

**Adoption Advisory Council
APPROVED MINUTES
Friday, September 9, 2011
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

Eastland Suites, 1801 Eastland Drive, Bloomington, IL

Members Present	Members Absent	Guests	DCFS Staff
Clemmie Banks	Julie Cebulski	Lisa Arndt	June Dorn
Claudia Dancy-Davis	Julie Fritzler	Jim Gleeson	Ray Gates
DeAudrey Davis	Tamara Guy	Lori Horgan	Vanessa James
Rosa Dust	Derek Jeske	Nancy Rolock	Shaun Lane
Karen Faber	Betty Johnson	Cindy Spurgeon	Cheryl Lawrence
Nancy Golden	James Jones	Penny Weedon	Terry McGlothlin
Amy Jachna	Jeanette Kurth		Karen Moredock
Ruth Jajko	Sarah Phillips		Mary Reis
Jim Jones	Dawn Saphir		
Billie Ray Lewis	Carol Sheley		
Sandra McGee	Karen Taylor		
Lisa Myles			
Maripat Oliver			
Elizabeth Richmond			
Cathleen Villa			
Karen Wardlaw			
Mark Werner			
Linda Wolter			

Welcome and Introductions - Co-Chairs

Elizabeth welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked all present to introduce themselves. She said Jim had another commitment but would join the meeting by 11:30.

Presentations

Changes to Preferred List of Psychotropic Meds - Lisa Arndt, DHFS

Lisa Arndt, Bureau Chief of Pharmacy Services at HFS, came to talk about the changes for mental health drugs. The Governor and Legislature were tasked with coming up with a budget while facing an unprecedented deficit. Tough decisions were made that affected programs around the state. One decision was to make some changes in the mental health classes of drugs. They are very expensive drugs and account for about one-fourth of our drug budget, approximately \$400 million dollars. States across the nation have been trying to deal with the rising costs of these drugs. She said they recognize the importance of ensuring the drug lists are clinically sound, and consulted heavily with mental health professionals before making these changes. HFS consulted with the University of IL College of Pharmacy in Chicago pharmacy program, physicians, pharmacists and psychiatrists. They also consulted with them on how to implement these changes while not disrupting patient care. Initially they grandfathered patients who had been stabilized

on the medications if they had a diagnosis that supported the need for the medication. After determining that they did not always have the diagnosis on file, they went back and grandfathered in all children currently on these drugs. Patients who are newly being treated are expected to at least try the preferred alternatives prior to being moved to a non-preferred drug. If a physician has tried the preferred alternatives or there is a clinical reason, the prescriber can request prior approval for the non-preferred drug. If there is clinical justification it will be approved. Physicians and pharmacies can call or fax prior approvals and they are made within 2-3 hours of the request.

For questions or to provide feedback, parents can call the Health Benefits Hotline at 800-226-0768.

Questions:

*Sometimes we cannot get in to see a psychiatrist fast enough so primary care physicians are prescribing medications. Does your department look at it any different if a PCP is prescribing? *No. PCPs can also call if they are not comfortable with what to prescribe.*

*Is there a process for the parent to appeal? *No. There needs to be clinical justification. The parent should speak to the physician or the pharmacist.*

*What would be an example of clinical justification – *Many drugs have metabolic side affects. There are qualities in drugs that may make them inappropriate for a patient. Some atypicals are more sedating than others. Some may not be appropriate for someone who is diabetic.*

*What if the patient has been switched by the pharmacy automatically but should have been grandfathered in?

If the new drug is not successful ask the pharmacy why they were not grandfathered.

*What if the dosage is changed – do we need a new justification? *No, once a drug is approved or grandfathered in it is for that drug at any dosage.*

*If an 18 year old child is grandfathered in and then turns 19 are they still grandfathered? *No – At age 19 there has to be an age edit. An Adult with ADHD is different. If patient has prior condition the prior approval process will be granted but have to go thru prior approval. Ideally this should be taken care of prior to the 18th birthday.*

Report from DCFS Training Office - Cheryl Lawrence

Cheryl said in response to the need for more adoptive certification training, and as we are trying to make training more accessible, we worked with WIU on online training for adoption and guardianship certification. She showed pieces of a “rough draft” of the adoption certification training. The training will still be reviewed by the committee before it is finalized. One element worked into the online training that isn’t in the classroom training is the issue of a sibling placed in another home and the feelings that surround the situation. Cheryl said Lori Horgan, Regional Training Manager from Northern Region was on the committee as well as Carol Sheley from this council.

