

Notes

Florida Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers (FICCIT)

Quarterly Meeting
January 29 – 30, 2008

8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. – Panama City, Florida

Members Present: Roni Bader-Tables, Judy Corso, Cynthia Fuller, Randee Gabriel, Janice Kane for Phyllis Sloyer, Lou Ann Long, Angella Malave, Michele Polland for Bambi Lockman, Cindy Hutchens-Gueth for Sue Ross and Paula Kendig.

Members Absent: None

Members Absent with Notification: Lori Fahey, Elaine Mathews, Dominique Fethiere

Non-members Present: La'Tasha Dullivan, Samantha Dellosso, Lili Copp, Carole West, Ernestine Kessel, Becky Maguire, Melaine DiLoreto, Patricia Corder, Pat Grosz, Lorraine Allen, Dawn Lynch, Catherine Duncan, Kelly Purvis, Lourdes Quintana, Cheryl Fitzgerald, Shelly Bear, Joyce Long

FICCIT Business

Approval of Minutes – Randee Gabriel

Discussion: The Executive Committee Chair called for a vote to approve the minutes from the October meeting.

Conclusion: Members voted to approve the minutes with no modifications needed from the October meeting.

Action	Person(s) Responsible	Date Due
Post October Meeting Notes to the web.	Tameka Davis	ASAP

Stipend Update: - Janice Kane

Discussion: The stipend process was approved and is ready for parents to take advantage of the opportunity for the upcoming meeting.

Conclusion: All interested parties can contact the Executive Committee, Janice Kane or Tameka Davis for additional details.

Approval of Annual Report & Palm Cards – Angella Malave

Discussion: Members reviewed and made revisions to the annual report and the palm cards.

Conclusion: Revisions will be made to the annual report. The report will be sent to the Early Steps State office for printing. The palm cards were revised and will be printed.

Action	Person(s) Responsible	Date Due
Send a letter to the state technology office recommending that state agencies produce documents in multiple formats (brail, audio etc.)	Cynthia Fuller	ASAP
Revision to Annual report to send to State Office	Public Affairs Committee	ASAP
Print palm cards	Paula Kendig	ASAP

Status of Action Steps – Randee Gabriel

Discussion: Reports were reviewed at the committee meetings and are to be discussed with the committee reports

Local Early Steps Program – Cheryl Fitzgerald and Shelly Bear, Big Bend Early Steps

Discussion: The Big Bend Early Steps shared several extraordinary accomplishments such as scoring an 88% on their Quality Assurance review. They serve 14 counties and currently serving 681 children. Big Bend also shared some of their challenges which include the lack of providers, families not being knowledgeable of their resources and how to make use of those resources, Medicaid TCM changes and pre-paid therapists.

Early Steps Update – Janice Kane

Stipend Update – Early Steps received approval to offer stipends to qualifying Council members. We have attached the Council's procedure and request forms for information. For those parents/caregivers wishing to be considered for a stipend for this meeting, please review the procedure and complete the required forms which are available by request. See Tameka Davis, staff assistant to the Council, for assistance.

Annual Performance Report Update (APR) - the Continuous Improvement Workgroup members have begun review of the ESSO draft APR. Their review and comments are critical to finalizing the report due to the Office of Special Education Programs February 1, 2008. Randee, as Chair of the Council, will again need to sign the ICC endorsement page of the APR. ESSO has taken advantage of numerous opportunities to collaborate including participation in: the Office of Special Education (OSEP) Data Manager conference in July; the OSEP Monitoring and State Improvement Planning conference in August; monthly OSEP conference calls; periodic state calls with OSEP; and periodic technical assistance calls with the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC) and the Southeast Regional Resource Center (SERRC). Annual Q/A Monitoring, a primary data source for the APR, was completed by end of October, and assignments of Correction Activities were made for uncorrected non-compliance. The APR and updated SPP must be submitted to OSEP by 2/1/08. Local Determinations will be made in subsequent weeks

Auditor General's Review - The Auditor General's review of Children's Medical Services was completed and Early Steps had one repeat finding regarding reconciliation of the 2004-2005 contracts. The Auditor General's finding requires CMS to reconcile the year end actual expenditures incurred by the Local Early Step (LES) against the amount that was paid to them during the fiscal year. The LESs must either be able to document that they spent those funds in the subsequent contract period or return them to CMS. The reconciliations of all Early Steps Provider contract expenditures for fiscal year 04-05 were completed at the end of October 2007. After a CMS management review of the findings, LESs were provided with a copy of the reconciliation in mid December of 2007 and asked to provide comments and or adjustments to the expenditures or reported third party collection amounts by January 7, 2007. Those adjustments are in process and should be completed within the next few weeks. As those adjustments are completed the CMS Contract Manager will send instructions to those LESs who have received surplus funding in excess of expenditures and the LESs will be required to document how those funds were spent in the subsequent contract period.

