

Foster Families Have a New Health Services Provider

For Immediate Release

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FRANKFORT, Ky. (Oct. 1, 2014) – The Commission for Children with Special Health Care Needs (CCSHCN) is announcing changes to the services available for children in out-of-home care placements.

As of Oct. 1, children in out-of-home or foster care will be able to receive primary care at HealthFirst Bluegrass locations in Lexington instead of the CCSHCN's Thomas H. Pinkstaff Medical Home Clinic at 333 Waller Ave. in Lexington.

The change is a result of the upcoming retirement of clinic pediatrician Grace Maguire. The clinic, a partnership between CCSHCN and the University of Kentucky, cannot provide services without a full-time pediatrician on staff and will close.

Judy Theriot, MD, CCSHCN medical director, said the staffing changes required a new collaboration for the commission and a decision was made to partner with HealthFirst Bluegrass.

"We are very excited about the move," Theriot said. "We have found a wonderful medical home with increased hours and more services for patients."

HealthFirst Bluegrass is a federally credentialed medical home which will provide continuity of care even if a child's home placement changes. All a foster child's medical needs can be coordinated through its pediatric clinic. HealthFirst also can provide expanded hours, an on-site pharmacy, dental and behavioral health services.

Part of the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, CCSHCN serves youth ages 21 and younger who have special health care needs.

Deborah Stanley, medical director of HealthFirst Bluegrass, said she and her staff are optimistic about the move.

"HealthFirst Bluegrass is fortunate to have well-trained pediatric providers that deliver quality medical care with a high level of compassion," she said. "These pediatric providers look forward to providing medical care to the children and families being referred by Lexington CCSHCN as these children and families make HealthFirst Bluegrass their medical home."

Steve Davis, MD executive director at HealthFirst Bluegrass, said staff is ready to provide consistent, comprehensive services to families going through a lot of changes.

"We are so very blessed to be a part of the lives of these children with special health care needs," he said. "We look so forward to showing our love for the children and for them to know just how much we care."

CCSHCN staff will ensure a smooth transition by working closely with staff from HealthFirst Bluegrass and the CHFS Department for Community Based Services. Nurses and social services staff in the CCSHCN Lexington office are available to answer questions to make the change as easy as possible for patients.

“What matters most is that every child gets the care he or she needs,” Theriot said. “That was the purpose of the medical home program at the CCHSCN and it continues to be the purpose going forward.”

Starting Oct. 1, foster families should contact HealthFirst Bluegrass to make general medical appointments and when they are referred by commission staff. The main clinic locations are at 650 Newtown Pike and at 2433 Regency Road, both in Lexington. HealthFirst Bluegrass also has clinics at several Lexington schools. For information or to make an appointment with HealthFirst Bluegrass, call 859-288-2425. For after-hours care, call: 859-335-7200.

HealthFirst Bluegrass will provide data to CCSHCN about services provided to children in out-of-home care.

Learn more at the about CCSHCN website.

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The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state’s human services and health care programs, including Medicaid, the Department for Community Based Services and the Department for Public Health. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full and part-time employees throughout the commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.