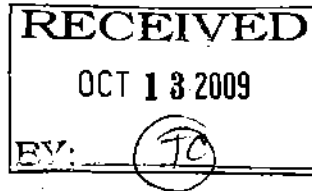




DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES



ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20447

September 29, 2009

Patrick J. McConnon, MPH
Executive Director
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
National Headquarters
2872 Woodcock Boulevard, Suite 303
Atlanta, GA 30341

Dear Mr. McConnon:

Thank you for your letter to Secretary Kathleen Sebelius conveying a copy of the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) position statement 09-CC-01 entitled "Refugee Health Care: Improving overseas and domestic health assessment and management of U.S.-bound refugees" adopted at the CSTE Annual Conference, June 11, 2009. Secretary Sebelius forwarded your letter to me because the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) has responsibility over refugee assistance programs within the Administration for Children and Families.

ORR funds medical screening through state governments and through this responsibility we have become keenly aware of the physical and mental conditions of refugees when they enter the United States. CSTE's position statement reflects many of our concerns for refugee health care.

The recommended actions outlined in your letter are appropriate. Since refugees destined to the U.S. are served in a network of government and private sector agencies overseas and in resettlement, it is most reasonable to approach these action steps in the multi-agency working group as was suggested in your letter.

Thank you for sharing your position with us. I appreciate the care and interest expressed by your letter in these matters and look forward to collaborating in the future.

Sincerely,

Eskinder Negash
Director
Office of Refugee Resettlement