New Employees - Early Steps State Office welcomed two new employees during the last few months. La'Tasha Dullivan joined as our Training Unit Director in November and Eunice Connor began working in December as our Policy Unit Administrative Assistant.

Autism Spectrum Disorders Guidance Workgroup – This newly formed workgroup will use the collaborative expertise of members to evaluate existing evidence-based practice information and other states early intervention systems documents to recommend action steps by the Early Steps State Office to produce service guidelines for children with autism spectrum disorders.

The expected product will assist the state office in developing clear, concise written guidance to assist Individualized Family Support Plan (IFSP) teams, including evaluators, service coordinators, providers and families in designing quality interventions for children with autism spectrum disorders. This guidance will help ensure interventions throughout the state are developmentally appropriate, outcome-based, fiscally responsible and consistent with federal mandates and state policies.

Federal Medicaid - The final Medicaid regulations related to administrative claiming and transportation have been published in the December 28, 2007 Federal Register. The notice indicates the regulations go into effect on February 26, 2008. However, before the Congress adjourned, a 6 month moratorium on the implementation of these regulations and any pending rehab regulations was enacted. This moratorium is designed to give the Congress more time to work on directing the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid on specifics in promulgating these and other revisions to Medicaid regulations. The rule as it currently stands will prohibit school districts' ability to obtaining Medicaid reimbursement in administrative claiming and transportation reimbursement for trips to and from school. For more information you may visit: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedicaidGenInfo/Downloads/CMS2287F.pdf>.

ESSO Policy Unit: The policy unit is preparing to release interim policy and guidance documents on the Early Steps web site in late January. They have had to learn about hyperlinks and bookmarks which will allow those visiting the web site ease in searching between policies and applicable guidance. They have done an excellent job incorporating the recommendations of the Service Implementation Workgroup. We are most grateful for Renee Jenkins' leadership of the unit during this very important project and congratulate the unit for their yeomen efforts.

Children's Medical Services (CMS) Data System Update: The provider enrollment piece of the project is in the initial testing phase of development. Regional meetings are planned in the near future to showcase the system and to gather input from providers and communities in order to finalize the process. The local Early Steps will be invited and encouraged to participate in the regional meetings. When completed all providers will be able to apply on line, receive approval for enrollment in the system and manage changes in their demographics (like addresses, adding additional provider types, etc) themselves. Work is currently being completed to issue an Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) for a third party administrator. It will enable claims processing to be centralized and included as a function of the CMS Data System.

2007 - 2008 Travel for FICCIT

Anticipated Number of Days of Travel	Purpose of Trip	Anticipated Number of Persons on Each Trip	Estimated Cost of Travel	Actual Expenditures
3	FICCIT August Meeting	25	\$6,575.00	\$2,340.92
3	FICCIT Oct 23-24 Meeting	25	\$6,575.00	\$6,077.55
3	FICCIT January Meeting	25	\$6,575.00	
3	FICCIT Quarterly Meeting	25	\$6,575.00	
	Chairperson Travel		\$700.00	\$3,800.96
	TOTAL		\$27,000.00	\$12,219.43
			BALANCE	\$14,780.57

Local Parent Group: Acton Up with Downs, Joyce Long

Discussion: This group was founded 3 years ago and has since developed multiple fundraising efforts. There have been several meetings during those three years:

1st meeting - 68 people

2nd meeting - 200 people and raised 10,000 dollars

3rd meeting – 300 people and raised over 10,000 dollars

Friends, family and the community are all apart of the collaborative effort. They are advocates of children with disabilities. They print resource cards for the community. They sponsors three families for the Buddy walk every year and hopes to send several families to the National Down Syndrome Conference in Boston this year.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee – Randee Gabriel

Discussion: The committee discussed the current membership list and the content of the list. The committee suggested that the budget sheet be revised to capture detailed information. The committee discussed the distribution of the packet to the absent members.

