



Kent County Department of Social Services

Linda C. Webb, LCSW Director

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350 High Street P.O. Box 670 Chestertown, MD 21620

Telephone: 410-810-7600 Fax: 410-778-1497

Mark Poerio 910 Lynch Drive Arnold MD 21012

Office of Child Support Enforcement 315 High Street, Suite 208 Chestertown, MD 21620 Telephone: 1-800-332-6347

By E-mail: markpoerio@paulhastings.com



Re: Paul Hastings Award for Innovative Programs Nomination – Pregnancy and Tobacco Cessation Help Initiative, Kent County Department of Social Services

Dear Mr. Poerio, Mark

I am writing to nominate Kent County Department of Social Services' (KCDSS) participation in the Pregnancy and Tobacco Cessation Help (PATCH) initiative for the 2014 Paul Hastings Award for Innovative Programs.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, smoking during pregnancy has been linked to premature birth, certain birth defects and infant death. Maryland Vital Statistics Administration data show that Kent County had the fourth highest rate (20.7%) of adult females smoking three months prior to pregnancy in the state in 2011. The PATCH initiative addresses smoking among pregnant women and women of childbearing age in the Maryland counties with the highest smoking rates within that population. This initiative provides screening for tobacco use and provides education, as well as referrals for free smoking cessation assistance. KCDSS has used innovative approaches to interest individuals who smoke in participating in this initiative.

I believe that Kent County Department of Social Services' participation in this initiative is worthy of consideration for the 2014 Paul Hastings Award for Innovative Programs.

Sincerely, Linda C. Webb, LCSW Director

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