

COUNTY OF VENTURA

CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES CAREGIVER HEALTH GUIDE

Introduction:

This guide provides information on commonly asked questions regarding Medi-Cal funding for the physical and mental health needs of foster children. In addition, other health related topics are addressed. The Guide is included in the Health and Education Passport Notebook that accompanies the child in out-of-home care.

What is Medi-Cal

- Medi-Cal is government funded medical care. All children in foster/relative care can receive Medi-Cal.
- The child's Medi-Cal identification number is the critical information needed by caregivers.
- The permanent Medi-cal card is a plastic card (known as the BIC card).
- It can take several weeks for the State to generate the plastic card.

How can I get immediate eligibility for Medi-Cal for the foster child who does not have a card yet?

- Regular eligibility process will be completed by the child's Social Worker and the Foster Care Eligibility Unit at Children and Family Services. Once the case is approved, you will receive a BIC card in the mail, usually within 30 days.
- If you need a card immediately, please call (805) 654-3409, ask for the Foster Care Eligibility Officer of the Day and ask for a temporary card, which will be good for 90 days. Take the card with you to all medical and dental appointments.
- For any eligibility questions, please call the Foster Care Eligibility Officer of the Day at (805) 654-3409.

How do I get an emergency Medi-Cal Card?

- Call/contact (Monday through Friday, excluding holidays):
 - The child's Social Worker, or
 - The Children and Family Services Foster Care Eligibility Officer of the Day (805) 654-3409.

What is Gold Coast Health Plan?

Gold Coast Health Plan is an independent public entity created by County Ordinance and authorized through Federal Legislation; however, Gold Coast Health Plan is not a county agency. The Ventura County Board of Supervisors approved implementation of a County Organized Health System (COHS) model, transitioning from fee-for-service Medi-Cal to managed care, on June 2, 2009. The purpose of Gold Coast Health Plan is to serve Medi-Cal beneficiaries, enhance the quality of healthcare, provide greater access, improve service, and provide choice. The plan provides health benefits to more than 100,000 beneficiaries in Ventura County, California.

Your child's Medi-Cal will be managed through the Gold Coast Health Plan, so you will receive a Gold Coast information packet including registration materials approximately 2 weeks after receiving the BIC card. You will need to complete and return registration paperwork as soon as possible. You will also need to select a primary care physician or medical group. Please call Gold Coast at 1-888-301-4176 with any questions regarding registration. Make sure you state that your child is a Foster Child when calling Gold Coast.

What if my foster child has private health insurance?

- Both the private and Medi-Cal insurance may be applied. The private insurance is billed first.
- Caregivers can choose to use private insurance only, but would be responsible for all copayments.
- If there are problems with the private insurance, contact the Foster Care Eligibility Unit.

Will Medi-Cal reimburse over-the-counter medicine and vitamins?

- Some over-the-counter medicines are covered if the doctor writes a prescription. Medi-Cal will not reimburse many over-the-counter medicines and vitamins.

Will Medi-Cal cover glasses for my foster child?

- Yes, once a year.
- Contact Foster Care (FC) Eligibility with any unpaid medical bills as soon as they are received to avoid collection issues.

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Can I get help if my foster child is prescribed a medication that is not reimbursed by Medi-Cal?

- Request the physician apply for a T.A.R. (Treatment Authorization Request) for Medi-Cal approval; the request may take weeks for processing and determination.
- The Children's Auxiliary may be able to assist on a short term basis. The Children's Auxiliary is a non-profit organization dedicated to the needs of foster children.
 - To apply for reimbursement from the Children's Auxiliary:
 - Contact the child's social worker,
 - Send a copy of the medical receipt (keep the original) to the social worker,
 - The social worker completes a form (Dependent Ward Payment Plan) and attaches the copy of the receipt
 - The social worker gives the form to the Community Services Coordinator who calls the Auxiliary,
 - If approved, reimbursement is expedited within two weeks or sooner
 - If there are problems with turnaround or a critical need, please call the Community Services Coordinator (805) 654-3245.

What is a CHDP Exam?

- The Child Health and Disability Prevention program is a California state program that provides preventive health examinations.
- CHDP exams include hearing and vision tests and all necessary immunizations.
- A list of CHDP providers will be provided by the Social Worker at the time of the child's placement.

