



Report on Outcome Measures and Oversight Activities

Department of Children and Families
Office of Family Safety

January 31, 2007

Robert A. Butterworth
Secretary

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Governor

Overview:

The requirement to submit this legislatively mandated report is a result of the passage of the Laws of Florida 2006-194 which became effective July 1, 2006. This is the Department's first submittal of a report addressing these specific issues. This report provides information about work products and activities regarding three topics as specified below:

1) outcome measures, 2) departmental oversight, and 3) rule promulgation. Most of the activity described in this report has occurred during the period July through December 2006 except as otherwise noted. In a related action last legislative session, language in the 2006 General Accounting Act requires the Department to establish minimum standards and measures for independent living services. The due date specified is July 1, 2007.

Authority:

Section 409.1451(6), F. S.

"The department shall prepare a report on the outcome measures and the department's oversight activities and submit the report to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the committees with jurisdiction over issues relating to children and families in the Senate and the House of Representatives no later than January 31 of each year. The report must include:

(a) An analysis of performance on the outcome measures developed under this section reported for each community-based care lead agency and compared with the performance of the department on the same measures.

(b) A description of the department's oversight of the program, including, by lead agency, any programmatic or fiscal deficiencies found, corrective actions required, and current status of compliance.

(c) Any rules adopted or proposed under this section since the last report. For the purposes of the first report, any rules adopted or proposed under this section must be included."

2006-2007 General Appropriations Act (Conference Report on House Bill 5001 – Page 84 and 85):

For the funds in Specific Appropriations 355, 357 and 361, The Department of Children and Families is required to establish, in coordination with community-based care lead agencies, minimum standards for the Independent Living Transition Services Program. The department has been directed to include these minimum standards in department contracts with community-based care lead agencies by July 1, 2007. In addition, the department, in coordination with community-based care lead agencies, has been directed to develop measures for assessing lead agency performance in meeting these minimum standards by July 1, 2007 and begin monitoring lead agency performance in accordance with these requirements by Fiscal Year 2008-2009.

Outcome Measures for Community-Based Care Lead Agencies:

The Department has begun the process for determining the best method to develop and implement outcome measures for the independent living program. This includes review of federal law and federal funding requirements related to data collection and outcome measures for states receiving Chafee and Education and Training Voucher funding.

The Department has worked extensively with two stakeholder groups convened to review policy and practice and to make recommendations for improvements to the array of independent living services. The two groups are the National Governor's Association Policy Academy Youth Transitioning Out of Foster Care and the Independent Living Services Advisory Council. Florida competed for and was selected as one of six states to participate in the policy academy in May 2006. The Chair of the Independent Living Services Advisory serves on the policy academy team and has served as a critical link helping to coordinate the work of the two groups.

On July 14, 2006, the Administration for Children and Families released, for comment from the states, a rule proposing the Chafee National Youth in Transition Database. Under this proposal, the new federal database will be created to capture information for youth who are receiving independent living services and the outcomes of older youth who are in foster care and those that leave foster care. The states will report four types of information regarding youth including: the services provided by the state, the characteristics of each youth receiving independent living services, outcomes for youth in or formerly in foster care, and basic demographic information for each youth. As of the writing of this report, the federal government has not released a final rule or a proposed implementation date. As a state receiving federal Chafee funds, Florida will be required to implement this rule and its requirements regarding data collection and outcome measures. In addition, staff from the Department and various stakeholders including representatives from community-based care agencies reviewed the proposed rule and provided comments to the federal Administration for Children and Families supporting adoption of the rule.

Since August 2006, the Department has been working with the Department of Education and the Agency for Workforce Innovation to develop and implement an interagency agreement for data sharing. Concern about restrictions on data sharing imposed by federal education statutes has prevented the final signing of this agreement. However, the Department has negotiated sharing of data necessary to analyze and calculate outcome measures for young adults formerly in foster care. The Department continues its work with these agencies to resolve confidentiality concerns and sign an agreement to meet the requirements of this statute.

In the 2005 and 2006 annual reports submitted to the Florida Legislature, the Independent Living Services Advisory Council included specific recommendations for outcome measures. The recommended outcome areas included: Education; Employment; Personal and Community Engagement; Housing; Physical and Mental

Health; Transportation; and Life Skills. For each of the seven outcome groupings, the report included recommended indicators as well.

