qualified interpreter.

Similarly those with disabilities, either mental or physical should be accompanied by a chaperone.

There is probably a lot more I could say but will leave it at that for the moment.

I may be contacted via this email or via mobile: [REDACTED]

Best wishes,

Kathie Collins OAM