TO: County Children and Youth Agencies

 SWAN Affiliate Agencies

CC: OCYF Regional Representatives

FROM: SWAN Prime Contractor

DATE: August 27, 2015

RE: Secure Email Communication

Due to the confidential nature of information distributed electronically by the SWAN prime contractor, Diakon/FDR has adopted a secure email program. A secure email program prevents protected health information (PHI) from being accessed by unauthorized persons. In addition to medical information, PHI includes any information that can be used to identify an individual such as name, social security number, date of birth, etc.

PHI accidentally sent to or accessed by someone who does not need to know this information is a data breach under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, better known as HIPAA. Because Diakon/FDR exchanges PHI, the secure email program is required.

To protect PHI, the secure email program contains two major components.

The first portion of protecting PHI involves encrypted email. If identifying information for a child or family is required in an electronic correspondence, Diakon/FDR staff will include identifying information in the email, however, that email will be sent as an encrypted email. To view encrypted emails sent from the SWAN prime contractor, the recipient must access a secured website. Instructions on how to access an encrypted email are attached and are also posted to the SWAN prime contractor website, [www.diakon-swan.org](http://www.diakon-swan.org).

Please note that encrypted emails will only be available to the recipient for 30 days after the correspondence is received. If the information in the email needs to be accessible for longer than 30 days, the recipient should save the correspondence elsewhere.

The second portion of protecting PHI involves excluding it in electronic correspondence. Effective immediately, if identifying information for the child or family is not essential, Diakon/FDR staff will refrain from including it in emails. Instead, a child or family will be referred to by their SWAN#, PAE ID#, Referral#, etc. The intended recipient will then search for the child or family on the SWAN portal using the provided information.

We appreciate your attention to these updates. If you have any questions, please contact your SWAN regional technical assistant.