

Circular letter: DHCQ 04-03-439

TO: Chief Executive Officers, Massachusetts Hospitals
FROM: Paul Dreyer, Director
SUBJECT: Hospital Reporting of Serious Incidents
DATE: March 3, 2004

The purpose of this letter is to provide additional guidance to hospitals regarding their obligations to report incidents that seriously affect the health and safety of patients to the Department. The Department's regulation governing the reporting of incidents states that: Hospitals must report fire, suicide, serious criminal acts, pending or actual strike, serious physical injury resulting from accident or unknown cause, and other serious incidents that seriously affect the health and safety of patients (105 CMR 130.331).

Consistent with this requirement, hospitals must report:

- Discharge of an infant to the wrong family.
- Presentation of an infant to the wrong mother for breast-feeding.

For additional information or questions, please contact Sherman Lohnes at (617) 753-8160.