
EVALUATION AND DATA COLLECTION WORKGROUP UPDATE

The Evaluation and Data Collection Workgroup met on March 6, 2018. The meeting focused on the most recent Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) packet, the progress in data collection of the Foster Care Review Office (FCRO), and the status of the external evaluation. Below is a brief summary of areas discussed.

DHHS CQI PACKET INFORMATION

GENDER AND RACE

Through discussion of the Bridge to Independence (B2i) participant demographics, the workgroup outlined the need to examine the population aging out of the foster care system who do not enroll in the program. The hope of examining this population is to identify if the program is unevenly serving its intended population. Ultimately, identifying any variance in this population could provide insight on how to improve outreach and program education to foster youth in the lead up to aging out of care.

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

With the workgroup's previous recommendation that data collected related to living arrangement should reflect young adults who are experiencing homelessness and unstable housing, discussion on this topic has continued. Work is in progress to add in additional categories to the NFOCUS system that would more accurately capture living arrangement. Collaboration is in progress to identify the most appropriate category definitions and ways in which to better capture this information when working with the young adults.

The group will also be examining the data on living arrangements across the state to identify if there is any variance in available services. The FCRO will be pulling data to identify living arrangements by county to assist with this assessment.

ELIGIBILITY PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Given the recent focus on the "Incapable" program population, members of the workgroup agreed that it would be helpful to include a definition of what constitutes eligibility in this category. In addition, the members felt a breakdown that included the number of participants enrolled in multiple categories would be beneficial. Not only could it emphasize areas of young adult success, but it could help identify gaps in data tracking.

IV-E FUNDING

The workgroup was pleased to see the increase in participants who qualified for IV-E funding. DHHS staff clarified that the current overall rate of IV-E participants sat at around 28%. However, for the population enrolled since the state plan amendment and increased coordination efforts that began in April 2017, nearly 49% were IV-E eligible.

PERCENT OF YOUNG ADULTS AGING OUT WHO ENROLLED WITHIN 30 DAYS

Members agreed that demographic data referenced above should be pulled on the 20% from 2017 who did not enroll into the program within 30 days. DHHS staff also discussed how difficult it would be to hit 100% enrollment into B2i of youth aging out given that not all of them would meet the program criteria. The group also identified a need to track the number of young adults who enrolled at a period later than 30 days after aging out. This information could be yet another way to identify gaps in the transition process from foster care to the B2i program.

FCRO INFORMATION

The FCRO is continuing to partner with DHHS to receive the CQI packets and charts. The two agencies are working to ensure that data is being tracked without unnecessary duplication. The main focus of the FCRO will be to ensure that all B2i participants have identified goals in a specific area and that regular documentation is completed

regarding said goals. Their oversight efforts will include tracking and verifying data, examining IV-E policies, identifying the academic and education levels that participants are currently in the process of completing, and partnering to identify instability in living arrangements.

EXTERNAL EVALUATION

The evaluation is nearly ready to begin with the recommended change of completing the quantitative data and technical assistance task first. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is currently being reviewed by DHHS legal. The hope is to have an approved MOU within the next week so that the first step of the evaluation could be completed by May of this year.