



Children's Medical Services  
Child Protection Teams  
&  
Florida Network of Children's  
Advocacy Centers



---

Date: October 28, 2009

To: Children's Advocacy Center Directors  
Child Protection Team Coordinators

From: John M. Knight, Chief Executive Officer, Florida Network of Children's  
Advocacy Centers; Michael L. Haney Ph.D, Director, Prevention and  
Intervention, Children's Medical Services

---

**Purpose:** This memorandum clarifies the policy for Child Protection Team forensic interviews, and interviews conducted by Children's Advocacy Centers when conducted *under the auspices of Child Protection Teams*.

**Background:** Chapter 39 mandates that certain cases be referred to the Child Protection Teams (CPT) for medical evaluation and other CPT assessments, which includes forensic interviews. Children's Advocacy Centers also provide forensic interviews and have accreditation standards associated with the National Children's Alliance. Both Children's Advocacy Centers and Child Protection Teams have formalized forensic interviewing training, however the purpose and method of conducting forensic interviews are different to some extent. Specifically, Child Protection Team forensic interviews are provided primarily for the purposes of assisting the Department of Children and Families in the assessment of child abuse and neglect allegations and include an assessment of risk. As such, the Child Protection Team policy is that ear pieces may not be used during forensic interviews for the purpose of law enforcement guiding the interviewer to ask specific questions.

**Actions/Results:** Because the Child Protection Team policy raised questions and concerns among some of the Child Protection Teams and Children's Advocacy Centers around the state, Children's Medical Services held a telephone conference call with representatives from the Florida Network of Children's Advocacy Centers, the Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement to address some of the concerns.

As a result of the telephone conference call, Children's Medical Services has clarified its CPT policy towards the use of ear pieces during a forensic interview. The clarified policy is as follows. CPT interviewers may not use the ear pieces during the CPT interview. However, at the conclusion of the CPT interview, the interviewer may advise the child victim that they are going to use an earpiece to see if any of the multidisciplinary partners, including law enforcement, have any additional questions to ask the child victim. The interviewer may then use the ear piece to determine whether any of these partner agencies have additional questions. If they do, the interviewer may proceed with the interview of the child victim and may ask the child victim the additional questions.

**Contact Information:** If you have any questions, please contact either Peggy Scheuermann at (850) 245-4220 or [Peggy\\_Scheuermann@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:Peggy_Scheuermann@doh.state.fl.us), or John Knight at (850) 671-4791 or [jknight@fncac.org](mailto:jknight@fncac.org)

---