**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING ARTICLE 4 TO CHAPTER 11, TITLE 63, SO AS TO ENACT THE “SOUTH CAROLINA CHILDREN’S ADVOCACY MEDICAL RESPONSE SYSTEM ACT” TO CREATE THE SOUTH CAROLINA CHILDREN’S ADVOCACY MEDICAL RESPONSE SYSTEM, WHICH IS A PROGRAM THAT PROVIDES COORDINATION AND MEDICAL SERVICE RESOURCES STATEWIDE TO AGENCIES AND ENTITIES THAT RESPOND TO VICTIMS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT, AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROGRAM.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Chapter 11, Title 63 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Article 4

South Carolina Children’s Advocacy Medical Response System

Section 63-11-400. This article may be cited as the ‘South Carolina Children’s Advocacy Medical Response System Act’.

Section 63-11-410. There is created the South Carolina Children’s Advocacy Medical Response System, which is a program to provide coordination and administration of medical service resources to those entities responding to cases of suspected child abuse and neglect. This program shall be administered by the University of South Carolina School of Medicine.

Section 63-11-420. For purposes of this article:

(1) ‘Child’ has the same meaning as provided for in Section 63-7-20(3);

(2) ‘Child abuse or neglect’ has the same meaning as provided for in Section 63-7-20(4);

(3) ‘Children’s advocacy centers’ has the same meaning as provided for in Section 63-11-310;

(4) ‘Program’ means the South Carolina Children’s Advocacy Medical Response System created pursuant to this article; and

(5) ‘Healthcare provider’ means a physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant duly licensed to practice in this State.

Section 63-11-430. (A) The program shall coordinate and administer child abuse medical service resources for the State, assisting and collaborating with children’s advocacy centers and state agencies charged with the investigation, assessment, treatment, and prosecution of child abuse and neglect for children in South Carolina.

(B) The program shall develop, support, and maintain a consistent quality standard of care and practice for the following services intrinsic to the assessment of children with suspected child abuse or neglect:

(1) forensic medical examinations, assessments, and diagnosis;

(2) medical consultations;

(3) participation in multi-disciplinary team case conferences and reviews; and

(4) medical expert witness services.

(C) The program shall also develop, support, and maintain:

(1) guidelines for educational, clinical training, and professional development requirements of healthcare providers participating in the forensic medical assessment of children who are suspected victims of child abuse or neglect;

(2) a standardized clinical assessment tool to report the findings of the forensic medical assessment; and

(3) guidelines for the South Carolina Department of Social Services and law enforcement agencies on when to obtain a forensic medical assessment.

(D) The program shall collect and manage data from child abuse healthcare providers participating in the program, children’s advocacy centers, and children’s hospitals for the purposes of establishing quality assurance programs, research, and public policy guidance.”

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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