LEGAL RIGHTS OF STEP-PARENTS

In the State of Nebraska, forms for minor children must be signed by parents or guardians. Step-parents do not have the legal right to make decisions on behalf of the child’s well-being. Step-parents do not have a say in medical decisions, who can have access to the child, or educational decisions.

At Central Nebraska Medical Clinic, this means that forms including the Consent to Treatment, Involvement in Care, Past Medical History, Social History and Family History, Consent for Procedures, Consent for Immunizations, School and Sports Physicals must be completed and signed by a parent or guardian. If the parent has included the step-parent on the minor’s Involvement in Care, that allows the step-parent to bring the child to the clinic for care as well as call to speak to a nurse or provider, but any decisions about the care of the minor should be approved by the parent after the treatment has been recommended. If the parent is unable to be present at a provider visit where forms will be required, they should obtain the forms from the office or website and complete and sign and send the forms along with the step-parent at the time of the visit. Immunizations will not be given without the consent form signed by the parent. The child will need to be rescheduled if the signature cannot be obtained.

If there are legal documents that parents or guardians have regarding parental rights, they should present these to the clinic. Court documents regarding foster parents, temporary power of attorney, temporary delegation of parental powers or adoption are important documents that the clinic should have on the child’s record. If the court has ruled that a parent has had their parental rights removed, that document must be given to the clinic as well.