NCACDSS Committee Meeting Notes

Children’s Services Committee

Wednesday January 10, 2023

2:15-4:15

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| **Item #** | **Agenda Item/Presenter** | **Attachments** | **Time** | **Action Needed** |
| 1 | **Welcome from CSC Chairs:**  Jennie Kristiansen, DSS Director, Chatham County  Kathy Ford, DSS Director, Pasquotank County  Kimberly McGuire, Wayne County  Bobbie Sigmon, McDowell County |  | 2:15 | No |
| 2 | Approval of December 2023 Minutes | Attached | 2:15 | Yes |
| 3 | **Pre-service Redesign, Crystalle Williams**  Phase 1 started in region 6 from February through November of 2023. The upcoming training is for regions 5 and 7. Ms. Williams reviewed the timeline and training process (see slides for more detail).  A DCDL went out in October requesting county partners to assist with training. Having county trainers is a bonus. The trainers from Public Knowledge, who developed the curriculum. This means that counties will have Pre-service Training (PST) available in their county, limited travel for staff, preferred enrollment, and support. NCDSS will provide the training materials. Ten counties expressed interest initially with two confirming and hosting training in region 4 and 5. Work is ongoing with the other interested counties.  The three-week PST is being phased out by the end of summer 2024. County staff are expected to attend and to travel when necessary. Staff from these regions can attend the redesigned PST in any region.  NCDSS is monitoring enrollment in the virtual curriculum. Only if there is no space available for in-person redesigned PST, staff will be allowed to attend current PST. Ms. Williams shared the upcoming schedule (see slides for the months and regions).  Region Six starts next week with only 7 enrolled, Region Five starts on February 13 with one enrolled. For Region 7, foundation starts February 13 with 3 people who have applied.  There was a question about the length each week. The foundation is 4 days long followed by five weeks of three days per week. A question was asked about distance to training. It will be hosted in each region but may be a drive as regions are large.  A question was asked regarding the conditions that are needed to host the training. Would like space for 28 people and enough room to set up tables of 4 or 5. Would request a wall/screen for projection. Also, would like a space to store their lunches.  **NCACDSS County Survey Data on Children without a Placement, Chuck Lycett**  Ms. Lycett discussed the development of the survey and reviewed data from February 12, 2023, through December 30th, 2023 (see slides for data).  On average, there were 30 children in the office with an average number of nights per week at 120.5. In June, started collecting data on the reasons for a child’s stay in a DSS office. The slides provide more data, but some examples of reasons include care manager assigned with a placement recommendation of PRTF and none available, care manager assigned with a placement recommendation of level II or III and none available, closure of a licensed facility/home, discharged without a plan from more than two placements in the last three months, etc. On average 13.5 children were in an office because there was not a foster home available. Most children move out of an office within a week; however, some counties have had children in the office for extended periods of time (months). Regular calls are held with LME’s to talk about these issues (slides provide averages by LME/MCO).  A question was asked about response rate and 65 counties respond weekly. Ms. Ellis encouraged all counties to respond to the survey even when there aren’t children in the office. Will continue to survey through 2024 and are planning a few changes to the survey.  A question was asked about how the data was being used. The data is primarily for information for legislators and DHHS. There have been further discussions about managing the issue. NCACDSS is collecting information to understand the scope of the problem and raises awareness about where these children are located. The problem impacts small, medium, and large counties.  A question was asked about capturing the children currently in hospitals ready for discharge. The LME’s have a process for collecting the data but it requires the hospitals to use a separate system and so it does not always get entered.  **Child and Family Services Review Planning Update, Michael Ward**  Mr. Ward reviewed the purpose of the CFSR which is to ensure conformity with federal requirements, determine the experience of children and families in the child welfare system, and assist states in enhancing capacity. There are three steps. The first is a statewide assessment followed by case review and then a Program Improvement Plan.  