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HEALTH
DEPARTMENT
of Northwest Michigan

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Health Department partnering with Pediatricians to offer enhanced services

CHARLEVOIX – The Health Department of Northwest Michigan has been partnering with pediatric and primary care providers across Charlevoix and Emmet counties to implement a new program—the Michigan Children’s Healthcare Access Program (CHAP). CHAP aims to make it easier for families to connect the resources they need to keep their children healthy.

Natalie Kasiborski, Community Health Supervisor at the Health Department, is excited to roll out CHAP to benefit the area’s youth. “Navigating health resources and insurance can be confusing and sometimes overwhelming, especially for parents whose children need special attention,” she said. “CHAP will make the process smoother for families and health care providers alike.”

CHAP, which serves youth ages 17 and younger, acts as a coordinator of children’s health care services. The mission of CHAP is to improve health outcomes among children on Medicaid, while better utilizing existing resources and decreasing healthcare costs. Patients will receive needed services, education, and assistance navigating the healthcare system. Current CHAP participants include Petoskey Pediatrics, Community Health Center of Northern Michigan, Charlevoix Pediatrics, Pine River Medical, East Jordan Family Health Center, and Dental Clinics North-East Jordan.

“The Children’s Healthcare Access Program will make a great difference for our families,” said Dr. Laura Most, a pediatrician at Petoskey Pediatrics. “Not only will the program help the children directly, but it will provide a central source of support for their families.”

To be eligible for CHAP, children must be enrolled in a Medicaid health plan and assigned to a participating primary care practice. Services include home visits, telephone consultation and follow-up, transportation assistance, and coordination of care. Families may be referred to CHAP for a variety of reasons, including unnecessary emergency room use, transportation issues, frequent missed appointments, being in need of an annual well-child visit, needing assistance connecting with behavioral health or specialty services,

By educating parents and guardians, Kasiborski hopes the program will encourage the use of primary care providers and decrease the number of inappropriate emergency room visits.

CHAP is funded through the Michigan Association of United Ways, and is a part of the statewide MI-CHAP demonstration project. For more information about CHAP and other Health Department children’s services, visit www.nwhealth.org or call (800) 432-4121. The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego Counties.