How often does my foster child need a CHDP Health Assessment?

- A child that is first entering foster/relative care should have a CHDP health assessment within 72 hours of placement, if possible, especially if there is an immediate health need. Some CHDP clinics will make arrangements to see foster care children within this time. If this is not possible, however, the CHDP health assessment must be completed within the first 30 days of placement.
- A child that is changing placements does not need a new health assessment unless the child is due an exam according to the CHDP schedule.
- Children, age two and younger require more frequent CHDP health assessments. Please refer to CHDP Eligibility Assessment Schedule in the Health and Education notebook/binder.
- Older children must receive an annual CHDP health assessment.

When to call and schedule CHDP Health Assessment and a separate Dental exam

- If this is an initial placement into a foster home and the child has been placed with you directly from their parent's home, call to schedule a CHDP medical exam and a separate dental exam as soon as possible!

CHDP

1. The CHDP exam must be completed within 30 days. A foster child is in a high risk group and may have significant health needs due to the situation which caused out-of-home placement
2. If you have a child who is changing placement (coming to your home from another foster/relative or group home placement) you will need to determine whether the child is due for an exam by noting when the last CHDP and dental exams were done. This information is found in the Health and Education Passport. For a child over the age of two, a new exam will be needed every 12 months. For a child under age two, please see the CHDP Eligibility Assessment schedule (should be a blue sheet) in the Health and Education Passport notebook/binder. A dental exam/cleaning will be needed every 6 months starting at the age of one year old. It is very important to discuss when to schedule a health exam with your child's social worker at the time of placement.
3. Call the medical clinic to schedule an appointment and state that you have a foster child who needs a CHDP exam.
 - Change of clinic or doctors requires pre-authorization from Gold Coast Health Plan. Please call Gold Coast Health Plan at 1-888-301-4176. You may need to fax your placement agreement to Gold Coast at fax# 1-888-310-3660.
4. If this child is being initially removed from their parents, but has had a recent exam, a new CHDP exam must be done even though the child has had a recent exam before being placed in foster or relative care placement. The CHDP exam will be paid for by the CHDP program through a provision called Medically

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Necessary Inter-periodic Health Assessment (MNIHA). Please call (805) 240-2700 and ask for the CHDP Foster Care Nurse with any question regarding exams.

5. Take the *Medical and Dental Treatment Form (Fax)* to appointments and have the medical provider complete it. (A copy of the PM-160 form that the CHDP doctors complete can be substituted for the Medical and Dental Treatment Form as long as it has all relevant information on it, including any referrals made, and to whom).
6. Obtain the copy at the exam and fax the completed form to the Foster Care Nurse at the number on the form (805 240-2710). You may ask the provider to fax the form to us at the time of service.

DENTAL

1. The dental exam must be completed within 30 days. A foster child is in a high risk group and may have significant dental needs due to the situation which caused out-of-home placement.
2. Call the dental clinic and indicate you have a foster child who needs a dental exam.
3. Take the Medical and Dental Treatment Form (Fax) to the appointments and have the dental provider complete it.
4. Fax the completed form to the Foster Care Nurse at the number on the form (805 240-2710). You may ask the provider to fax the form to us at the time of service.

A copy of the updated Health and Education Passport Document based on the exam information you provided, and any other new significant medical, dental or educational information received by the Social Worker or nurse, will be mailed to you when information is updated by the Foster Care Nurse. Replace the old HEP document with the updated HEP document in the HEP Notebook.

How often does my foster child need a dental exam?

Alert! Medi-Cal only funds the routine dental exam every six months. If it appears that the child has received a recent routine dental exam, contact the Foster Care Nurse and Child's Social Worker.

- A dental exam is required within 30 days of the first foster or relative home placement and then once every six months if the child is over one year of age.
- The dental exam is separate from the CHDP exam.

Foster Child is ill when he/she arrives and scheduling when Medi-Cal Card is not yet available

Anytime the child appears ill upon arrival, discuss with the Social Worker what has already been done for the child and what is known about the health history.

