



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
CHILDREN'S ADMINISTRATION – FIELD OPERATIONS
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May 31, 2011

TO: Regional Administrators
Deputy Regional Administrators
DCFS Area Administrators
Administrator, Licensed Resources
Area Administrators, Licensed Resources
Regional Implementation Coordinators
Children's Administration Staff

FROM: Becky Smith, Director
Children's Administration
Division of Field Operations

RE: New Medically Fragile Child Supports Policy

CA is implementing Medically Fragile policy to better meet the needs of caregivers for this especially vulnerable population of children. The new Medically Fragile policy will improve child safety by emphasizing practice expectations and assisting social workers in providing appropriate support to caregivers.

The attached policy for **Medically Fragile Child Supports** is in effect today, May 31, 2011. This policy requires social workers to identify children in out-of-home care who meet the definition of medically fragile, and establish a written plan with the caregiver to:

- Meet the day to day needs of the medically fragile child
- Identify training and support needs of the caregiver (e.g. planned respite)

Social workers will:

- Identify children who are medically fragile as early as possible using the following definition:

Medically Fragile Children are those who have medical conditions that require the availability of 24-hour skilled care from a health care professional or specially trained family or foster family member. These conditions may be present all the time or frequently occurring. (If the technology, support, and services provided to a medically fragile child are interrupted or denied, the child may, without immediate health care intervention, experience death).

- Consult with Regional Medical Consultants and Fostering Well-Being Nurses to determine if a child is medically fragile.
- Refer medically fragile children in out-of-home placement to the Fostering Well-Being Care Coordination Unit.
- Develop a written plan with the caregiver to address identified trainings and supports needed to address the day to day care of the medically fragile child - including a plan for respite.
- Document medically fragile children in FamLink.

Questions about this policy can be directed to the CA HQ Health Program Manager – Michelle Bogart at: Michelle.Bogart@dshs.wa.gov or 360.902.8006.

Attachments