



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH

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Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

201 W. Preston Street • Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Martin O'Malley, Governor – Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor – Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D., Secretary

October 17, 2014

The Honorable Joan Carter Conway  
Chair, Senate Education, Health and  
Environmental Affairs Committee  
2 West, Miller Senate Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Peter A. Hammen  
Chair, House Health and Government  
Operations Committee  
241 House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Review of Services for Medically Fragile  
Foster Care Youth

Dear Senator Conway and Delegate Hammen:

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Department) respectfully submits this report on the review of services for medically fragile foster care youth. The Department initiated this review in response to the death of a child in the care of a provider for medically fragile youth.

As part of this review, the Department's Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ) reviewed the survey reports and investigations of complaints and self-reported incidents since January 2011 for all four providers serving medically fragile foster care youth. Staff reviewed processes within OHCQ, including initial licensure, re-licensure, triage of self-reported incidents and complaints, survey process, deficiency statements, plans of correction, administrative actions, data management, record keeping, and work flow. Additionally staff reviewed collaboration with other parts of the Department and other agencies. Feedback was solicited from providers, advocacy groups, and other stakeholders.

This review concluded that statutory mandates with respect to the renewal survey frequency every two years were met, and there were no unexpected serious gaps in the oversight of group homes for medically fragile foster care youth. However, several areas for improvement in oversight of these facilities were identified.

The Honorable Joan Carter-Conway  
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To continue to address those areas for improvement, Bernard Simons, the new Deputy Secretary for Developmental Disabilities, and Patricia Nay, Executive Director and Acting Medical Director of OHCQ, will be convening and co-chairing a task force on the quality of services for individuals with developmental disabilities. The Department of Human Resources will be integrally involved in the parts that relate to services for children in the agency's care. The task force will deliver an initial set of recommendations in January 2015.

If you have any questions about this report of the Department's review, please contact Allison Taylor, Director of Governmental Affairs at 410-767-6481 or at [Allison.Taylor@maryland.gov](mailto:Allison.Taylor@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Josh M. Sharfstein". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D.  
Secretary

Enclosure