1. The RX for Kids Nurse may be consulted by the social worker.
2. Children that have immediate life-threatening symptoms are taken for medical care by Children and Family Services prior to placement.
3. Call the CHDP clinic and make an appointment. Tell the clinic that this is a foster child, new to placement, and has an immediate health care need.
4. Make sure they schedule the child for a return CHDP partial screen exam to complete the necessary items (i.e. tuberculosis screening, immunizations, hemoglobin, urinalysis, hearing, vision screening) for their health assessment. This will do two things, provide medical attention for the current condition and meet the comprehensive medical exam requirements.

Medical/Dental Follow up Visits: Keeping the Child's Health and Education Record Up-to-Date

1. Your team involvement as a substitute care provider (foster parent, relative caregiver, group home manager etc.) is critical in keeping the Health & Education Passport Document up-to-date. This means discussing with the Social Worker all medical, dental, mental health and educational information you have obtained.

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2. The Medical and Dental Treatment Form can be used for all medical or dental visits and is to be faxed to the Foster Care Nurse. (The medical clinics may give you a copy of the PM 160 billing form or the Progress Note. Again, this is acceptable to send to the Foster Care Nurse as long as it indicates reason for the visit, treatment ordered, and referral information).
3. Please call (805) 240-2700 and ask for the CHDP Foster Care Nurse to get more report forms if needed.

Can my foster child get orthodontia services?

- Medi-Cal does not pay for non-severe orthodontia.
- Any child with full-scope Medi-Cal is eligible for Denti-Cal.
 - Denti-Cal will cover orthodontia for severe malocclusion only. For list of Denti-Cal orthodontists, you may call (800) 322-6384.
- Contact the Foster Care Nurse if you have questions about the above resources (805) 240-2700.

My foster child needs a routine surgical procedure. What do I do?

- Contact your social worker who will request a written statement from the physician regarding the diagnosis, the need for surgery and the anticipated date of surgery.
- The social worker will request a Court hearing on an expedited basis and will contact the parents if the parents' whereabouts are known.
- If approved, the Judge will issue an order granting permission for surgery.

My foster child needs emergency surgery. What do I do?

- In immediate life or death situations, the hospitals have authority to promptly apply medical treatment.
- Following any immediate life saving actions, the caregiver should contact the CFS Hotline at (805) 654-3200 to inform CFS about the child's situation. The Social Worker may need to contact the birth parents and the child's attorney.
 - When there is an emergency, but non-immediate situation, the Judge can be contacted by the Social Worker and an order/permission obtained within a couple of hours.
- During the day, Monday through Friday (excluding holidays), call the Social Worker.
- If the Social Worker is not available, speak to the Social Worker's supervisor or the Officer -of-the-Day.
- Children and Family Services will expedite the matter to the Court.
 - During the evening, weekends or holidays, call the Children and Family Services hotline (805) 654- 3200 and request staff to contact the On-Call Magistrate for legal authority. Staff will call the Judge on duty to obtain permission. The Judge on-call can grant authority over the phone.
 - The Social Worker will follow-up during the work week to inform the child's attorney and parents.

What is the age cut-off for Children to Receive Medi-Cal?

- Youth who have emancipated from foster care at age 18 or older are eligible to continue to receive Medi-Cal up the age of 26.
- Youth must be US citizen or have Special Immigrant Status.

What do emancipated youth need to do to continue receiving Medi-Cal?

ALERT: youth that are dismissed from the foster care system early (before age 18) or who are placed back with parents will not be eligible for extended Medi-Cal. The youth needs to:

- Call (805) 654-3409 and ask for the eligibility officer of the day upon receiving their Notification of Action form from the Foster Care Eligibility Unit
- Report over the phone:
 - That he/she wants Medi-Cal
 - His/her new address and
 - Whether or not he/she has other insurance

If there are questions, please call the Foster Care Eligibility Supervisor at (805) 654-3409.

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Psychotropic medication has been recommended for my foster child. What is the required legal procedure?

- Contact the child's social worker who will inform the parents.
- The physician must complete a Court approved request form:
 - The social worker or Officer-of-the-Day can fax the physician a copy of the form (JV 220). Or a copy of the form may be downloaded from: <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/forms/>
- The physician must fax the form to the Court (805) 654-3464.
- The Court will hold an expedited hearing and, if approved, will issue a Court order.
- Please note that Court approval needs to be obtained every six months while the child is taking psychotropic medication.

