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**Children & Family Services  
Committee**

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**HB 2985**

**Brief Description:** Creating a foster care health unit in the department of social and health services.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Schual-Berke, Clibborn, Appleton, Moeller, Green, Cody, Morrell, Walsh, McIntire, Kagi, Kenney, Hasegawa and Simpson.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Creates an foster care health unit in the Department of Social and Health Services.

**Hearing Date:** 1/25/06

**Staff:** Sonja Hallum (786-7092).

**Background:**

If there are allegations of abandonment, abuse or neglect, or no parent who is capable of caring for a child, the State may investigate the allegations and initiate a dependency proceeding in juvenile court. If the court finds the statutory requirements have been met, the court will find the child to be a dependent of the State.

Whenever the court finds a child to be a dependent, the court will enter a dispositional plan for the case which will include an order for the placement of the child either within the home or outside of the home. If the child is placed outside the home, he or she may be placed with a relative or in non-relative foster care.

For all children who are found to be dependent, the state provides all routine medical and dental examinations and care, and all necessary emergency care.

**Summary of Bill:**

The Office of Foster Care Health Care Services is established within the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). The duties and responsibilities of the office include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) Providing for the physical, dental, and mental health needs of children committed to the custody of DSHS;

- (2) Working with health care providers, clinics, and hospitals to develop health care services tailored to the unique needs of children in foster care; and
- (3) Establishing a medical home for each child placed in foster care to ensure that appropriate, timely, and necessary quality care is available through a coordinated system of care

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on 1/18/06.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.