Cheryl said they are working on updating some of the modules. One being updated is on children who have been exposed to domestic violence. An older one about understanding children who have been in homes with alcohol and substance abuse is also being revised. They are also working on a few new modules about caring for teenagers.

Elizabeth asked if someone misses part of the adoption certification regular class could they make it up by taking that class online. Cheryl said that should be possible. The online training should take approximately 6-9 hours. There are three lessons and two Adoption Learning Partners segments are included within those. She said they are also making more efforts to offer more adoption certification classes in response to the need. When this is set up families would go through the Virtual Training Center to access the training. It will require a referral from the worker.

Report from Deputy Director, Service Support

Shaun reported that Director McEwen is leaving as of September 30th. Two hallmarks of his administration are his fervent commitment to support families previous to formal involvement with DCFS and his fierce and effective advocacy for resources for the child welfare system. We do not know who will be appointed to his position.

Shaun said the state budget remains seriously compromised. Yesterday there was an announcement to lay off approximately 1900 state employees, 1300 which are within the Department of Human Services. This would include the closure of various mental health centers, centers for care of developmentally disabled, a juvenile detention center and a prison. The budget as passed is reportedly inadequate to fund state operations for the full fiscal year. We are already beginning discussions about FY'13 budget issues. It will be every bit as challenging as this year and last.

We will continue to be creative and aggressive in securing outside funding. For example, federal grants allowed us to develop the differential response program.

Report from Office of Caregiver & Parent Support - Ray

Interim Medical Director

Dr. Jaudes is on sabbatical in Nigeria for 6 months. Dr. James Mitchell will serve as Interim Medical Director in her absence. He is an active practicing pediatrician and also involved in the Health Works program.

Conflict of Interest

Ray distributed forms for council members to sign. He said it applies to council members if they or the POS agency they work for has a contract with DCFS but members who do not have such contracts should check no and sign the form. These forms are kept in a file in Ray's office for audit purposes. Ray reminded such members that they are prohibited from billing their employer for costs associated with AAC meetings and they are prohibited from billing DCFS if their employer is reimbursing them for expenses to attend council meetings.

Medicaid Workgroup

Carol Sheley is representing the AAC on this workgroup that makes recommendations specifically for children with special home health needs. They are in the preliminary stages.

Medicaid – OTC Coverage

Ray read from a draft information transmittal that says the Medicaid program will no longer pay for over the counter medications for children covered by the medical card. He will distribute when the information transmittal is finalized.

Next Meeting

Ray reminded council members that the next meeting will be a conference call on October 7th at 10am.

Printing Budget

Ray said that DCFS has been required to cut the printing budget by half. In response to this cut, he sent an email to members proposing that all paper, such as agendas, travel forms, and other handouts for council members will be emailed rather than printed and brought to the meeting. Some suggestions were that council members bring their laptops to pull up information at the meeting, and that we use a projector to put the agenda and other handouts up on a screen for the meeting.

Report on Post Adopt/Adoption Preservation Services - June Dorn

FY 11 Permanency Report - June distributed copies of the report. Subsidized guardianships show the most dramatic decline which is due to implementation of kin gap program and the requirement for licensing. The adoption rate declined 25.7%. She also passed out a report from the Post Adoption Call Center at Metropolitan Family Services. She said that Cara said a lot of calls they get are from youth who have aged out and are looking for services such as housing, medical cards, and insurance. She also noted a slight increase in the number of pregnant teens. June will work on tweaking the reports for more definition and detail on some areas.

SACWIS - June said the Post Adoption office is now on SACWIS which is a much more modern system that will help their customer service and ability to enter information.