The Department has committed to both the National Governors Association Policy Academy members and the Independent Living Services Advisory Council to work together to implement outcome measures. Once the federal rule for data collection and outcome measures is final, an implementation schedule will be determined. In the meantime, the Department is working with state agencies to obtain data to establish outcome measures in advance of the federal rule. The Department's performance management and business planning process provides the opportunity to establish data collection, analysis and outcome measures prior to the changes necessary to implement in the statewide automated child welfare information system, Florida Safe Families Network.

Departmental Oversight Activities:

In July 2006, the Department implemented a new model of oversight of the child welfare services delivered by community-based care agencies. This approach is the three tier quality management process. The federal outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being are the foundation of this approach. Another major component of the approach is the contract oversight process. Included in this model is a review of the array of independent living services authorized by Section 409.1451, F.S. Tools for more in-depth review of independent living services are under development and will be included as part of the three tier process.

The implementation of the three tier quality assurance process is a paradigm shift in how the Department evaluates the performance of community-based care providers. It includes a greater emphasis on ownership of performance and accountability on the community-based care agencies for their respective systems of care. An abbreviated outline of the three tier process is included below:

Tier 1 – Community-Based Care Staff responsibilities include:

- Development and implementation of a quality assurance plan including the uniform core elements established by the Department
- Monthly monitoring based on a valid sample of cases using a monitoring tool meeting established criteria
- Submission of quarterly data to the Department for analysis
- Ongoing review of continuous improvement activities generated to address performance gaps

Tier 2 – Department of Children and Families responsibilities include:

- Verification of content, reliability and effectiveness of the community-based care quality assurance plan

- Monitoring for each of the 22 lead agencies using a modified federal Child and Family Services Review process
- Integrated Team Process addressing administrative (contract) and compliance (licensing, federal funding, and child welfare quality) requirements

Tier 3 – Department of Children and Families responsibilities include:

- Qualitative Review using the Federal Child and Family Services Review process
- Rotating Schedule with 6 reviews per year including 10-14 cases at each site
- Data collection for quality outcomes (identical to Tier 1)
- Other activities including:
 - Comprehensive independent quality assurance reviews
 - Safety Protective Investigation desk reviews
 - Technical assistance to the community-based care agencies
 - Sheriff's Department peer reviews
 - Risk and death reviews and analysis
 - Child Protection Team reviews
 - Reviews of screened Hotline calls
 - Other ad hoc reviews

At the current time, the Department is refining data systems to ensure consistency of data from the tier one reviews and the capacity to roll up data from the various systems of care established throughout the state. At this time, data from the implementation of the three tier quality assurance process is not available. The anticipated date is spring 2007.

Fiscal monitoring contracts have been implemented in all community-based care agencies that are not county government entities. These providers deliver financial oversight and ensure integrity regarding the lead agency's fiscal operations. The independent fiscal monitors provide an ongoing analysis of administrative, accounting and internal controls of the lead agencies and provide recommendations to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their accounting systems and financial processes. Abel and Associates performs fiscal monitoring and administrative monitoring tasks in community-based care lead agencies in Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe counties. Public Consulting Group provides fiscal monitoring for other lead agencies. A limited number of fiscal monitoring reports have been received to date. Thus far, no deficiencies specific to the delivery of independent living services have been indicated.

In accordance with Laws of Florida 2006-30, a programmatic monitoring pilot has been established in the following communities: Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties (Our Kids, Inc.) and Broward County (Childnet, Inc.). Chapin Hall Center for Children, a research and development center of the University of Chicago is under contract through 2009 to provide programmatic monitoring. Chapin Hall's responsibilities are to: analyze and recommend new outcome measures and monitoring tools to best determine quality of

performance of lead agencies; compare pilot performance to that of other lead agencies; and to report to state leaders and alliances.

As required by Section 409.1451(5), F. S., each community-based care agency submitted a plan to the Department addressing the following major components for the population of young adults formerly in foster care.

- The number of young adults to be served each month of the fiscal year;
- The number of young adults who will reach 18 years of age who will be eligible for the plan;
- The number of young adults who will reach 23 years of age and will be ineligible for the plan or who are otherwise ineligible during each month of the fiscal year;
- Staffing requirements and all related costs to administer the services and program;
- Expenditures to or on behalf of the eligible recipients;
- Costs of services provided to young adults through an approved plan for housing, transportation, and employment; reconciliation of these expenses and any additional related costs with the funds allocated for these services; and
- An explanation of and a plan to resolve any shortages or surpluses in order to end the fiscal year with a balanced budget.

The Department reviewed each of these plans, provided feedback to the lead agencies, and committed to collaborate with representatives of the Independent Living Services Advisory Council on developing templates for future submissions of the plans. The Council also reviewed the plans submitted by the lead agencies and has recommendations for improvement to ensure that valuable information is obtained for program planning and budget forecasting.

