



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Health Service Regulation

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Re: Dense Breast Bill HB467

This year, the General Assembly of North Carolina passed HB467 to amend §130A-215.5, Article 7 of Chapter 130 A of the General Statutes of North Carolina by clarifying what must be contained in correspondence sent to patients who are identified as having heterogeneously or extremely dense breast tissue. A summary of the changes that take effect **January 1, 2014** follows:

- The statute, as amended, instructs the radiologist/interpreting physician to determine the existence of heterogeneously dense or extremely dense breast tissue using nationally recognized guidelines or systems for breast imaging reports of mammography screening, including the Breast Imaging Reporting and Data System (BI-RADS) established by the American College of Radiology.
- All healthcare facilities equipped with radiology services that provide mammography screenings/examinations are required by §130A-215.5, of the General Statutes of North Carolina to include the following statement in the summary of each mammography lay letter if the patient has been identified to have heterogeneously or extremely dense breast tissue:
“Your mammogram indicates that you may have dense breast tissue. Dense breast tissue is relatively common and is found in more than forty percent (40%) of women. The presence of dense breast tissue may make it more difficult to detect abnormalities in the breast and may be associated with an increased risk of breast cancer. We are providing this information to raise your awareness of this important factor and to encourage you to talk with your physician about this and other breast cancer risk factors. Together, you can decide which screening options are right for you. A report of your results was sent to your physician.”
- Patients who receive diagnostic or screening mammography may be directed to informative material about breast density. The material may include the American College of Radiology’s most current brochure on the subject of breast density.

The Chronic Disease and Injury Section of the Division of Public Health is currently working with the Division of Health Service Regulation, Radiation Protection Section to ensure compliance of HB 467.

These protocols will be documented and evaluated for compliance during the federal Mammography Quality Standards Act annual inspections already conducted by the Division of Health Service Regulation, Radiation Protection Section. It is highly recommended that facility staff be trained in these new requirements so facilities can implement by January 1, 2014.

Radiation Protection Section

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