

In Case You Missed It...

Miami Herald: “Florida vows to stick fewer kids in nursing homes”

“Florida vows to stick fewer kids in nursing homes: A state administrator says new rules are aimed at reducing the number of severely disabled kids raised in geriatric nursing homes.”

For full story [click HERE](#)

By Carol Marbin Miller, December 12, 2012

...

Liz Dudek, who heads the state Agency for Health Care Administration, **outlined a series of new policies on Wednesday to help the parents of severely disabled children care for their kids at home.** The new policies also are contained in a memo written Tuesday by Justin Senior, AHCA's deputy secretary for Medicaid, the insurance program for needy and disabled people.

“We want to make sure parents make a choice with the best information they can get,” Dudek said Wednesday while appearing before The Tampa Bay Times' editorial board.

...

But both Dudek and the top Tampa Bay-area administrator for the Department of Children & Families also **outlined a series of steps to make it easier for frail children to receive care in community settings** — and to improve the lives of children who do live in institutions.

Included in AHCA's “enhanced care” plan for children in nursing homes: **Each child will be given a “nurse care coordinator,” who will stay in regular contact with family members and the nursing home’s staff “to receive status updates about the child’s progress.”** The coordinators also will help families that want to move their children out of facilities and back home by referring parents to local agencies that can provide in-home care, Senior wrote.

DCF announced last week that foster care caseworkers would need high-level agency approval before placing any dependent child in a nursing home. Of the 20-or-so foster children already living in nursing homes, a memo said, the agency **will review their cases monthly to look for ways to return them to their birth parents** or shift their care to foster homes run by parents with specialized medical training.

...