

Policy: **Management of Suspected Abuse/Neglect Cases**

Date of Implementation: **December 11, 2003**

Product: **Specialty**

The definition of abuse or neglect is any act or failure to act resulting in actual or imminent risk of serious physical or emotional harm, death, sexual abuse, or exploitation.

Suspected abuse/neglect cases are investigated, documented, and reported as a health and safety issue to the Senior Vice President, Clinical Services by the Health and Safety Investigation Team (HSIT). When abuse by a practitioner is identified or suspected, a Clinical Performance Alert is generated and managed through established processes defined in the *Clinical Services Alerts, Clinical Performance Alerts, and Corrective Action Plans (Practitioner/Provider Clinical Issues) (QM 2 – S)* policy.

When a clinical quality evaluator identifies a suspected abuse/neglect case not implicating the practitioner, the following process is followed:

- The clinical quality evaluator makes at least two (2) attempts to contact the practitioner to discuss the suspected abuse/neglect case and determine if a report has been filed with the appropriate state agency. These attempts and any communication with the practitioner are documented in the communication log and forwarded to HSIT. If the clinical quality evaluator is unable to reach the practitioner or the practitioner indicates a report has not been filed, the Senior Vice President, Clinical Services will report the issue to the appropriate state agency.
- Copies of the Medical Necessity Review Form (MNR Form), the communication logs, and any other pertinent documentation are forwarded to the HSIT and Clinical Services Investigation Team (CSIT). HSIT maintains a database for tracking and trending incidents of abuse/neglect and reports aggregate information to the clinical quality committees quarterly. CSIT maintains a database in order to track and trend practitioner compliance as well as monitor clinical services and clinical performance activities.
- HSIT forwards a memo to the Privacy Officer with a description of any specific privacy information released to the authorities.