

CONFIDENTIALITY (TEENAGERS) POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy is specific to patients under the age of 18, and should be read in conjunction with the Staff Confidentiality Policy and Agreement ^[*], and Fraser (Contraceptive) Guidelines [*see Resources below*].

POLICY

The principles of confidentiality apply equally to all patients regardless of age. Young people (including those under 16) are entitled to equal confidentiality as all other patients. This includes respecting their wishes to withhold information from parents or guardians. The GP involved will determine the competency of a young person seeking treatment and will determine the extent to which confidentiality guidelines apply in each case.

Care must be taken to ensure that this right of confidentiality is not inadvertently breached by following the procedural guidelines in force.

Any young person regardless of age can independently seek medical advice or treatment, including surgical procedures, if a health professional believes that they are capable of understanding the choices of treatment and their consequences. This includes contraceptive advice, but the principles apply to other treatments, including abortion.

The policy of the Practice is to support young people in exercising their choice of medical treatment, and to deal with them in a sympathetic and confidential manner. Where a young person presents at the surgery without adult support they may be booked in to see a clinician in the normal way. Where there is some question of the urgency of an appointment the matter should be referred to a nurse in the first instance to triage the request.

RESOURCES

[BMA - Consent and Gillick competency](#)
[Fraser \(Contraceptive\) Guidelines](#)