

Lucio Legislation on Prescribed Pediatric Extended Care Centers Featured

Austin, TX – Senator Eddie Lucio (D-Brownsville), authored Senate Bill 492 during the 83rd Legislature authorizing specialized non-residential day health facilities for children with special needs. The first of these facilities in Brownsville was recently featured in *The Brownsville Herald*.

‘Little Haven’ is alternative for special-needs children*

The first center in Texas dedicated to non-residential care for children who require ongoing, skilled nursing is right here in Brownsville.

Little Haven, the state’s first Prescribed Pediatric Extended Care Center, got its first patient April 25. Made possible by legislation from State Sen. Eddie Lucio Jr., PPECC is a new alternative to private-duty nursing and is covered by traditional Medicaid, managed care organizations such as Driscoll, Superior, Molina and United, and private insurers like Aetna, Blue Cross Blue Shield and Cigna.

The only other states to allow PPECC’s so far are Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana and Pennsylvania. Little Haven CEO Shubhra Sharma said it’s an innovative concept that allows special-needs kids to interact socially and enjoy other benefits not normally available to children in home-care situations, where resources often are limited, she said.

“Those kids can come here, and we can take care of them and make them part of the community,” Sharma said. “Also, professionally speaking, the expertise for a crisis during that time would just be whatever skills that nurse has.”

Little Haven has six nurses and four direct-care personnel on staff. Edgar Urquiza, director of nursing, has 12 years of RN experience ranging from neonatal ICU to pediatrics, home health care and adult ICU.

“The concept’s amazing,” he said. “I’ve dealt with these children in their homes, taking care of them in private-duty nursing, for years. ... For them to now have a center to actually experience all of this, the abundance of resources and space, I myself just take joy when I see them smile with the toys, with the space, with the friends. It’s very rewarding.”

For more information, call (956) 350-KIDS (5437) or visit LittleHavenPPECC.com.

* Clark, Steve. “ ‘Little Haven’ is alternative for special-needs children.” *The Brownsville Herald*, 05 August 2018, https://www.brownsvilleherald.com/news/local/little-haven-is-alternative-for-special-needs-children/article_89de5d12-91da-5c7a-a55b-7a9c128823cf.html