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SEPARATED PARENTS POLICY

This policy is established to ensure a respectful and harmonious environment for all patients, staff, and healthcare providers at our paediatric practice. It outlines the expected behaviour of separated parents during medical appointments involving their child.

1. **Respectful Communication:** Separated parents are expected to maintain respectful and civil communication with each other, our staff, and healthcare providers at all times.
2. **Appointment Scheduling:** Both parents should coordinate and communicate regarding appointment scheduling to avoid conflicts and ensure their child's healthcare needs are met.
3. **Information Sharing:** Both parents have the right to access their child's medical information. We encourage parents to share relevant medical information and updates with each other and with our practice.
4. **Presence During Appointments:** Both parents are welcome to be present during their child's medical appointments, but they should respect the professional advice and decisions made by our healthcare providers.
5. **Confidentiality:** Parents are expected to maintain the confidentiality of their child's medical information and not disclose it to unauthorized individuals.
6. **Disagreements:** In cases of disagreements or disputes about their child's healthcare, parents are encouraged to address these matters outside of the medical appointment and seek legal or mediation support if necessary.
7. **Staff Interaction:** Separated parents should interact with our staff and healthcare providers in a polite and courteous manner. Any conflicts or concerns should be addressed in a calm and respectful manner.
8. **Safety:** The safety and well-being of the child are of paramount importance. If any behavior by either parent poses a risk to the child's well-being, the practice reserves the right to take necessary actions to ensure the child's safety. **Enforcement:** Violations of this policy may result in actions that could include: - Issuing a warning. - Restricting or altering visitation arrangements. - Involving legal authorities if necessary.

Review: This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Any amendments will be based on the evolving needs of the practice and the well-being of the children under our care. It's essential to communicate this policy to both parents clearly and ensure they understand their responsibilities to maintain a polite and respectful environment within your practice.

Payment is to be made on the day of the child's appointment. If there is legal agreement that requires the other parent to pay all or part of the treatment costs, it is the attending parent's responsibility to settle account and collect reimbursement from the other parent.

Where there is significant conflict, we reserve the right to request the court orders, obtain signed consent from both parents, or limit our services until dispute has been resolved. If necessary, we may discharge a family from the clinic if the conflict is disruptive to the clinic or impedes the care of the child.

We do not take referrals where the purpose of the assessment is to generate information for legal decision making around custody issues of parental separation.

It is not our clinical routine service, to provide reports to solicitors and courts for the purposes of assisting with legal proceedings. If such report is to be provided, it needs to be negotiated independent of child related medical services. We reserve the right to refuse to do these reports.

We always try our best to accommodate all family circumstances. Please help us to provide the best care for your children by providing all information regarding your family situation at your first appointment with us.

Communication

The practice management software identifies a 'default' primary parent for each child. Communication regarding that child, by default, is addressed to that parent.

This identified 'default parent' applies to automatic communications such as reminder emails (sent to the email address of the default primary parent) and reminder text messages (sent to the mobile phone number of the default primary parent).

Sometimes this inadvertently leads to problem situations where information is sent to the wrong person. An example would be where a parent who is not the default primary parent on our information system makes an appointment, but the reminder information is sent to the default parent.

This default primary parent's contact details also applies to written communication. It is mostly the Paediatricians' practice to routinely copy letters, such as medical reports back to the referring General Practitioner, and also send to the child's parents as a method of enhancing communication with parents. If the Paediatrician indicates this, a single copy of their consultation letter (addressed to the referring GP) is sent to the parent identified as the default primary parent, however, the administration team can make a note in the child's file if you (or Family Court orders) require each parent to receive a copy separately. If your doctor identifies and communicates this at the time of creating their report, an admin team member will endeavour to manually email a second parent the copy of letters/ reports marked by the doctor 'for parent copy', when the doctor's reports are completed. If you require this option, please discuss this with the administration team. Please note however, this is not an

automated service, so whilst we will endeavour to follow your request, this may not always be achievable.

In general, it is our expectation that separated parents work in a framework of joint parental responsibility. Legally, this means it is the responsibility of parents to work out how they exchange information.

We do not have the capacity to make complex individualised arrangements, but we try our best to accommodate two individual circumstances for the benefit of the child where this is reasonable and achievable.

If this communication policy is potentially a problem for you, please discuss this with reception staff.

Child's name

Parent 1 Name

Signature

Date

Parent 2 Name

Signature

Date