Staffing issues – June said they have not been able to post the child welfare staff position in Rockford that Jennifer Zaluckyj left. Pam Mills, Supervisor in Cook County will be taking six weeks off for surgery. Daniel F. and June will be there more and a Child Welfare Advanced Specialist will be temporarily assigned while Pam is gone.

Adoption Preservation – Carmen Velasquez and her team will be training adoption preservation staff on the team decision making model, which is part of Casey's Family to Family training. They will first train Cook and Northern staff and then have one training downstate. It has been effective in Peoria and she thinks it would be helpful on a statewide basis.

Federal grants – The Differential Response program is moving forward well at Adoptions Unlimited. Yesterday they met with the Public Guardians Office. They are getting everyone in court on board with this program. Training has moved ahead and has been very supportive.

The other federal program in the state has had more revisions and changed their population. This opened a door for us to expand beyond the age of 12, and they considered going up as far as age 17 but decided to take on one more year and go to age 13. She has a conference call with the Children's Bureau at noon to discuss this.

Federal audit finding on recertification process – June said forms are not coming back to be filed. They are mailed out of Springfield and if no response is received from the first letter then a second is sent. If no response we need to do outreach to these families. The MAC programs could possibly do the follow up. She just received a mock report from Bob Woodrum and will move forward with this. Phone calls will be made to determine if we have bad addresses.

Sibling Rights Steering Committee – Repr. Sara Feigenholtz developed this group in the spring to look at proposed legislation regarding sibling rights to visitation and how this could be included in adoption agreements. June chairs the best practice piece of it. They will be doing some type of research on how this is currently working. They will identify kids in post adoption and what contact they have with siblings. Repr. Feigenholtz hopes to propose legislation by January that would effect adoption agreements at the front end. This would not effect those adoptions already in place. Elizabeth asked if there is room for adoptive parent input. Elizabeth and Maripat Oliver volunteered to serve on this steering committee with June.

Working Lunch

The meeting continued after 15 minutes were allowed to get lunch and return to the meeting table.

Family Driven Care/Certified Family Partnership Professionals - Penny Weedon

Penny Weedon, Chair of the Family Drive Care Commission, spoke to the council about a new credentialing program called Certified Family Partnership Professionals (CFPP). She explained how it benefits all types of parents, including foster parents. CFPPs are individuals trained to incorporate their unique life experiences gained through parenting a child who's emotional and/or behavioral challenges required accessing resources, services and supports from multiple child-serving systems as they progressed toward achievement of the family's goals. She gave a quick overview of the credential and had information to distribute to anyone interested in more detail.

Penny also mentioned their monthly Parent Empowerment Calls being offered to all parents in Illinois who have a child with an emotional and/or behavioral concern. The calls focus on giving parents information they need to advocate for and support their children. The calls are held from 12pm-1pm. The toll free number is 1-800-260-0712, Participant Access Code is 120964. Following is the schedule of calls for the remainder of this year: October 6 – Advocating for a Lifetime; November 3 – Keeping Life Real (What parents need to know about trauma); December 1 – Sleigh-Driving Safety Course (Family driven care for the holidays). Call 618-838-9382 with questions about the calls. More information can also be found on the Illinois Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Professional Certification Association, Inc. website at www.iaodapca.org.

Placement Stability Research - Nancy Rolock & Jim Gleeson

Nancy Rolock gave a PowerPoint presentation with the results of research done by the Foster Care Utilization Review Program and the DCFS Division of Quality Assurance. They reviewed cases from all regions of the state. The title of the presentation was Foster Care: What Distinguishes Children with Multiple Moves from Children who Experience Stability? Nancy said the definition of a stable case for the purpose of this study was children in foster family or kinship placement with less than 3 placements within 18 months.

Implications and Recommendations:

- A history of instability does not foreclose long term permanence.
- Evaluate foster parent recruitment and support to successfully manage needs of current population.
- Ensure provision of individualized services to foster parents.
- Impact of previous instability should be clinically considered more closely when making system-related placement changes.
- Evaluate and clarify:
 - Involvement of children in placement decision-making
 - Training and matching of caregivers to children who are LGBTQ
 - The use and impact of psychiatric hospitalization of very young children

Nancy said the full report can be accessed on DNET or at www.socialwork.uic.edu, or she can be reached at Jane Addams College of Social Work, U of I at Chicago, rolock@uic.edu, phone 312-413-2307.

