



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Social Services

325 North Salisbury Street • MSC 2408 • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2408  
Courier # 56-20-25

Michael F. Easley, Governor  
Dempsey Benton, Secretary

Sherry S. Bradsher, Director  
(919) 733-3055

July 15, 2008

**DEAR COUNTY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**ATTENTION: Child Welfare Program Administrators and Supervisors**

**SUBJECT: Child Medical/ Child/Family Evaluation Program**

**EFFECTIVE: Immediately**

We need to remind you of continuing critical issues facing the funding for the Child Medical Evaluation Program (CMEP) that provides for Child Medical Evaluation (CME) and Child and Family Evaluation (CFE) services. The Division issued a Dear County Director Letter [FSCWS-22-06](#) in April 2006 that described these issues and that reiterated the criteria for use of the program. The CME and CFE are extremely valuable diagnostic resources used to assist county Departments of Social Services (DSS) in the identification of abuse and neglect. However, there continue to be serious limitations to the funds available to the Program at this time.

Over the past three years, the costs associated with usage of this program by county DSS's have far exceeded the legislative allocation of funding. Fortunately, the Division has been able to identify funds to supplement the legislative allocation. However, the funding source that we were able to identify is no longer a resource. The budget for the program and the availability for supplementing the program's services will be extremely tight this year. We ask each county DSS to keep this in mind as you make referrals. In the meantime, the Division and the CMEP are working closely to monitor the usage of the Program, to ensure that only appropriate referrals are accepted for services and that we develop strategies that ensure the most effective use of the services.

Your agencies can help us in the effective use of the CME Program by ensuring:

- That the child's health insurance is billed for all children with health insurance.
- That Medicaid is billed for all Medicaid eligible children.
- That CME's and CFE's are ONLY used for CPS assessment purposes in helping the DSS make a case decision when there is otherwise insufficient information to make that decision.
- That CME's and CFE's are not used as "routine" referrals when there is already sufficient information to make a case decision.

- That children needing medical or mental health treatment are referred to other appropriate providers, such as emergency rooms, the child's medical home, or an appropriate mental health provider that treatment services are not billed to the CMEP.
- That the social worker accurately completes the DSS-5143, Consent /Authorization for Medical Mental Health Evaluation prior to the time of the evaluation and that the form includes SIS ID number, date of case opening for services and the parent/caretaker/guardian signature. An improperly completed DSS-5143 can result in a delay in the billing process and failure to provide all necessary documentation could result in the county having to pay for the evaluation.

We recognize the value that CME's and CFE's are to your staff and to the protection of children. We want to ensure that these services are used appropriately and that they will remain available throughout this year.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Terri T. Reichert, CPS Policy Consultant, at (919) 334-1110 or by email at [terri.reichert@ncmail.net](mailto:terri.reichert@ncmail.net).

Sincerely,



Charisse S. Johnson, Chief  
Family Support Child Welfare Services

CJ/ttr

cc: Sherry S. Bradsher  
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Children' Services Program Representatives  
Family Support and Child Welfare Services Team Leaders  
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**FSCWS-38-08**