A Summary of the Rules Governing the Licensing and Funding of Maternity Homes in North Carolina

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This document summarizes the required licensing process for prospective homes for pregnant and parenting teens (maternity homes) and homes for teen parents. For the purpose of this document, both homes will be called maternity homes.

Background

The need for stable housing resources for pregnant and parenting teens is a clear and ongoing need. Since 2000, the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of North Carolina (APPCNC) has received an average of two calls per month requesting referrals for safe and stable housing. In response, APPCNC convened a forum on housing resources for pregnant and parenting teens in 2005, and proceeded to work with organizations to increase the availability of housing.

While some organizations have successfully created new housing resources – for example, My Sister Susan’s House in Greensboro and My Aunt’s House in Winston-Salem – we see two persistent challenges. First, the number of housing options remains inadequate. Second, the regulations and procedures for groups wishing to start programs can be confusing and cumbersome.

This document serves to clarify current rules and provide a guide to people interested in developing residential homes for pregnant teens or teen parents and their children.
# To Receive and Maintain Licensure and Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option 1</th>
<th>An organization can apply to operate a residential maternity home if it has been accredited for <strong>three (3) years</strong> by one of the following groups: The Council on Accreditation (COA), The Joint Commission (TJC), The Commission on Accreditation and Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), or The Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL). The accredited organization can provide mental health services, adult services or children’s services. The important factor is that they have been accredited for three years before they apply, demonstrating that they have the capacity to operate an agency and provide quality services. For example, Agency A operates a program that serves children or adults, has been accredited by COA for three years and is currently accredited. Agency A can apply for a license to operate a residential maternity home.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Option 2</td>
<td>An agency that wants to provide residential maternity care and is not accredited can partner with an accredited agency. If the maternity home program becomes accredited and remains accredited for <strong>three (3) years</strong> then the maternity home program can apply for licensure on their own. For example, an organization providing residential maternity care partners with Agency B (a mental health agency accredited by TJC). Agency B becomes licensed to operate a residential maternity home. At some point the residential maternity home program becomes accredited. After three years of the residential maternity home program maintaining accreditation, they then can apply to be licensed on their own as a residential maternity home. The specific rule about accreditation is found in 10A NCAC 70K.0103 Licensing Actions. The accreditation rule applies to residential maternity homes licensed after August 1, 2011.</td>
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<td>Funding</td>
<td>A maternity home shall maintain a valid maternity home license for a consecutive one (1) year period and submit an audited financial statement to the NC Dept. of Health and Human Services before the per diem rate is assigned. The per diem rate is based on the actual cost of care. A licensed maternity home is eligible for reimbursement from maternity home funds in the second year of operation if this criterion is met and maternity home funds are available. The specific rule that relates to being in business a year before becoming eligible for state maternity home funds is 10A NCAC 71L.0102 Approval Criteria. Specific rules about state maternity homes funds are found in 10A NCAC 71L (<a href="http://reports.oah.state.nc.us/ncac.asp">http://reports.oah.state.nc.us/ncac.asp</a> Scroll to 10A, Scroll to Chapter 71, Scroll to Subchapter L)</td>
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Additional Resources and Explanation

The licensure and funding process is designed to ensure that the organizations that apply for a license to operate a residential maternity care program have experience providing services and quality care to the populations they serve. As of August 1, 2011, agencies that want to open a maternity home must be ACCREDITED for three (3) years before applying to be licensed as a maternity home. (For a list of the accrediting groups, please see the agencies listed in Step One.) After the agency has been accredited for three years, the home needs to be operational for at least one (1) year and submit an audit before any application for Maternity Home Funds can be considered.

As an example: The Children’s Home, headquartered in Winston-Salem, has programs in other parts of the state. They are the managing agency for My Aunt’s House, a residential home for teen parents and their children. The assumption is that this kind of agency has the infrastructure, experience and expertise in place to offer effective services to pregnant and parenting teens and their children. Hypothetically, this agency (or another residential services agency) could be the managing agency for a new maternity home.

In conclusion, any agency that wants to open a home would have to be already accredited for three (3) years before making the application to license a home, or would have to come under the management of an accredited agency. After one (1) year of operations and an approved audit, maternity home funding could be requested.

Regarding other options for safe housing for teen parents, departments of social service and other children’s services agencies are working to expand the number of family foster homes that offer foster care to BOTH teen parent and child. It is good news that there are plans to expand this option which will result in fewer separations between teen parents and their babies. Some residential/group homes are administered under Mental Health. Benchmarks is an organization that represents many accredited agencies that provide residential, foster care and adoption services.

This website identifies agencies licensed by NC Division of Social Services for maternity homes: http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/licensing/listings.htm

This website identifies members of Benchmarks: http://www.benchmarksnc.org/about/staff/

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