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**Better Health Care for all Floridians**

ELIZABETH DUDEK  
SECRETARY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**State Officials Meet with Department of Justice Representatives**

*-State outreach overwhelmingly finds parents are satisfied with child's services and location of services-*

**Tallahassee, Fla.**—The Agency for Health Care Administration (Agency), Department of Health and the Department of Children and Families today met with officials from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) regarding the State's involvement with medically-complex children in skilled nursing facilities. The meeting is to discuss DOJ's allegations and the State's policies. The Agency for Health Care Administration pays for all medically necessary nursing services up to 24 hours per day, 7 days per week for children, regardless of setting.

"There has been an abundance of misinformation about this topic in the media since it was first reported. What is really important to keep in mind is that Florida encourages parents to place their children in the least restrictive setting that can best serve their medical needs. Ultimately, the choice is up to the parents," said Secretary Liz Dudek. "If DOJ or anyone knows of a child that is currently residing in a nursing facility and the parent would like to learn more about options available to receive services in the home, they are encouraged to contact the Agency."

The Agency called the parents or guardians of children who currently reside in skilled nursing facilities in Florida, and as a result 14% expressed an interest in a reassessment to explore options for their child to receive medical services in the home, as opposed to a skilled nursing facility. After learning more, just 1% of parents were interested in actively taking steps to have their child moved from the facility to their home, and the State continues to work with those families to facilitate the transition.

The State does not interfere with a parent's choice of where their child will receive medically necessary nursing services – the State respects the decision they have made in consultation with medical professionals. Hundreds of families have made the choice to keep their child with complex medical needs at home with supportive services through the Florida Medicaid program.

All medically necessary services are available to children enrolled in the State Plan Medicaid program. Medicaid has a comprehensive medical service package that can accommodate any family who chooses to have their child at home and encourages children to be in the least restrictive setting that can best serve their needs. Most Medicaid children in Florida who regularly receive nursing services receive it in their home.

*The Agency for Health Care Administration is committed to better health care for all Floridians. The Agency administers Florida's Medicaid program, licenses and regulates more than 40,000 health care facilities and 37 health maintenance organizations, and publishes health care data and statistics at [www.FloridaHealthFinder.gov](http://www.FloridaHealthFinder.gov).*

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