Conclusion: Only members that have been appointed or have been invited by the council will be added to the membership list. The FICCIT travel budget will be formatted to show all charges in detail. FICCIT packets will be sent to all members that were absent from the meetings.

Action	Person(s) Responsible	Date Due
Revise current travel budget to include spending details	Janice Kane/Lynn Marie Price	Before next Meeting
Send packet to absent members	Tameka Davis	After Meeting

Personnel Development and Training –

Discussion: The committee discussed possibly using the training dollars that was set aside for the Summer Institute to be used to fund tuition for students to achieve the ITDS certificates, using the virtual system or another approved university coursework. The conversation with providers went well, two providers attended. There was a survey sent to all of the local Early Steps offices to poll the number of providers in each are, hourly rates for consultation, hourly rates for travel reimbursements and percentage of time consulting. There are varied responses throughout the state. Several items on the strategic plan have already been completed.

Conclusion: The committee recommended action steps to be considered.

Action	Person(s) Responsible	Date Due
Training dollars initially set aside for the summer institute to be used to fund tuition for students to achieve the ITDS certificate using the virtual system to other approved university coursework.	La'Tasha Dullivan	
Upon full implementation of the virtual ITDS program, the hardship exception policy for use of the on-line ITDS modules will be terminated.	La'Tasha Dullivan	

Family Leadership – Lou Ann Long

Discussion: The Conversation with Families was a success. There were 9 families that attended including 6 children all from multi-cultures. Each of the children had different types of disabilities. There was a wide variety of referral and the children were all served in the natural environment, except two who chose to go to a clinic and private physician. The families were very pleased with the services that they have received. April 1 is the rally at the Capitol. March 30th is the hanging of the hands in Tallahassee at the Capitol. March 31st is the award and reception dinner to be held in Tallahassee at the University Center.

Conclusion: The data will be consolidated and distributed.

Public Affairs – Angella Malave

Discussion: See annual report and Palm

Membership – Paula Kendig

Discussion: Committee recommended inviting Dr. Abrams to attend the next meeting. Letters were written to those members that have been absent for more than three meetings. The committee will continue to recruit new members.

Conclusion: An invitation will be sent to Dr. Abrams to attend the next meeting. Contact will be made to members that have resigned their positions to ensure that the official resignation letters are received.

Action	Person(s) Responsible	Date Due
Send recommendations for placement of potential new members	Full Council	
Contact Martha Harbin for official resignation letter	Ranee Gabriel	ASAP
Draft a letter to the Governor's office with FICCIT's recommendations on pending applicants with their corresponding positions	Paula Kendig	ASAP

Agency Updates – Carole West, Department of Education Report

1. DOE Staff Update

Dr. Eric J. Smith began his tenure as the new Florida Commissioner of Education in December 2007. The State Board of Education (SBE) voted unanimously to select him to serve as Florida's chief educational officer responsible for providing full assistance to the SBE in enforcing compliance with the mission and goals of Florida's K-20 education system. Dr. Smith began his career more than 30 years ago as a classroom teacher. His commitment to affecting positive change in the field of education led him to several administrative positions in Florida school districts and eventually to 16 years of serving as a district superintendent in Virginia, North Carolina, and Maryland. His goals have remained constant throughout his career: to increase academic achievement of all students and to reduce the disparity in achievement among student subgroups. His success in consistently meeting these goals in individual districts bears testimony to his own passion to change students' lives, the urgency he brings to the challenges involved, and the leadership he demonstrates in ensuring the involvement of all stakeholders.

Dr. Frances Haithcock, a longtime Broward County educator, became Florida's Chancellor of Kindergarten through Grade 12 Education on January 1, 2008. Dr. Haithcock, a native of North Carolina, began her educational career in Florida as a teacher, principal, associate superintendent of instruction, area superintendent, and deputy superintendent of educational services for Broward County schools. Prior to the position of Chancellor, Dr. Haithcock served as associate superintendent for educational services for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school district in North Carolina and Senior Director of EXCEerator Schools for The College Board in New York.

2. Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS)

Education Commissioner Eric J. Smith recently announced the results of the 2007 FLKRS. This year's results show a continued increase in the percentage of children demonstrating early literacy skills. The FLKRS measures Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program outcomes, that is, what children should know and be able to do by the end of the VPK program as defined by the VPK standards in the following areas:

- Physical Health
- Approaches to Learning
- Social Emotional Development
- Language and Communication
- Emergent Literacy
- Cognitive Development and General Knowledge
- Motor Development

The screening results are used to determine the school readiness of children entering Kindergarten, inform classroom instruction, and provide useful information to parents and teachers. The FLKRS screening instrument includes selected measures from the Early Childhood Observation System™ (ECHOS™) and the first two criteria of the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills™ (DIBELS™) for Kindergarten. Scannable response sheets were received for 193,817 kindergarten children, representing 98 percent of the total Kindergarten FTE for 2007. Additional information may be found on the Web site at http://www.fldoe.org/news/2007/2007_12_12.asp.

3. Regional Traumatic Brain Injury Workshops

The Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS), in conjunction with the Brain Injury Association of Florida (BIAF) and Florida Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Program/Children's Medical Services, is sponsoring a one-day workshop on the hidden nature of traumatic brain injury (TBI) in children, to be presented in five regions of the state. Each of the five workshops titled *Traumatic Brain Injury: "A Disability Often in Disguise"* has been scheduled in the months of January and February 2008. Additional information related to these workshops including the scheduled locations, dates and registration may be found at <http://www.biaf.org/BIAF-FDOEWorkshops.html>

4. State Performance Plan (SPP), Part B, Indicator 12

The SPP, Indicator 12 requires that states report the percent of children referred by Part C prior to age three who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an individual educational plan (IEP) developed and implemented by their third birthday. Since this indicator is a compliance indicator, and all school districts are required to have 100 percent compliance, those districts that did not achieve 100 percent have been asked to conduct a verification activity to ensure the data districts submitted to DOE is accurate.

The data to be verified which includes children enrolled in the district's prekindergarten program for children with disabilities, is a match between the Early Steps database and the DOE automated student database or reflects children in the Early Steps database, however, no match was found in the DOE automated student database. This activity is to assist in accurately reporting the timely transition of children from Part C to Part B and will demonstrate evidence of progress toward Florida's goal of 100 percent compliance for this indicator.

5. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Issues Final Rules

On December 28, 2007, Children's Medical Services (CMS) published CMS-2287-F in the Federal Register. This rule will severely limit school districts' ability to obtain Medicaid reimbursement by eliminating School District Administrative Claiming and Medicaid transportation reimbursement for students' trips to and from school. Basing its actions on its effort "To protect the fiscal integrity of the Medicaid program and its ability to assure coverage and access to care for children and other beneficiaries," the rule prohibits "federal Medicaid reimbursement for administrative activities performed by school employees or contractors, and for transportation of students from home to school." Citing recently passed legislation, however, the rule provides that "there will be a six-month delay in implementing these changes so school budgets in the 2007-2008 school year will not be affected." The final rule does not affect federal Medicaid reimbursement for direct medical services provided by schools for children on Medicaid such as physical therapy, speech therapy, or transportation to medical services during the school day. Additional information is available by contacting Susan Douglas, Florida Department of Education, by telephone at (850) 487-8716 or by E-mail at sdouglas@coedu.usf.edu or by visiting the Web site at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedicaidGenInfo/Downloads/CMS2287F.pdf>.

6. Family Café

The Family Café has published the latest edition of its *Questions and Answers Book for 2007*. The Family Café has published this resource guide for nine consecutive years. The questions included in this guide come from families from all regions of Florida. Persons who attended the 9th Annual Family Café Conference in Orlando, June 8-10, 2007, should receive a copy of the 2007 *Questions and Answers Book* by mail. Additional copies may be obtained by contacting Family Café at info@familycafe.net, by telephone at 888-309-2233, or by downloading a copy on the following Web site: <http://www.familycafe.net/images/stories/pdf/q-and-a%20final.pdf>.

The 10th Anniversary Family Café Conference will be held at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort in Orlando, Florida, June 13-15, 2008, and will once again include a wide range of informative presentations on a variety of timely, relevant topics. As in past years, registration will open on Valentine's Day, February 14, 2008. Additional information related to Family Café may be found on the Web site at <http://www.familycafe.net/>.