What if psychotropic medication is needed for my foster child immediately on an emergency basis?

- When a child must be medicated immediately, the physician may proceed without prior Court authorization.
- The physician is to follow-up by faxing the *form JV 220* to the Court at (805) 654-3464 in time for the next business day.
- Inform the Social Worker.

What if psychotropic medication is needed for my foster child after hours?

- The physician may reach the on-call magistrate for authorization by calling (805) 652-2479.
- The physician is to follow-up by faxing the *JV 220 form* to the Court (805) 654-3464 in time for the next business day.

What is the Health & Education Passport?

- The Health and Education (HEP) is a State-required document that contains the foster child's health and education information. This is a vital history for each child in foster care.
- Every foster parent and every relative caregiver must receive a passport.
- The HEP is contained in the Health and Education Passport Notebook (a binder with plastic inserts to keep the child's health and school records).
- The HEP must travel with the child, including if the child is emancipated or reunified with his/her parent.

Who completes the Health & Education Passport?

- Both the foster child's Social Worker, foster/relative caregiver gather information to complete the passport.
- The completed Medical and Dental Treatment Form is sent to the nursing staff by the social worker so that the Health and Education Passport can be updated.
- Any pertinent medical records and reports are to be sent to the CHDP Foster Care Nurse (fax# 805 240-2710) by the medical or dental provider, the foster parent, and/or the social worker. The nursing staff documents major medical and dental information into the computerized passport; and mails updated passports to the caregivers.
- The foster parent/relative caregiver informs the Social Worker about the medical and dental appointments, health conditions as they arise or become known; and also communicates educational information, such as school, grade, teacher, progress reports and awards. The Social Worker will then send the information to nursing or clerical staff for update of HEP document.
- The Social Worker will review the HEP medical information together and discuss how to meet special needs of child.

What is Behavioral Health?

- Behavioral Health is a department within the Ventura County Health Care Agency that provides mental health, alcohol and other drug treatment services.

What is the Options Program?

- Children with specific mental needs are served by the Behavioral Health Options counseling program.
- Children are referred to Behavioral Health by the child's Social Worker.

The Social Worker or calls the S.T.A.R. (Satellite Triage, Assessment, and Referral) program at (805) 981-4233 and Behavioral Health determines whether the child meets the eligibility criteria, and will schedule appointment if does.

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What is a Case Plan?

The case plan is written by the child's social worker based on information from many sources, including birth parents, foster parents, relative caregivers and other service providers.

- The child's portion of the case plan addresses health, education and service needs.
- The social worker verbally shares the child's needs with the caregivers.
- The case plan becomes a part of the Court record.

What is the Child's Needs and Services Plan?

The Child's Needs and Services Plan is completed with the caregiver at time of placement

- The Plan describes the child's services and what is known about the child's functioning, needs, likes and dislikes.
- Per Licensing regulations, foster parents must have a completed copy of the Child's Needs and Services Plan for children currently in their care.

What does the Foster Care/CHDP Nurse do?

- The CHCP Public Health Foster Care nurse is stationed with the Children and Family Services.
 - The Nurse:
 - Gathers family health history from those parents who appear at the first Court hearing, if possible.
 - Enters the health information into the computerized Health and Education Passport.
 - Communicates high risk conditions to the foster parents and social workers.
 - Tracks follow-up health needs noted by CHDP doctors on the CHDP form (PM 160).
 - Consults with staff and care providers on high risk conditions and reviewing health records.
 - Provides an individual health consultation for youth exiting foster care at the age of majority. The HEP is very important for the youth to review with the Nurse to assure understanding of health maintenance needs as youth becomes independent.

What is the RX for Kids Program?

- The Public Health RX for Kids nursing staff work closely with Children and Family Services social workers.
- The nurses identify the developmental and other health needs, primarily during emergency investigations.
- The nurses also assist with identifying appropriate services.

What is C.A.R.T.?

- Children who have been placed in the Casa Pacifica shelter have received at least one C.A.R.T. assessment to develop a plan to meet the child's needs.
- C.A.R.T. is short for Coordinated Assessment and Response Team.
- The team is comprised of staff from Behavioral Health, Children and Family Services, Public Schools, Public Health and Casa Pacifica. Other participants may include foster/relative caregivers and others.

