

# Patient Policies & Procedures Handbook

## 1 PRIVACY POLICY

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Island Health & Wellness Center complies with federal regulations regarding HIPAA and patient privacy. Please see our privacy policy for further details.

Every employee and volunteer at Island Health is required to sign a confidentiality statement assuming an obligation to keep all information that pertains to patients confidential. It is the responsibility of every person employed or volunteering in any capacity at Island Health to uphold this obligation. All employees/volunteers shall avoid discussing a patient or any information about a patient with any other employee/volunteer except as required to fulfill a job requirement (charting, scheduling appointments, etc.) or for direct patient care.

We take this obligation very seriously and understand that living on a small island presents a unique set of privacy concerns and challenges. Please note, that discussion of a patient includes not only reason for visit and treatment, but also whether an individual is a patient or has been in for a visit. We will not discuss who is seen as a patient at Island Health and cannot confirm or deny this or any other information with other individuals without your written consent.

## 2 FINANCIAL POLICY

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Island Health charges a flat rate of \$50 per visit.

There are additional charges for lab work. These charges include:

\$25 for single blood test

\$50 for combination of 2 or more blood tests

\$50 for women's health testing (PAP smears, HPV)

We do not accept insurance and cannot process any claims or reimbursements. Payment for visit and lab work is due at time of service. We accept cash, check, Mastercard and Visa.

No one will be turned away or denied care due to inability to pay. If you cannot afford payment, please speak with your health care provider or other staff member and arrangements can be made for either a waiver of payment or for a payment plan.

## 3 MEDICAL RECORDS

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Island Health is happy to provide each patient with one complete copy of their medical record/chart free of charge. If additional copies of the chart are requested by the patient, there will be a \$10 administrative charge due at time of release of records. You will be required to sign a medical release form when records are released to yourself or a third party at your request.

Please allow 7 to 10 working days for your medical record release request to be processed. If you have a situation in which you need your copies released sooner, please contact us at 340-714-4270 and we can assist you with that as soon as possible.

## **4 APPOINTMENTS**

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Island Health is open a variety of hours in order to accommodate as many patient schedules as possible. Please see our hours of operation for current hours. Appointments can be made by calling our office at 340-714-4270.

Same-day appointments are typically available for sick visits on an as-available basis. If we cannot fit you in for a same-day appointment, we will schedule your appointment as soon as we can.

### **CANCELLATIONS**

If you are unable to keep your scheduled appointment, we ask that you notify us as soon as possible. We understand that things come up and therefore do not charge a cancellation fee. However, by cancelling your appointment with as much notice as possible, we are able to accommodate another patient who needs to be seen. We are happy to reschedule your appointment at your next convenience.

### **EMERGENCIES/AFTER HOURS:**

If you have a life-threatening emergency, you should call 9-1-1 or go immediately to the emergency room (Myrah Keating or Hospital on St Thomas). If you need to see a physician after regular office hours for urgent or emergent problems, you can be seen at Myrah Keating on an emergent basis. Appointments for prescription refills, wellness visits and long-term illnesses should be handled during routine office hours.

### **WALK-IN VISITS:**

Walk-in visits will be seen on a first come, first served basis between scheduled appointments. If possible, please call first as we typically have same day appointments available.

## **5 TELEPHONE CALLS**

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Every phone call is important to us, and we will attempt to answer your calls and return your phone messages as promptly as possible. Please leave a phone number where you know we will be able to reach you. If you call for an urgent matter, we will make every effort to respond immediately. If it is an emergency or potentially life-threatening, call 911; from a cell phone on St. John, dial 340-776-9110 to be connected to an emergency operator.

Please be aware that the providers will not leave their scheduled patients to return routine phone calls; these are generally answered in between or after patient care sessions are finished.

Good medical care cannot always be accomplished over the phone, so we may advise you to schedule an office visit to discuss your concerns, problems, or test results.

## **6 LAB RESULTS**

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Lab tests (blood work, cultures, pap smears, etc.) are sent out to a lab in Florida for processing. Results are typically back to us within one week, although some can take up to two weeks. You will receive a phone call from either your provider, a nurse or a medical assistant with your results. We will call you to let you know that your results are normal or if further action is required. If you circled “yes” on your information form, we will leave a voice message. We do our best to call every patient with results, but if you do not hear from us within 1-2 weeks, feel free to give us a call at 340-714-4270, and check in.

## **7 PRESCRIPTION REFILLS**

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If you need to refill your prescription(s), please call the office and have the name and dosage of the medication(s) handy. Please allow 2 days for refills to be completed. If you are due for a follow-up appointment in order to receive a medication refill, we will let you know that when you call or once we speak to your provider and can schedule that appointment for you. If appropriate, we will provide you with a short term (one month or less) refill to get you covered until your appointment. Be aware that there are certain medications and certain situations where this is not possible. So, try to schedule your appointment prior to running out of your medications.

## **8 CHAPERONES**

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Island Health is committed to providing a safe, comfortable environment where patients and staff can be confident that best practice is being followed at all times and the safety of everyone is of utmost importance. All patients are entitled to have a chaperone present for any consultation, examination or procedure where they would like one. The chaperone may be a family member or friend, but on occasion a formal chaperone may be preferred.

If possible, please ask for a professional chaperone if you would like one at the time of scheduling your appointment. That way, arrangements can be made ahead of time.

There are times when the healthcare provider may require or request a chaperone to be present for consultations, examinations or procedures. Chaperones will be a professional member of Island Health and will follow all privacy policies.

## **9 PAY IT FORWARD**

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As a non-profit organization, we rely on the generosity of donors and grants to operate. We charge a nominal fee to patients, however this does not cover the full expense of the visit or lab

tests. We also do not turn anyone away due to an inability to pay. Therefore, we have a “Pay It Forward” Program where patients can give a donation to help cover the cost of a patient who is unable to afford his/her visit or lab work. Please consider ‘paying it forward’ by leaving a donation in our Pay it Forward jar or with one of our staff members if you are in a place to do so. Feel free to speak with your provider or our office staff for more information.