An independent living specialist and part-time budget specialist are funded in the headquarters Family Safety Program Office. These staff provide technical assistance and training to community-based care independent living coordinators. A two to three day training event is held each quarter. On-site technical assistance visits are scheduled as requested and as staff resources are available. In addition, program office staff collaborate with members of the Independent Living Advisory Services Council and other stakeholders to augment the capacity of the headquarters program office to provide best practice and policy training. Connected by 25, the Eckerd Family Foundation, and Florida's Children First representatives along with federal and staff from other state agencies have provided training and technical assistance to community-based care providers.

The combination of quality management processes and technical assistance resources above comprise the Department's oversight process for the independent living program. In upcoming months, the three tier quality assurance process will yield agency specific data and results as well as statewide data. In addition, tools specifically designed to

monitor performance related to the services specified in Section 409.1451, F. S., will be implemented. At this time, the Department is actively engaged in developing additional technical assistance resources for the community-based care providers including the Center for the Advancement of Child Welfare Practice. This will expand the Department's capacity to provide oversight and technical assistance related to independent living services.

Adopted or Proposed Rules Under Section 409.1451, F.S.:

Over the last seven months, three separate administrative rules related to child welfare or child protective services were promulgated. Each of these rules has provisions governing delivery of services to youth in foster care and/or young adults formerly in foster care. These administrative rules include: 65C-28 Out-of-Home Care; 65C-30 General Child Welfare Provisions; and 65C-31 Services to Young Adults Formerly in the Custody of the Department.

A description of the content of each of the rules is below:

65C-28 Out-of-Home Care – this Chapter provides direction in implementing the provisions of statute for children in out-of-home care. Many of the provisions in this rule impact teenagers in foster care such as visitation, placement matching and permanency staffings. In addition, this rule contains provisions addressing Adolescent Services and Minor Parents in the Custody of the Department that are specifically targeted at the population addressed in s. 409.1451, F.S. This rule was adopted on May 4, 2006.

65C-30 General Child Welfare Provisions – this Chapter provides direction in implementing the array of child welfare services available to children and families being provided services by the Department or community-based care agencies. In addition, this Chapter also contains a section regarding “Normalcy for Adolescents and Teenagers in the Custody of the Department.” This specific section provides guidance and clarification for staff in allowing and encouraging age appropriate activities for youth in the custody of the department. This rule was adopted on May 4, 2006.

65C-31 Services to Young Adults Formerly in the Custody of the Department - this Chapter provides information regarding the services available to young adults who have aged out of Florida's foster care system. This chapter includes definitions, case management responsibilities, specific descriptions of service options, documentation requirements, needs assessment instructions, due process rights, jurisdictional options and budget management guidance. This rule was adopted on July 27, 2006.

After the 2007 legislative session, the Department will review legislation specific to the delivery of independent living services and determine needed changes to the rules above.

NOTICE OF FILING

Reporting Agency:	Department of Children and Families
Recipient Agency:	Substantive Committees of the Senate and House of Representatives
Subject:	Department of Children and Families Independent Living Services Outcomes and Oversight Report
Report Due Date:	January 31, 2007
Statutory Requirement:	s.409.1451(6), F.S.
Abstract:	
<p>As required by s. 409.1451(6), F.S., effective July 1, 2006 the Department of Children and Families was directed to prepare a report on outcome measures and the Department's oversight activities of the services outlined in s. 409.1451, F.S.</p> <p>Paragraph 409.1451(6), F.S., provides:</p> <p>ACCOUNTABILITY.—The department shall develop outcome measures for the program and other performance measures in order to maintain oversight of the program. The department shall prepare a report on the outcome measures and the department's oversight activities and submit the report to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the committees with jurisdiction over issues relating to children and families in the Senate and the House of Representatives no later than January 31 of each year. The report must include:</p> <p>(a) An analysis of performance on the outcome measures developed under this section reported for each community-based care lead agency and compared with the performance of the department on the same measures.</p> <p>(b) A description of the department's oversight of the program, including, by lead agency, any programmatic or fiscal deficiencies found, corrective actions required, and current status of compliance.</p> <p>(c) Any rules adopted or proposed under this section since the last report. For the purposes of the first report, any rules adopted or proposed under this section must be included.</p> <p>Copies of this report may be obtained by contacting: Joel Atkinson at (850) 921-4118.</p> <p>Lawful recipients will not be charged for copies. Charges for copies requested by others will conform to requirements of HRSR 15-9.</p>	

