

## **Family Members and Other Accompaniers in the Dental Clinics**

### **I. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe and efficient clinic environment. The School of Dentistry will limit the presence of unaccompanied children and other persons who require guardianship as well as family members and others who attend dental visits.

### **II. Policy**

1. In order to maintain a safe and efficient treatment visit, family, friends, and visitors may not accompany patients into the clinic treatment areas. Minors and persons who require guardianship must be supervised by an adult at all times in the reception area.
2. Supervising faculty may, at their discretion, allow one additional family member or other person into the treatment area.
3. Interpreters are provided for patients who require them and are allowed to accompany the patient in the treatment area.

### **III. Procedures**

1. All new patients will be informed of this policy when they schedule their first appointment. Patients will be reminded of the policy as necessary.
2. Patients may be reappointed at the discretion of the supervising faculty.
3. Exceptions will be made in emergency situations when treatment is necessary at the discretion of faculty.
4. Patients must sign an Authorization to Discuss Protected Health Information when they bring visitors to dental appointments or meetings with providers, treatment planning consultants, finance officials, or any other representatives at the School of Dentistry.
5. Non-patients are welcome to wait in the reception area.

### **IV. Definitions**

1. **Minors**, for the purpose of this policy, are considered anyone younger than 14 years of age.
2. **Persons who require guardianship** include minors, disabled persons who require extensive assistance to attend to their own needs, or incompetent adults who lack the capacity to tend to their own needs.

3. **Family members** include blood relatives, adopted and foster children, and any persons who play a significant role in one's life including same- or opposite-sex domestic partners.
4. **Interpreters** are licensed interpreters who are contracted through the school of dentistry. According to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Minnesota Bilingual Services Act of 1995, and Minnesota Statutes of 1996, the Minnesota Department of Health requires that medical providers receiving federal assistance make interpretation services available to patients. Patients who require interpreters may not use family members.

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