

**Nebraska Children’s Commission
Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee**

July 19, 2021

10:00 am to 1:00 pm

Zoom

and

Nebraska State Office Building, Lower-Level Conference Room C
315 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, NE 68508

1. Call to Order

The Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee (FCRRC) Co-Chair Peg Harriott called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Committee Members present (8):

| | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Phillip Burrell | Jackie Meyer | Lisa Story |
| Peg Harriott | Felicia Nelsen | Lana Temple-Plotz |
| Bobby Loud (10:19 a.m.) | Cindy Rudolph | |

Committee Members absent (3):

Jessica Kroeker
Liz Lovejoy-Brown
Jennifer Potterf

Ex Officio Members present (4):

Olivia Biggs
Brenda Brooks
Kari Rumbaugh (10:27 a.m.)
Jennifer Runge

Ex Officio Members absent (1):

Kathleen Stolz

A quorum was established.

Guests in Attendance (5):

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Adam Anderson | Nebraska Children’s Commission |
| Kevin Bagley | Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services |
| Manuel Escamilla | Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services |
| Michaela Hirschman | Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services |
| Darcy Kramer | Boys Town |
| Laura Opfer | Nebraska Children’s Commission |
| Nannette Simmons | Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services |
| Alger Studstill | Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services |
| Amadi Watts | Dukes Village |

a. Notice of Publication

Recorder for the meeting, Adam Anderson, indicated that the notice of publication for this meeting was posted on the Nebraska Public Meetings Calendar and Nebraska Children’s Commission website in accordance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act. The publication would be kept as a permanent attachment with the meeting minutes.

b. Announcement of the placement of Open Meetings Act information

A copy of the Open Meetings Act was available for public inspection and was located online and at the sign-in table at the entrance of the meeting room.

3. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Lana Temple-Plotz to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Lisa Story. No further discussion ensued. Roll Call vote as follows:

FOR (5):

Peg Harriott
Jackie Meyer

Felicia Nelsen
Lisa Story

Lana Temple-Plotz

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAINED (2):

Phillip Burrell
Cindy Rudolph

ABSENT (4):

Jessica Kroeker
Bobby Loud

Liz Lovejoy-Brown
Jennifer Potterf

MOTION CARRIED

4. Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes

Lana Temple-Plotz moved to approve the [March 9, 2020 Minutes](#) as presented. Motion was seconded by Jackie Meyer. Roll Call vote as follows:

FOR (6):

Phillip Burrell
Peg Harriott

Jackie Meyer
Felicia Nelsen

Lisa Story
Lana Temple-Plotz

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAINED (0):

ABSENT (5):

Jessica Kroeker
Jennifer Potterf

Bobby Loud
Cindy Rudolph

Liz Lovejoy-Brown

MOTION CARRIED

5. Co-Chair Report

Co-Chair Peg Harriot announced that this meeting will be her final meeting on the FCRRRC Committee, as she plans to retire in October or by January. Harriott has offered to help meet with Senators if needed.

Co-Chair Nelsen shared that the Children's Commission elected her as Co-Chair in April. She noted that the Commission has not yet announced new membership.

Laura Opfer added that the Children's Commission requires one Co-Chair of each Committee to be a member of the Commission, and that was the intention bringing Nelsen on as Co-Chair early and to allow time for Peg Harriott to transition away from the Committee. Opfer noted that Commission membership expired on June 30, 2021, and that we are awaiting new membership appointments by the Governor.

Harriott noted the recent activity of the Committee. She hoped that bringing more people into the discussion will help reshape some of the pending policies and legislation. She continued by noting that there were some rates approved in the budget bill.

6. Legislative Update

Laura Opfer noted all the recent work with DHHS and the Legislature. She noted all bills introduced and gave background on some of the meetings held to help shape those bills. Opfer continued, noting that the bills are currently sitting in committee currently, but they are not indefinitely postponed, meaning that they could be amended and reintroduced. She noted that LB 100 included a 2% increase in rates for foster care agencies and foster parents that will go into effect July 1, 2021 and another 2% going into effect July of 2022.

Co-Chair Harriott shared information regarding the legislative testimony from DHHS, noting their desire for a level of care in-between three and four. She noted that DHHS didn't necessarily have problem with a fourth tier or treatment family care, just the timing was an issue.

