



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

KODY H. KINSLEY • Secretary

SUSAN G. OSBORNE • Deputy Secretary for Opportunity and Well-Being

June 26, 2023

**DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**ATTENTION: DIRECTORS, CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS,  
MANAGERS, SUPERVISORS, AND SOCIAL WORKERS**

**SUBJECT: HEALTHCARE POWER OF ATTORNEY INFORMATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGING  
OUT OF FOSTER CARE**

**REQUIRED ACTION:**  Information Only  Time Sensitive  Immediate

Through the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111-148), children and youth aging out of foster care and independent living programs must be provided information about the importance of designating another individual to make health care treatment decisions on behalf of the youth in certain situations.

Transition planning includes information on designating another individual to make healthcare treatment decisions on behalf of the young person if the child becomes unable to participate in making decisions and the young person does not have, or does not want, a relative who would otherwise be authorized under law to make such decisions. This provides transitional age youth with an option to execute a healthcare power of attorney, a healthcare proxy, or other similar documents recognized under law.

To assist counties, the NC Division of Social Services (NCDSS) is providing counties with the "Five Wishes" booklet. Five Wishes includes steps to *complete an advance directive and identify an individual to make decisions regarding* healthcare treatment preferences on their behalf if they are unable to make decisions.

NCDSS will be mailing approximately 25 copies of the Five Wishes booklets to each county which will be available to staff that work with LINKS eligible youth through their county leadership.

Fostering Health NC presented on Five Wishes during the May LINK-Up Call and provided additional information to LINKS Coordinators, Foster Care 18 to 21 Workers, and Permanency Child Welfare Staff that work with youth and young adults between the ages of 14 to 20.

For more information on the Five Wishes booklet or to purchase additional copies of the booklet agencies can visit [www.fivewishes.org](http://www.fivewishes.org).

**NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

LOCATION: 820 S. Boylan Avenue, McBryde Building, Raleigh, NC 27603

MAILING ADDRESS: 2401 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2401

www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-855-6335 • FAX: 919-334-1018

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

For any questions, please contact Tori Marshall, State LINKS Coordinator at [Tori.Marshall@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:Tori.Marshall@dhhs.nc.gov).

Sincerely,

*Carla McNeill*

Carla McNeill, MSW  
Section Chief for Permanency Planning  
Division of Social Services, Child Welfare  
North Carolina Department of Health and Human  
Services

Cc: Susan Osborne, Deputy Secretary for Opportunity and Well-Being  
Lisa Tucker Cauley, Senior Director of Child, Family and Adult Services  
Adrian Daye, Deputy Director for Child Welfare Practice  
Tammy Shook, Interim Deputy Director for County Operations  
Kathy Stone, Section Chief for Safety and Prevention Services  
Kimaree Sanders, Section Chief for Regulatory and Licensing  
Peter West, Section Chief for County Operations

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