Guidelines for Forensic Medical Evaluations

Upon receipt of a report of abuse and neglect, a referral for a forensic medical evaluation must be made as soon as possible, but no later than 3 working days, to a child abuse pediatrician (CAP) or a physician, advanced practice registered nurse or physician assistant (known as medical providers) that is qualified by the SC Children’s Advocacy Medical Response System\(^1\) (SCCAMRS) pursuant to section 63-11-430 when the presenting case includes\(^2\):

a. Bruises anywhere in a child under 1 year of age that is not pulling to stand.

b. Children under the age of 2 with presence of at least one of the following:
   a. Head Injury
   b. Any fracture
   c. Any burn
   d. Chest and/or Abdominal Visceral Injury

c. Bruising located on face, ears, neck, chest, back, buttocks, genital area or bruises elsewhere with a pattern or multiple in number.

d. Any report alleging sexual abuse of a child.

e. Any sexually transmitted disease in a child eleven years of age or younger.

f. Any family in which one or more children has been pronounced dead on arrival at a hospital or other health care facility, or has been injured and later died, as a result of suspected abuse, abandonment, or neglect, when any sibling or other child remains in the home.

g. Child exposed to the manufacture of methamphetamine or other hazardous drugs (clandestine labs), or lives in or is exposed to an environment where drugs, including pharmaceuticals, are used, possessed, and/or trafficked.
A face-to-face medical evaluation by a child abuse pediatrician or qualified SCCAMRS medical provider may not be necessary when:

1. The child was examined for the alleged abuse or neglect by a physician who is not a member of the SCCAMRS network or a child abuse pediatrician, and a consultation between the examining physician and a SCCAMRS qualified medical provider or child abuse pediatrician concludes that a further medical evaluation is unnecessary;  

   OR

2. The child protective caseworker, with supervisory approval, has determined, after conducting a child safety and risk assessment, that there is no indication of injury as described in paragraphs (a)-(g) as reported;  

   OR

3. The child abuse pediatrician or qualified SCCAMRS medical provider determines that a medical evaluation is not required.

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1 For a list of child abuse pediatricians and SCCAMRS qualified medical providers, please see program website www.sscamrs.org

2 Requesting a medical evaluation is not exclusively limited to the above scenarios.