Jim Gleeson gave a PowerPoint presentation on his study on children living in Kinship Care. The title of his presentation was "What Can We Learn from Research on Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children (AKA “Kinship Care”)?”"

What can we take away from these research findings?

- Reducing caregiver stress is important to child well-being.
- It is important to support caregivers raising children with significant behavioral problems.
- It's not just the children – stress comes from many sources.
- Parent-child contact is important.
- The parent-caregiver relationship is also important.
- There can be difficulty for caregivers in supporting and strengthening the parent – child relationship and the caregiver's own relationship with parents.

So what can we do? (further research)

- Do these same issues apply to foster parents who are not related to the children in their care?
- What can we do to support related caregivers and foster parents to:
 - Reduce and manage stress
 - Care for children
 - Promote commitment to children, stability and continuity for children?

Contact Information: James Gleeson, Ph.D., jimglee@uic.edu – 312/996-0042
Copies of the PowerPoint presentations were included in member packets.

Committee Reports

Adoption Month Event - Lisa Myles

The Adoption Month event will be held at 6201 South Emerald in Chicago on November 19th from 11am – 4pm. Lisa has been working closely with Carol Williams and a committee to plan the event. Lisa said that the Save the Date will be in the fall newsletter. Reservations have been made for the space and two custodial workers will be available. Child care will be offered and she will be seeking volunteers for this and to serve in other areas. There will be a general session and breakout sessions. A children's dance group will provide entertainment. The joint meeting of the SWFCAC and AAC will be held the day before and will end at 2pm. At that time they are hopeful that some council members will stay to help set up for Saturday's event. Lodging will be provided on Friday night for those council members who qualify and are staying for Saturday's event. Ray said this event is on the Director's calendar so he is hopeful that the new Director's staff will bring this to his/her attention.

Vanessa is working on the video from last year's adoption celebration in Springfield and it should be ready to show at this year's event.

Legislative/Public Policy - Nancy Golden

Nancy distributed a handout on OBC (Original Birth Certificate) legislation. Adopted persons born after 1/1/46 can request their original birth certificate beginning on November 15, 2011. There is a birth parent preference form if they don't want their name included. If no preference is known it will be included. The adoption registry will also continue to be available.

Membership - Mark Werner

Mark said all membership slots are full at this time. New at today's meeting were Amy Jachna, adult adoptee and Clemmie Banks, adoptive parent from Cook North. Amy has a degree from UIC in Psychology and has served on youth panels at the Caregiver Institutes. Her mother is a FPSS in Northern Region. Clemmie is an adoptive and foster parent, is active with her local foster parent council and operates a home day care.

Newsletter - Maripat Oliver

Maripat said that Vanessa does a great job of keeping adoption information flowing in the newsletter. They are always open for suggestions if anyone knows of something that should be included in the adoption section.

Post Adoption/Clearinghouse - Medicaid Issue Update - Mark Werner

Mark said it is clear that there is no allowance in the current legislation to include adopted children to age 26. This needs to be changed at either the state or federal level. If it is changed at the state level it will not be reimbursable, so it would be best to go to the federal level. He plans to have a committee conference call, and include Vince

Champagne's staff, prior to the October meeting to put something together that illustrates what the costs will be. In October he will give out names of legislators so we can begin to look for a sponsor. Ray will ask Vince's office to give us some estimates on the financial impact of this change to legislation.

Respite - No report

Training & Support Groups - Carol Sheley – No report

Scholarship Committee – Elizabeth reported that she is serving on the Scholarship Committee as she has done for the past several years. This committee scores applications from youth applying for the DCFS scholarships.

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of Minutes from June 3, 2011 Meeting - Council

Karen Faber made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Claudia seconded. Motion carried.

Adjourn

Maripat made a motion to adjourn. Billie Ray seconded. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.