DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814

September 2, 1999

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

[ ] State Law Change
[ ] Federal Law or Regulation Change
[ ] Court Order
[ ] Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
[X] Initiated by CDSS

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-55-99

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DEPARTMENTS
ALL COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENTS
ALL COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS
ALL REGIONAL CENTERS
CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY HEALTH OFFICERS
COUNTY HEALTH EXECUTIVES
LOCAL DIRECTORS OF PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING
LOCAL CHDP DIRECTORS AND DEPUTY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: NEW FOSTER CARE PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE (PHN) PROGRAM IN COUNTY WELFARE DEPARTMENTS

The purpose of this letter is to announce the availability of funds to counties statewide to provide health services to children in foster care. This new program, the Health Care Program for Children in Foster Care, will be effective January 1, 2000.

The California Departments of Social Services (CDSS) and Health Services (CDHS) are pleased to announce that new funding is included in the State Budget for the current fiscal year to provide public health nursing expertise to meet the health care needs of children in foster care. For State Fiscal Year 1999-2000, a total of $2.48 million State General Fund (GF) has been appropriated. This augmentation, when matched with federal funds at the local level, will provide a total of approximately $9.9 million to counties statewide. Current year funding will begin on January 1, 2000, with subsequent funding being made for a full year.

The current fiscal year appropriation of $2.48 million GF is in the CDSS budget. These funds will be transferred to the CDHS and allocated to local health departments through the Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) program to operate the Health Care Program for Children in Foster Care. We are finalizing a process for equitable distribution of these funds and are making plans for joint training for staff in local CHDP and child welfare agencies in the near future.

Many child welfare agencies and local health departments have long recognized that PHNs are uniquely positioned to develop and implement the recommendations for improving the health care of children in foster care outlined by the Child Welfare League of America and the American Academy of Pediatrics. In fact, many county welfare agencies and probation departments have already adopted a multidisciplinary team approach to meet the complex needs of children in foster care. Drawing from these successful approaches, the PHNs funded through the new Health Care Program for Children in Foster Care will work closely with the child's caseworker or probation officer as an integral team member to ensure that children receive needed health care

services. The PHNs will provide health care oversight for the physical, behavioral, dental, and developmental needs of children in foster care, including those in out-of-county and out-of-state placements. They will collaborate with welfare and probation department staff and will provide consultation and assistance in the collection and interpretation of health care information, development of health resources, and planning and providing training programs for health, child welfare, probation and juvenile court staff. These new program funds will enhance and expand each county's capacity to provide comprehensive services to children in foster care.

The PHNs will be located at county welfare offices. They will be hired by the local health department and will be funded and supervised through the local health department CHDP program. PHN duties will be specified in a proposed scope of work which will be designed to maximize federal participation in allowable administrative cost. As a "skilled professional medical personnel," PHNs are eligible for a 25/75 match of state and federal dollars and will be required to perform time studies to meet federal requirements. PHNs will **not** be funded through this program to provide direct services to children.

Health care services for children in out-of-home care must be provided to every child who receives an Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care payment, regardless of that child's legal status. Both probation and child welfare departments, through their local interagency agreements and regulations, are to provide all mandated services to children they supervise. All letters or agreements must refer to both county child welfare agencies and county probation departments, and county child welfare workers and county probation officers.

Experience has demonstrated that collaboration between child welfare agencies, probation departments, and PHNs has been successful in creating a more comprehensive system of health service delivery to children in foster care. We look forward to working with you to implement this exciting new program.

Additional information will be provided by CDHS to assist counties in implementing the new program. Information to be provided will include a "model" scope of work for PHNs funded through this program, funding allocation information, budget instructions, and additional program guidelines.

For questions or additional information about the Health Care Program for Children in Foster Care, contact Maggie Petersen, Nurse Consultant III, CDHS Children's Medical Services Branch, at (916) 657-0614 or Lou Del Gaudio, Manager, CDSS Placement Resources Unit, Foster Care Services Bureau, at (916) 445-7001.

Sincerely,

Original Signed on 9/2/99 by
Del Sayles-Owen

DEL SAYLES-OWEN, Acting Deputy Director
Children and Family Services Division
California Department of Social Services

Original Signed on 9/2/99 by
Tameron Mitchell

TAMERON MITCHELL, R.D., M.P.H., Deputy Director
Primary Care and Family Health Division
California Department of Health Services