7. Statewide Meeting for Contacts Persons Coordinating Programs Serving Prekindergarten Children with Disabilities

The Technical Assistance and Training System (TATS) project is sponsoring a statewide meeting for district Prekindergarten Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Coordinators and contact persons on February 7-8, 2008, in Orlando, Florida. The meeting to be held at the Holiday Inn Select-Orlando East-University of Central Florida Area will begin on February 7th at 1:00 pm, conclude on February 8th at 3:00 pm, and will focus on transition from Part C to Part B. The Keynote Speaker for this meeting, Dr. Beth Rous, Project Coordinator for the National Early Childhood Transition Center (NECTC), has been a leader in defining models for transition of young children and will be sharing a national perspective about transition for young children with disabilities. This is also an opportunity for Local Early Steps Directors/Coordinators to attend and partner with district staff in discussions related to the transition process. For additional information, please contact Susan Donovan, Project Director, at (407) 823-3058.

8. Early Reading First Program

The Office of Elementary and Secondary Education is inviting applicants to apply for Early Reading First grants. These grants support local efforts to enhance the oral language, cognitive, and early reading skills of preschool-aged children, especially those from low income families, through strategies, materials, and professional development that are grounded in scientifically-based reading research. School districts are eligible to apply. The pre-application is due on **February 1, 2008**.

Additional information is available regarding the application process by contacting Marilyn Hibbard, Florida Department of Education at (850) 245-0478 or by visiting the Web site at

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20071800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2007/pdf/E7-25276.pdf>

Agency Updates – Samantha Delloso, Bureau of Medicaid Services



CHARLIE CRIST
GOVERNOR

ANDREW C. AGWUNOBI, M.D.
SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 29, 2008
TO: Florida Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers (FICCIT)
FROM: Samantha Dellosso, Medical/Health Care Program Analyst
Bureau of Medicaid Services
SUBJECT: Florida Medicaid Program Update

Proposed Federal Changes to Case Management Services (CMS-2237-IFC)

Of concern is the financial impact that proposed federal regulation CMS-2237 will have on the two Child Health Services Targeted Case Management (TCM) programs. These two programs serve children ages zero to three who are receiving services under the Department of Health, Children's Medical Services (CMS) Early Steps program and those ages zero to 21 who receive TCM under the CMS Primary Care program. This document limits the use of federal Medicaid matching funds (known as federal financial participation, or FFP) for services to individuals receiving assistance under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). It states that some of the service coordination activities of IDEA Part C may be Medicaid-reimbursable, such as taking a child's history, identifying service needs, and gathering information from collateral sources to complete a comprehensive assessment. Other services required of service coordinators by IDEA are noted to be "administrative functions" of that federal law, such as scheduling Individualized Family Support Plan (IFSP) team meetings, attending the meetings, and providing requisite prior written notice.

At this time, service coordinators for the Florida Department of Health, Children's Medical Services, Early Steps program, the IDEA Part C coordinating agency in our state, receive approximately \$3.7 million per year from state appropriations to Medicaid and the corresponding FFP. The new regulations may significantly reduce the amount of money paid to these providers for TCM services. Further, resources would have to be utilized in an effort to educate providers on the services that will continue to be billable under TCM and those that will not. Florida Medicaid and Early Steps are working together to determine what service coordination activities will continue to be allowable TCM and which will not.

CMS-2237 also seeks to change the regulation regarding recipients having more than one case manager. In the past, if individuals qualified for more than one target group, they could receive services from more than one case manager, so long as a "lead" case manager was identified who would be responsible for coordinating services. CMS-2237 changes this, asserting individuals should have only one case manager and enrollment of a recipient into a target group should be based on his greatest need. For example, while one child could qualify for both Primary Care TCM and Early Steps Service Coordination, federal financial participation (FFP) will now only be paid for services from one of the above targeted case management entities.

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Agency Updates – Cindy Hutchens-Gueth for Sue Ross

Sue Ross is no longer Chief of Children's Mental Health. She has accepted the position of Assistant Director for the Mental Health Program Office, which oversees both adult and children's mental health. The goal is hire some one as soon as possible to fill the Chief position. Report was verbally reported.

Children's Mental Health served 11,836 children ages 0-5 last fiscal year, 06-07. This is a baseline which will be utilized to as a services count prior to CAPTA (Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act) implementation.

Agency Updates – Becky Maguire,

Head Start has been reauthorized. Training has started, they have 75 OPS assessors that go out to complete the assessments and they have at least 600 clients already. Report was verbally reported.

Public Comments

None

Meeting Adjourned

FICCIT Quarterly Meetings

2008

April 22 & 23, 2008 – Gainesville, Florida
August 26 & 27, 2008 – Ft. Myers, Florida
October 22 & 23, 2008 – Orlando, Florida