What is a Psychological Evaluation?

- A psychological evaluation is an exam done by a psychologist, which may assess personality issues, comprehension, attachment and interaction.
- The written evaluation is attached to the report to the Court.
- Psychological evaluations are performed by psychologists on an approved panel.
- The evaluations are Court ordered.
- Evaluations are separate from treatment but may recommend treatment.
- The social worker verbally shares information with the caregivers regarding the child's evaluation, including any diagnosis, the child's functioning, the child's developmental level and any recommended treatment.

What is a Psychiatric Evaluation?

- Usually a psychiatrist (MD) assesses the child's need for psychotropic medication.
- If the child is prescribed psychotropic medication, the doctor will follow-up to check the dosage, which may

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include blood tests and discussions with the child and caregiver to evaluate treatment.

- Psychotropic medication cannot be prescribed without specific Court order.
- Contact your foster child's social worker if a service provider recommends psychotropic medication, such as Ritalin.
- A psychiatric evaluation for a parent is sometimes Court ordered.

What does the CIRT Team do?

- The CIRT Team assesses children, to determine whether they are a danger to themselves or others.
- If there is a significant danger, the CIRT Team will put a 72-hour psychiatric hold on the child for psychiatric hospitalization.
- The process of administering a psychiatric hold is commonly called a "5150"

If I care for a foster child with a severe health condition, is there Special Coordination?

- Yes, for many conditions, including: enteral feeding tube, total parental feeding, a cardio-respiratory monitor, intravenous therapy, a ventilator, oxygen support, urinary catheterization, renal dialysis, tracheostomy, colostomy, ileostomy, injection needs and intravenous medication.
- Other conditions that may be assessed by the RX for Kids Nursing Staff for the special health care coordination include HIV, severe failure to thrive, asthma, spina bifida, diabetes, chronic lung disease, seizure disorders and shaken infant with severe injuries.
- A foster child that has a special health care need as described above must have an Individualized Health Care Plan (IHCP).
- The IHCP is developed with the physician, the RX for Kids Nurse, the caregiver and the social worker.
- Due to confidentiality law, if the child has HIV or AIDS, the terms "HIV" and "AIDS" cannot be written in the case plan.
- The caregivers must have training on the child's health care needs before the child is placed.
- The caregivers named on the foster care license must have current first aid and CPR certification. They must have had TB screening within the last 12 months.

How do I get permission for my foster child to get an HIV test?

- Due to confidentiality laws, doctors may not conduct HIV testing of a child in the foster care system without Court authorization.
- Contact the child's social worker who will consult with the RX for Kids Nurse.
- If the risk factors indicate a need, the social worker will request Court authorization.
- The social worker and caregiver cannot disclose the HIV status of a child without specific Court authorization.

How does my foster child get treatment for HIV?

- A team of care providers from several agencies will work together.
- The treatment will be coordinated by the California Children's Services (CSS) case manager and the Public Health HIV Manager.
- The type of treatment will be determined by the child's physician.
- The Social Worker may need to coordinate transportation arrangements, such as to the Children's Hospital in Los Angeles.
- The HIV Nurse and the RX Nurse are available to conduct training for caregivers.

What is ILP?

- The Independent Living Program helps foster youth ages 16 and up with life skills including employment, education planning, housing and health care.
- The youth set goals and take classes. Special events are also available including retreats, job fairs, and campus visits.
- The teens receive an incentive for completing the classes.
- Foster and relative caregivers are asked to encourage the youth to be involved in this important transition planning program.

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What is Transitional Living Housing?

- Transitional Housing is a semi-independent living situation for foster teens in out-of-home care age 16 to 18.
- The youth reside in a home and are expected to show responsibility under the guidance of several staff.
- The youth apply by contacting their social worker and completing an application.
- The social worker or probation officer must complete a referral.
- If the youth appears to meet the criteria, the teen participates in an interview.

How Do I Help My Foster Teen Successfully Emancipate?

