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Sent: Monday, November 19, 2007 4:01 PM
To: Challberg@covenanttocare.org
Cc: mprewitt@covenanttocare.org
Subject: Adopt A Social Worker Program

Dear Ms. Hallberg,

I wanted to write you to testify how wonderful it has been to have some of our neediest families receive services through your organization. I am not an official adopted social worker, but I have worked with Meral Prewitt where she was able to secure support for us. Our organization services children and youth from birth to 21 who have special health care needs ranging from asthma and obesity through more severe disabilities such as autism, cancer, ADHD and cerebral palsy. This is not a complete list by any means. We serve the uninsured and underinsured and offer care coordination, respite funding, and extended service funding through the Title V program. The Southwest area services the towns of Trumbull, Stratford, Monroe, and Bridgeport down to Greenwich.

Even though our program is broad, there are some children who "fall through the cracks". On particular child from Stratford was blind in one eye and had retinopathy in the other that needed emergency surgery in Boston if they were going to be able to save it. We had arranged the appointment but because the hospital was in another state, the family had no means to get there. Their Husky benefit would not transport them out of CT. The family was going to need two overnights in a room near the hospital as well. After much work on Meral's part, she was able to get the funding so the family would be able to make the trip and the child have the surgery successfully. This was a very dramatic example of an agency that aided the work that our Social Work and Nurse Coordination activities started so that the family could receive the needed services.

I have always wished that I could be an Adopted Social Worker to have a committed resource team to turn to for emergencies. I think it is essential to have the community's support in this way especially since it is impossible at this time to have government services provide the wrap-around details to help our families get what they need. Just as it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a dedicated community of resources to support the Social Worker. I strongly urge you to do anything possible to continue this service to your local families.

Mary Ann Austin, LCSW

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