7. DHHS Update & Stephen Group Report

Co-Chair Peg Harriott welcomed Olivia Biggs and Nanette Simmons to share an update from DHHS and present information from the [Stephen Report](#). Nannette Simmons noted the recent legislation increasing the foster care agency rate on July 1 and that the foster care contracts will be updated and increased starting October 1. Olivia Biggs shared information regarding the adoption assistance pilot. She noted that the Nebraska Permanency Resource Responsibility Rate Tool (NPRRRT) is being implemented in pilot service areas and used any time a family is requesting an increase in their adoption assistance. Biggs answered questions regarding implementation and training on the NPRRRT. Lisa Story noted lack of a clear expectation of compensation during emergency and respite situations. She shared that the compensation seems to be based on how the child behaved in the prior week rather than the care provided during the placement. Biggs noted that the Stephen Report addresses consistent utilization of the Nebraska Caregiver Responsibility Tool (NCR) across the state.

Olivia Biggs shared informational highlights from the Stephen Report. She advised the Committee to take a look at the resources available in the appendices, as they contain a lot of good information. Biggs noted that DHHS contracted with The Stephen Group to evaluate three of the recommendations from the FCRRC: The fourth tier of the NCR, NCR language changes, and adapting Treatment Family Care. Biggs discussed the process of review, that The Stephen Group reviewed historical as well as real-time data, looked at other states and surveys. She reviewed the recommendations in the report such as a need to have consistent NCR reviews and fidelity, another tier for the NCR, a tool that aligns with services covered by Medicaid, and adapting Treatment Family Care. Olivia continued by highlighting recommendations such as a need for a standardized prescription model. Kevin Bagley responded to this recommendation by noting that there is oversight of prescription in other methods, but no standardized policy. Lisa Story shared that there is a need for oversight or policy in place for when youth are discharged into a temporary living situation prior to placement or prior to the NCR. Harriott

Members discussed collaboration between Medicaid and Long Term Care, Children and Family Services, Developmental Disabilities, and Probation. Members also discussed the recommendation of needing a standardized assessment across all of DHHS, such as the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strength (CANS) Assessment. Members agreed in the need to show the needs of the youth in care.

Olivia Biggs noted the next steps from this report are to regroup with CFS, Medicaid, and leads from the FCRRC. Biggs continued that the Treatment Family Care will be developed by DHHS and led by Medicaid, and that lastly the finance office will dive into the financial analysis and get more information regarding what all is included.

Harriot pointed out that the report validated the rates the FCRRC has developed as reasonable, rational, and in line with other states. She posed the question to the group as to whether the group would be in favor of a 3.5 tier along with a fourth tier. She continued by speculating how the committee would determine that rate.

Harriott provided history behind the Treatment Family Care recommendations given by the FCRRC, and that it isn't required of the Committee in statute. She hoped that the Committee could be of use in supporting the work of Medicaid to develop. Kevin Bagley responded by sharing that hopefully out of these recommendations a reasonable timeline can be written into law after a plan is developed. Members noted that with a timeline laid out in statute work can continue during administration changes.

Harriott noted that the Committee should be proud of the good work that has been done.

Laura Opfer encouraged members to take a look at the Letters of Agreement (LOA) data on page 22 of the report, because it is broken down in a way that the Committee has yet to see. She cautioned, however, that LOA data from the Eastern Service Area is not included, and that area is the largest service area, which includes Omaha. She believes that it would be helpful to have that data as well, moving forward during the decision-making process. Opfer highlighted the breakdown of level of care usage across the service areas on page 22.

Kevin Bagley hopes to have better mechanisms for feedback and communication from community and stakeholders instituted at Medicaid. Harriott noted that the FCRRC is a great place to receive feedback from the five CFS regions and providers.

8. New Business

Lisa Story expressed gratitude for her time on the Committee and noted that with her current caregiver obligations she would try to participate as she has time for.

9. Public Comment

There was not public comment.

10. Upcoming Meeting Planning

Co-Chair Harriott proposed that the workgroups meet in September and the larger Committee meet again in October. Laura Opfer will send out a Doodle poll.

11. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m..... Respectfully Submitted, Adam Anderson