- Every foster teen age 16 and older has a Transitional Living Case Plan (TLP) to cover educational, employment, and housing planning and obtaining vital documents.
- Discuss the plan with the child's social worker.
- Help keep the HEP up-to-date.
- Encourage the teen to participate in the recommended activities towards becoming independent.
- If the social worker finds the teen appropriate to refer to Transitional Housing, work with the teen to consider this plan and to make the transition.
- Work with the CHDP/Foster Care Nurse to schedule the Emancipation Health Consultation.
- Discuss the youth's needs with the Social Worker. Does the child have all his/her life documents (birth certificate, social security number...)? Does the child need Special Immigration status? Does the child need help making a plan for the future?

What is Extended Foster Care?

- Youth have the option of remaining in foster care beyond age 18.
- Foster caregivers ensure that a non-minor dependent receives necessary first aid, medical, dental, vision, and mental health care, and related services.
- The caregiver assists a non-minor dependent with developing the skills necessary for self-sufficiency in obtaining health services.
- Upon the request of a non-minor dependent with a health condition that requires prescription or nonprescription medication, the caregiver assists the non-minor dependent with the self-administration of medication and injections if permitted by his or her physician.
- The caregiver ensures that the non-minor dependent stores medication and injections in a manner that ensures the safety of other non-minor dependents and children in the home.
- Even if a special rate is not offered right away, it is better to explore if a special rate is warranted than to lose the possibility of warranted assistance. Ask the social worker if the extra or specialized tasks constitute basis for a special rate.
- If a situation may meet the criteria, the social worker completes a form, the Dependent Ward Payment Plan.
- The Dependent Ward Payment is reviewed for approval by the social worker's supervisor and manager.
- Upon approval, the request is processed by the Foster Care Eligibility Unit.
- The check may be mailed as a separate amount from the basic payment rate or may be included with the basic rate.
- It may take 4 to 6 weeks for the first reimbursement.
- If the child is placed for less than a month, the rate for the partial month will be prorated.
- Special rates continue as long as the justification continues; however, the Dependent Ward Payment Plan must be renewed by the social worker and Foster Care Eligibility every 6 months, with the justification documented.
- Relative caregivers are only eligible to receive a special rate if the caregiver is being paid AFDC-PC funds.
- This funding category is dependent on two issues: whether the child's placement could be funded under a federal category as determined by the child's parents' status and, if so, whether the relatives chose the AFDC-FC rather than the non-needy aid. Please contact the child's social worker or the Foster Care Eligibility Unit if there are questions regarding the funding status.

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Resource Phone Numbers:

Resource	Phone Number (805 area code unless indicated)
Behavioral Health - Child must have Medi-Cal	(866) 998-2243 or 981-4233
Casa Pacifica	366-4170
CFS Regional Office/East County	955-2290
CFS Regional Office/Oxnard	240-2700
CFS Regional Office/Ventura	654-3409
CFS 24-hour hotline for referrals of suspected abuse/neglect and after hours emergencies	654-3200
CHDP Foster Care Nurse	240-2700
Rx for Kids Nurse	981-5373
Pediatric Diagnostic Center 3291 Loma Vista, Ventura	652-6255
Clinicas de la Comunidad de Oxnard 650 Meta Street, Oxnard	Medical: 487-5351 Dental: 483-3600
(Clinicas) Maravilla Community Health Center 450 W. Clara, Oxnard	488-0210
Clinicas del Camino Real Inc. 200 S. Wells Road, Ventura	Medical: 647-6322 Dental: 659-0590
(Clinicas) Ojai Valley Community Health Center 1200 Maricopa Highway, Ojai	640-8293
Clinicas del Camino Real, Inc., 500 E. Main Street, Santa Paula	933-0895
Court Fax	654-3464
Denti-Cal	(800) 322-6384
Developmental Assessment	639-2600
Developmental Assessment/Early Start	485-3177
Developmental Assessment/Head Start	485-7878
Developmental Assessment/Easter Seals	647-1141
Foster Care Eligibility	654-3409
HIV/AIDS: Resources for Treatment California Children's Services (CCS)	981-5281
Public Health Nursing	981-5115
On-Call Magistrate	652-2479
St. John's Regional Center Developmental Program	988-2793
VCMC	Emergency Admitting 652-6163

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