November 12, 2020

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

ATTENTION: DIRECTORS, CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS

SUBJECT: CHILDREN/YOUTH IN DSS CUSTODY STAYING AT DSS OFFICES OR IN HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOMS WAITING FOR RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT PLACEMENT

REQUIRED ACTION: ☐ Information Only ☒ Time Sensitive ☐ Immediate

The NC Division of Social Services (NC DSS) has developed the attached survey to support the Division with collecting data on the numbers of children and youth who are in the custody of Local Departments of Social Services who do not have timely access to residential treatment beds at the clinically recommended level of care.

These children and youth often come to the attention of NC DSS because they are staying in local Department of Social Services offices or in hospital emergency rooms/other settings waiting for a residential treatment bed.

NC DSS is committed to working with system partners and stakeholders to improve access to the continuum of residential treatment services for children and youth. Timely access to mental health, developmental disability, and substance use disorder services are required to reduce symptoms, crisis episodes and traumas experienced by the children and youth in care.

To accomplish this goal, NC DSS is requesting local Departments of Social Services complete the attached survey to support NC DSS in obtaining data on the numbers of children and youth who are in need of residential services, the level of residential services they are waiting for, and barriers to accessing these residential services.
Additionally, NC DSS is requesting data on the expenses incurred by local Departments of Social Services when residential treatment services from their Local Management Entity/Managed Care Organization are not available when needed.

NC DSS is requesting all Local Departments of Social Services complete the attached survey via https://surveymax.dhhs.state.nc.us/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=l8MH3ll0 by December 9, 2020.

Questions regarding this survey should be directed to Heather McAllister, Child Health and Development Coordinator at Heather.McAllister@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

Lisa Cauley,
Senior Director of Child, Family and Adult Services
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Cc: Susan G. Osborne, Assistant Secretary for County Operations
Teresa Strom, Section Chief for County Operations
Carla McNeill, Section Chief for Permanency Planning
Kathy Stone, Section Chief for Child Protective Services and Prevention
Linda Waite, Acting Section Chief for Licensing and Regulatory Services

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