



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Board Moves forward on Child Protection Recommendations**

Moving forward with key recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission for Child Protection, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors has approved pairing public health nurses with social workers to investigate every allegation of abuse for children under the age of two.

This move, based on a motion co-sponsored by Supervisors Mark Ridley-Thomas and Sheila Kuehl, will help medical and child welfare professionals evaluate if a child is in danger of abuse or needs immediate medical attention. The Board also moved forward with the recommendation to make sure these children get referred to special medical clinics (called “hubs”) to get immediate health screenings if the public health nurse deems it medically necessary.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Medical Hub will be the first site to begin this partnership between social workers and public health nurses as part of the first phase of recommendations. The MLK Medical Hub will serve residents in Compton and the Vermont area of the DCFS regional offices. These enhancements will also make it

possible to protect children and minimize disruption to families by having public health nurses evaluate children in their own homes.

In order to enhance all six medical hubs at county hospitals, the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services will allocate \$2-million to fund 14 new positions for doctors, nurses and one fellowship position. Annually, the Department of Children and Family Services estimates nearly 17,000 infants under the age of two in Los Angeles are at the greatest risk of being harmed.

“The time is now to move on the Blue Ribbon Commission’s recommendations. The protection and well-being of children in our care should always be top priority,” said Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, who co-sponsored the motion with Supervisor Sheila Kuehl. “All children in L.A. County deserve a fighting chance. They should be able to grow up healthy, free from abuse and in nurturing environments.”

Added Supervisor Kuehl, “I am very happy there are steps we have taken today reflecting the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission.”

The Blue Ribbon Commission for Child Protection was formed last year, based on a motion by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, to improve the safety and well-being of children in the child welfare system. The commission, comprised of experts in child welfare, social work and other areas, has issued two reports with recommendations for improving the system in Los Angeles County.

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