



TIPS FOR DOCUMENTING INTIMATE PARTNER AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

No Injury:

- Summarize the incident in detail: who, what, when, where, and how. Include any information regarding weapons, witnesses, and threats
- Describe the perpetrator just as the patient identified them
- Use neutral language (patient "states" rather than "claims")
- Use patients words in quotes when you can
- Do not include comments made by patient unrelated to the incident
- Document assessments (psych, safety, or child/adult abuse)
- Document any referrals and if a CPS or APS report was made
- Document other incidents of abuse, threats, or stalking

If injury add:

- A detailed description of the injuries, including type, number, size, location, resolution, and explanations given by patient. Where applicable, the location and nature of the injuries should be recorded by photos, on a body chart, or drawing
- What forms were filled out to document injuries and what lab/x-rays were ordered
- Document if patient made a report to law enforcement

UNC BEACON PROGRAM: A HEALTHCARE RESPONSE
TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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Why it is Important to Document Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence

Complete documentation is important for safety, treatment, and legal purposes

- Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence can negatively affect health in many ways. Using this documentation may be important in making diagnosis and treatment decisions.
- If you don't document it, it didn't happen. If you have any first hand knowledge of abuse, it should be documented appropriately in the patients medical chart.
- When documenting, words such as denies, claims, or alleged perpetrator are to be avoided as they imply the writer does not believe the patient
- Good documentation may assist a patient seeking legal resource. These records can be used in both criminal and civil cases.
- EMR documentation can help alert other providers to possible safety concerns with the patient. This information may be vital for keeping both the patient and others safe.

It is the patient's choice whether to report to the police or other authorities. However, suspicions of child abuse, abuse of vulnerable adults, and certain injuries must be reported to county departments of social services and/or law enforcement. For more information visit www.ncmedboard.org.

For more information:

Visit our website
<https://www.med.unc.edu/beacon/>

Opting Out of Open Notes for Ambulatory Providers

De-select the "Share with Patient" button in Epic. The button will then turn grey.

By completing this step sensitive information regarding abuse will be kept from potential abusers