

From:

To:

Date: 9/14/2016 9:33:51 AM

Subject:

---

## **Gov. Nikki Haley Announces BabyNet Transition to SCDHHS**

**COLUMBIA, S.C.** – Governor Nikki Haley today announced the transition of BabyNet, currently managed by First Steps, to the Department of Health and Human Services (SCDHHS).

A copy of the governor's executive order, detailing the transition, is available [here](#).

Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), known as "BabyNet" in South Carolina, provides for early intervention services for children with disabilities from birth to their third birthday. Services are designed to identify and meet a child's needs in five developmental areas, including physical and cognitive development.

SCDHHS is uniquely positioned to bring Medicaid managed care organizations and BabyNet providers together to more efficiently and effectively process their Medicaid care plans and Individualized Family Support Plans under BabyNet. The agency administers Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which together serve a majority of BabyNet recipients. Medicaid pays for a majority of births in South Carolina, so HHS has a relationship with most BabyNet recipients and their families from the very beginning of their lives.

"At Easterseals South Carolina we work every day to ensure that the children in South Carolina receive the best early intervention services they can, and we have been deeply troubled that South Carolina's Part C program has the worst track record of complying with federal compliance standards of any state in the union," said Deanna Lewis, President & CEO of Easterseals South Carolina. "With HHS's record of fiscal responsibility and having an established relationship with most BabyNet recipients already, we feel that HHS is the right agency to lead the program back into federal compliance."

"Too many children with developmental delays, disabilities and special health care needs in South Carolina are falling through the cracks and not receiving the critical early intervention services they need. As the parent training and information center for South Carolina, we support steps that will best serve the children of our state and help position them for success in school and life," said Amy Holbert, executive director of Family Connection of South Carolina. "We believe a partnership between SCDHHS and DOE – based on these actions of Governor Haley – can help ensure that the children throughout our state receive those critical services when needed."

The work of transitioning BabyNet to SCDHHS will begin immediately over the next few months with formal assumption of lead agency responsibilities beginning July 1, 2017. This incorporation period will ensure a smooth transition that includes completion of necessary filings with the U.S. Department of Education, establishing the partnerships with other state agencies and ensuring the state budget reflects the change.

-###-