**What You Need to Know About the New Child Abuse Reporting Statute**

A new state statute G.S. 14-318.6 mandates that certain crimes against patients under 18 must be reported to law enforcement. These crimes include:

1. Violent offenses: any serious bodily injuries that were inflicted by non-accidental means; includes serious mental injuries or any injuries that cause great pain and suffering

 *-Remember also to report any injuries caused by guns, poisons, knives or other sharp objects (non-accidental only), or recurrent illnesses caused by non-accidental trauma*

2. Sexual offenses: any type of sexual violence against a minor, including statutory rape

 *-This reporting is mandatory if the patient is under 18, regardless of the wishes of the patient or parents/guardians*

3. Misdemeanor child abuse: defined as when a parent or other person providing care or supervision to the child under 15 inflicts or allows to be inflicted physical injury to the child or allows a serious risk of physical injury to the child by non-accidental means

This new duty is **in addition** to reporting suspicions of child abuse, neglect and dependency to child protective services. In some cases, staff will have to make two reports.

**The new law also makes it a misdemeanor to prevent someone else from reporting child abuse, neglect, or dependency.**

**How to Make a Report**

1. If you are at the medical center, contact hospital police dispatch at 984-974-3686

2. If you are located at another facility, contact law enforcement for the child’s home county/city. If you are unable to determine the child’s “home”, contact local law enforcement.

3. Document in the patient’s chart

4. You are not required to notify the child’s parents/guardians that you made a report. You should **not** notify the child’s parents/guardians if you suspect that it will cause them to retaliate against the child.

**Resources**

1. To learn more about child abuse reporting, please see LMS module UNCHBEACHILD19   Identifying and Reporting Child Maltreatment

2. Questions? Call the Beacon Program office at 984-974-0470