Statewide Assessment: Measures 7 outcomes and 7 systemic factors. Currently finalizing statewide assessment which is due to the Children’s Bureau on February 1st. Mr. Ward thanked everyone who participated in a survey or focus and group and encouraged stakeholders to participate. Over 1,000 people completed the survey. There were 42 focus groups with 260 participants from October through December. Participants gave feedback on the following: parent and youth involvement, staff and foster parent training, service array and individualized services, working with courts, hearing notices, and court participation, DSS engagement, information sharing, feedback, and CQI. Mr. Ward provided data on who completed the survey (see slide for more detail). Themes from survey and focus groups included workforce challenges, more trauma informed training, behavioral health services limitations, and more services for transition age youth.  CFSR Case Review Update: NC has been approved to have a state led review with a random sample of 65 cases. The CFSR case review period is from April 1-September 30, 2024. Review will be conducted by NC DSS CFSR Quality Assurance Staff. He reminded attendees that the CFSR Case review of outcomes and items are measure of the county performance and work directly with children and families.  Next Steps: Stakeholder interview preparations are underway. These will take place the week of April 22nd and will be conducted by the Children’s Bureau. NC has engaged the Capacity Building Center for States to assist with stakeholder engagement and prep. If anyone wants to participate in an interview with the Children’s Bureau, please let Michael Ward know.  Mr. Ward reviewed what counties can do now to prepare. They can: talk/educate staff and stakeholders about the upcoming CFSR process, ensure you are meeting all state requirements, review county performance using past case review data and administrative data, and develop plans for improving performance on areas not meeting goals.  The slide deck includes links for resources and Mr. Ward’s contact information.  Child Welfare Education Collaborative Update, Lashonda Stanley-Pickett  Organizational Structure: The program is housed in the Division of Social Services and is supported by the UNC Family and Children’s Resource Program (FCRP), universities/colleges, MSW and BSW students, and the NCACDSS workforce education initiative. There are 21 affiliated colleges and universities that provide courses, guidance to students, and help with the transfer of learning. Students are required to attend orientation, coursework, field placement, and transfer of learning. Also partner with the NCCDSS Workforce Education Initiative. This initiative helps with workforce, assisted with a career fair in western NC, submitted a draft training guide for local agencies who supervise interns.  Changes to the Procedural Manual: Currently the program is undergoing some significant changes. A funding source has been identified to re-establish a stipend program, implementation of a workgroup organized for the review and finalization of the procedural manual, identified 3 MSW schools that agreed to participate in the stipend innovation zone (Fall 2024), drafted contract scope of work, student contract, and repayment agreement. Collaborating with NCDSS Contracts office and the NC Education Authority-College Foundation, Inc.  Innovation Zone: The stipend covers tuition, fees, books, and a travel stipend/mileage (to and from internship locations). The school programs will also attend train the trainer for the new pre-service redesign. It is required that this be included in the coursework. Administrative funding is provided to the school.  FCRP will no longer provide orientation; this will be provided by the school for prospective students each semester. It includes an overview of the program, roles/responsibilities of everyone (including students), provide a checklist with coursework, internship, and performance expectations. The schools will also provide a Q&A session. There will be an interview and selection process that includes several steps. These are a realistic job interview video, an employee self-assessment (so that they are career ready), the identification of 3 internship sites (by the student), an interview process (partnership with schools, division, and would like a county director or designee), and a written and analytical scenario. Everything is scored and ranked. Also conducting reference and background checks. The schools will have primary responsibility for these and submit to NCDSS who will make final decisions of students.  A question was asked about which schools were selected. ECU, NC A&T University, and Appalachian State University are participating with plans to add additional schools. The goal was to include schools across the state and an HBCU.  A question was asked about BSW and MSW. Ms. Stanley-Pickett answered that they are starting with BSW.  A question was asked about the total amount of funding available, and this information was not available.  Next Steps: Next steps for 2024 include finalizing the contracts, train-the-trainer events scheduled to prepare schools for Fall 2024 roll out, CWEC Partner Annual Meeting (February TBD), updated curriculum analysis to be finalized by Feb. 1 and presented to CWEC Partners at their annual meeting, CWE Spring Law Day, and CWEC Career Fair.  A question was asked about the requirement to work in a local DSS agency. Mr. West answered that this is a requirement to avoid payback. |  | 2:15 – 2:35  2:35-2:50  2:50 – 3:20  3:20-3:50 | No |
| 4 | Questions and Future Agenda Items |  | 3:40 | No |
| 5 | Adjourn |  | 3:40 | Yes |