



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Monday, February 12, 2018

Contact: [mediainquiry@acs.nyc.gov](mailto:mediainquiry@acs.nyc.gov), (212) 341-0999

**ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMISSIONER DAVID A. HANSELL ANNOUNCES EXPANSION OF ACS MEDICAL CONSULTATION PROGRAM**

*ACS is increasing Medical Consultants and trainings for Child Protection Staff to increase medical expertise on every investigation that has medical concerns*

New York, NY – NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Commissioner David A. Hansell today announced the expansion of the ACS Medical Consultation Program, which combines the medical expertise of Medical Consultants in child welfare investigations.

ACS is expanding the number of Medical Consultants from 9 to 14 and increasing ongoing trainings for Child Protection Staff to enhance medical expertise on cases with medically-related issues.

The Medical Consultation Program is a decade-long pioneer effort which adds the medical expertise of Nurse Practitioners from NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue (Bellevue) as medical consultants in high priority child welfare investigations involving medically-related issues.

Medical Consultants are stationed onsite at Child Protection Borough Offices to assist Child Protection staff with education and support during investigations involving medical concerns. ACS Child Protective Specialists who investigate allegations of abuse and neglect are required to seek support from the medical consultants on any report that includes medical concerns such as:

- Allegations of medical neglect;
- Special needs child is in the home;
- Child or parent with a chronic or life threatening illness;
- Educational neglect when a medical diagnosis (for the child or parent) is given as the reason for absence; or
- A child or parent is currently hospitalized for a medical reason.

“This expansion will bring medical expertise into more investigations, more intensively. More Medical Consultants will work alongside our frontline child-protection staff to provide assistance in high-priority investigations involving medically-related issues,” **said ACS Commissioner David A. Hansell.** “While we already have medical staff who assist with abuse cases at our

Child Advocacy Centers, the onsite support of our Medical Consultants has transformed the way caseworkers develop service plans for children and families at a critical time in their lives. I look forward to the continued expansion of this successful program.”

“We are pleased to partner with ACS and share the knowledge and expertise of our talented health care professionals to better serve our city’s children,” **said Mitchell Katz, M.D., President and Chief Executive Officer of NYC Health + Hospitals.**

“The ACS Medical Consultation Program provides critical pediatric input in the care of New York City's most vulnerable children and we at Bellevue consider it one of the most important programs we are involved with,” **said Dr. Benard Dreyer, M.D., Director of Pediatrics, Bellevue Hospital Center.** “It is gratifying to see its latest expansion, which will allow more timely medical consultations to the ACS staff across the city. I am so proud of the work of our medical consultants who have done so much for the last 10 years.”

The ACS Division of Child Protection investigates over 60,000 reports of alleged abuse and neglect involving some 80,000 children every year. To date, the Medical Consultation Program has provided close to 120,000 medical consultations and provided over 30,000 medical trainings for our frontline staff.

Medical Consultants help caseworkers obtain information about medical conditions and how it can impact a child or family, understand medical records, contact medical providers, and make recommendations for services. They also provide ongoing training for Child Protection staff in health topics such as: abusive head trauma, asthma, autism, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, vaccinations, sexual abuse and many more.

“I want to thank NYC Health + Hospitals for their partnership in ensuring our child welfare investigations have the medical expertise of their experienced medical staff,” **said ACS Commissioner Hansell.** “This is a perfect example of expanded interagency collaboration and I look forward to more opportunities with the new leadership of Dr. Katz.”

The Medical Consultation program was established in 2007 with support from Bellevue’s Director of Pediatrics, Dr. Benard Dreyer, and attending physicians Dr. Margaret McHugh, Dr. Vincent Palusci and Dr. Lori Legano.

The Program was inspired by the ACS Clinical Consultation Program for domestic violence, mental health and substance abuse, where caseworkers are able to consult with an expert in the field stationed at the Borough Offices.

Child Protection Staff continue to express that receiving the medical assessment support from the Nurse Practitioners is extremely helpful, as the caseworkers are better able to understand medical issues, which allows them to make better assessments for service recommendations.

###

**About the New York City Administration for Children’s Services:**

*The Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) protects and promotes safety and well-being of New York City’s children and families by providing child welfare, juvenile justice, and early care and education services. For more information, please visit: [www.nyc.gov/acs](http://www.nyc.gov/acs).*