



Requesting same gender health care professionals

Patient information factsheet

This leaflet outlines the Trust's response to requests for treatment by a member of the patient's own gender.



Patients will expect to see health care professionals of both genders working in all areas throughout our trust, in the wards and in various clinics and departments.

For reasons of dignity or specific religious or cultural traditions, patients may prefer to see and be treated by a member of their own gender. You should tell the health care team responsible for your care that you would prefer to be seen by a specific gender. There is **no** statutory requirement for the NHS to provide a clinician of the same gender in any healthcare setting as it is not always possible to meet these requirements. Under the NHS Act 1990, we have a duty to provide safe standards of care to all our patients, but we do not have a duty to promise it will be delivered by a particular person of either gender.

If, for whatever reason, you are very uncomfortable receiving care or treatment from someone who is not of the same gender as you, you should tell the health care team responsible for your care. Our ability to respond to such a request will be considered on an individual basis, and you will be seen by the most appropriate clinician available, because our primary aim is to always provide safe patient care, regardless of the gender of the clinician.

As part of our trust's commitment to privacy and dignity, all patients have the right to have a chaperone (someone who accompanies) present if an examination is to be done by a clinician of the opposite gender to the patient. The chaperones' role is as a safeguard for the patient and clinician, to ensure there is continuing consent to the procedure, so the chaperone will be a person of the same gender as the patient.

Please be aware that insisting on care or treatment from a clinician of the same gender as yourself may result in delays with your treatment while the hospital endeavours to make alternative arrangements and even then, it may not be possible to allocate clinicians of the required gender.

Please note: Refusing care from staff because of their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, or age is regarded as unacceptable by the Trust and without justification.



Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or whh-tr.PALS@nhs.net

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please email whh-tr.patient-information@nhs.net. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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