



Florida's Public Health & Medical System  
**PREPARES & RESPONDS**

**VULNERABLE POPULATION: Children's Medical Services for Children with Special Health Care Needs**

The Division of Children's Medical Services (CMS) provides comprehensive physician, inpatient, and care coordination services to children identified with acute and chronic healthcare issues. The goal of the service is to provide the maximum amount of care in a home based setting, and therefore children may require sheltering in an event.

**Key Issues:**

- CMS educates each family on the importance of having a disaster plan.
- These families may be able to shelter in place during an event. However, depending on the severity of the event and duration, they may require sheltering at a later phase in order to sustain their healthcare needs.
- Wherever possible, Special Needs Shelters should cohort child clients so the care environment is optimal for their needs.
- Many CMS clients are on multiple medications and specialty equipment, and may be compromised by an event.

**Planning Considerations:**

- CMS through their regional offices will attempt to contact each CMS family under their care prior to an event to determine their evacuation status and destination. This information should be integrated at the local level so that post event assessments can prioritize those clients who sheltered in place.
- Work with the local CMS Area Office to establish a timeframe objective to complete assessments of households post-event.
- Special Needs Shelter planning should include strategies for assessing and meeting the needs of children with special health care needs.

**Supporting Agency:**

Department of Health- Children's Medical Services Area Offices  
[www.cms-kids.com/home/contact/area\\_offices.html](http://www.cms-kids.com/home/contact/area_offices.html)

**Additional Information:**

For further program information contact CMS at 850-245-4200 or visit the CMS website at [www.cms-kids.com](http://www.cms-kids.com)