

Child Protection Team
Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center
Brenner Children's Hospital Pediatric Clinic

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We will be meeting with you and your child as a part of an evaluation for possible child abuse or neglect. The following information will explain the evaluation process.

THE CHILD MEDICAL EVALUATION (CME) PROCESS

Your child has been referred for a CME to help determine what may have happened. During the evaluation process, you and your child will be interviewed to provide the team with information to assist with diagnosis and treatment.

As indicated in the attached questions, you are being asked about your child's current situation, your family and its history, your child's school and/or daycare information, and things about your child's emotional, behavioral and physical health. Additional questions and clarification will be asked when you meet with the team.

If your child is able and willing to speak with an interviewer, s/he will then have a diagnostic interview. This will allow your child the opportunity to verbalize their understanding for the need of today's appointment and to provide an account of the abuse s/he may have experienced. The purpose of this interview is to help inform the medical provider in order to best cater the exam for your child's specific needs. A diagnostic interview will include a specific interview process but may also include drawing, writing, and/or the use of an anatomical model to discuss what may have happened. Overall, it is an additional way to help diagnose the concern for abuse.

As a part of the diagnostic and treatment evaluation, interviews with you and your child will be video and audio recorded. Please ask any questions you have concerning the evaluation.

Families and children experience much stress related to a child abuse investigation. Our team is committed to providing the most positive experience possible for your child's medical evaluation. The medical evaluation may cause memories and feelings to resurface for your child, perhaps provoking anger, sadness, and/or changes in behavior. It is important for follow up with additional supports as recommended in order to help you and your child cope with the situation.

The team members are specialists in the medical evaluation of abuse. The social workers are trained in child abuse and interviewing children while the pediatricians are trained in determining whether a child's physical examination is consistent with a history and/or diagnosis of abuse. The medical examination is not usually intrusive, but may include a thorough inspection of the external genital and anal areas. Cultures for sexually transmitted infections may be done. For females, the examination DOES NOT include a speculum examination and pap smear. A CortexFlo is used to assist the physician with lighting and magnification. Genital images may be taken for evaluation purposes. These images will be retained in strictest confidence and will never be shared unless a court order (signed by a judge) is submitted. The images will ONLY be provided directly to a court ordered professional who also specializes in child abuse.

Most children report the examination is not painful. The process may take up to two hours and a second interview with your child may be indicated.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The report of the medical evaluation will be sent to the person referring your child. Further release of the information is made only with your consent. **In order to expedite any investigations and also to facilitate sharing of information with treatment professionals, we would appreciate your consent as evidenced by your signature on the Authorization Form provided.**

With your child's best interests in mind, and when appropriate, your permission will allow sharing of medical documentation with law enforcement, counselors/therapists, and school/daycare personnel. You may also elect to share the medical documentation with your child's primary physician. It should be noted that when a Child Protective Services worker refers a child, the evaluation is a component of the CPS investigation and is used in making decisions regarding allegations of abuse or neglect. When CPS refers, the evaluation reports will only be released to Child Protective Services; the investigating worker then determines who has access to the evaluation information thereafter. All documentation for cases referred by CPS and/or sexual abuse evaluations are marked "sensitive" and therefore, cannot be accessed by the general medical records' system. The evaluation documentation will be kept in strictest confidence.

There are two situations that require reporting without permission or consent. Those two situations are: (1) when a person is threatening to hurt themselves or someone else: and, (2) when there are suspicions of abuse or neglect involving a child or elder person.

If you have questions or concerns later, you may call Ms. Meredith at (336) 713-4574 or Ms. Bulgarella at (336) 713-7049.

BILLING/METHODS OF PAYMENT/INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT

The cost of your child's evaluation may be paid by a variety of different methods of reimbursement. The Pediatric Clinic registration staff will take information concerning the reimbursement resources. Medicaid and private insurance will be filed by the hospital's billing department. When a situation is being investigated by the Department of Social Services, either Medicaid or Child Medical Evaluation Program (CMEP) funds will be used. With some situations involving only law enforcement, Victim's Compensation to cover the evaluation may be applied for with the referring law enforcement agency. It is possible you may be billed for the cost of your child's examination if there are no agencies investigating sexual abuse. If there is a question concerning the reimbursement source or billing, you may contact Ms. Bulgarella or Ms. Meredith at the numbers listed above.