

## Minutes

### Present:

Joan Kinsey	Barb Nissen
Susan Henrie	Lana Temple-Plotz
Rosie Higgs	Carol Krueger
Dave Newell	Karen Knapp

### Absent:

Carrie Hauschild

### Agenda

Approval of July 11, 2012 Meeting Minutes  
Approval of Agenda  
Discussion of research currently underway by subcommittee members  
Discussion of Next Steps

### Discussion

Group reviewed July 11, 2012 meeting minutes and all approved.

Group approved agenda.

The group discussed the research subcommittee members are currently conducting:

1. Review of Current Tools
  - a. Mixed reviews across the board regarding the NFC Foster Care Rate Evaluation, FC Pay Checklist, and the Nebraska Out-of-Home Care tool.
  - b. Group will compile all the comments they received from HHS, foster parents and private providers and forward to Lana so they can be placed in the public folder.
2. News from other States
  - a. Lana contacted Vermont. Cindy Walcott, Deputy Commissioner for Family Services, referred her to Heather McLain and Brenda Hallock and she is waiting from a response back from them.
  - b. Lana spoke with a provider from Wisconsin. She recommended picking a tool and waiting to link the tool to rates until we've had a chance to see where all the youth fall. When Wisconsin was structuring their rates and looking at tools, they linked the two right away and this impacted foster parent payment. She recommended implementing a higher rate based on the M.A.R.C. study.
3. Discussion of CANS
  - a. The Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) was brought up at the last meeting as a possible option based on feedback from Laura Boyd at FFTA and her input that several states had moved to this standardized tool to assess youth. The group researched it and had the following comments:
    - i. The CANS is used by multiple states so it should fulfill the state requirement as a standardized assessment tool.

- ii. Addresses the concern of the 0 to 5 ages by utilizing a separate tool for this specific age group.
  - iii. Requires training to assure the validity of the assessment but training is no cost, can occur on-line, and the tool does not require a masters level practitioner to administer.
  - iv. Focuses on strengths as well as needs.
  - v. If used properly includes team members i.e. foster parents as required by policy.
  - vi. Has no cost.
  - vii. Has readily available training/certification online.
  - viii. Designed as a communication tool with all professionals and is helpful to the service planning process
  - ix. Looks at a 30 day window of needs versus the whole history of the child
  - x. Not designed to be linked to payment
  - b. Magellan is working with the tools creator, Dr. Lyons, and using a mental health version of this tool for residential. They are currently conducting a study with UNO. Suggestion made to invite a Magellan rep. and possibly UNO to a subcommittee meeting to discuss.
4. Discussion of Points Necessary Regardless of Tool
- a. Group agreed with Dave's recommendation that we consider a set of unifying values/principles important to the process. Those discussed included:
    - i. Any process or tool must synchronize with Adoption and Permanency.
    - ii. A roll-out process is essential. This should include a clear implementation process and a "hold-harmless" where foster parents rates do not change (i.e. all current youth are maintained at their current level and reassessed over a period of time, 12 months or so). This will allow us to look at Nebraska's foster car population as a whole and see where youth fall.
    - iii. Every foster parents base rate would go up during this time based on the results of the rate subcommittee. Other states have based this minimum payment on the child's age.
    - iv. Make the tool and payment process as simple as possible.
    - v. Foster Parents must be present at assessment and have the opportunity to disagree with the rate (grievance process).
    - vi. Any "special needs" rate is understood to be time limited and foster parents are educated on this. Rates will go down as children get better.
    - vii. Extend the base rate to relatives.
5. Discussion of Populations within Foster Care
- a. A majority of the youth in foster care currently should be able to get their needs met by increasing the base rate for foster parents, thus allowing them to meet the child's basic needs and provide them with the things every child needs to thrive and grow.
  - b. Difficult populations may need to be addressed differently than through use of a tool such as the CANS. For example, Medically Fragile, Developmentally Disabled, Juvenile Justice and those youth with Co-Occurring (behavioral and mental health).
  - c. Group discussed using the CANS as the initial tool for this population but possibly pairing it a checklist for each of these groups to better capture not only their needs but the skills, abilities and time investment needed on the part of the foster parents to care for these youth. The group discussed looking at what other systems (DD, OJS, etc.) are using to identify youth needs and caregiver skills.

## Next Steps

**Lana** – contact Bill Reay at Omni and ask him to attend a subcommittee meeting in person or via phone to discuss the pros and cons of the CANS, instruments he’s used and found helpful and any advice he has on addressing the needs of special populations; contact Dr. Lyons and ask him to participate in a subcommittee meeting to discuss the CANS; compile meeting minutes; continue to connect with FFTA member agencies to gain feedback on tools.

**Joan** – invite Carl from Magellan to attend a subcommittee meeting with Dr. Lyons to describe how Magellan is currently using the CANS.

**Barb** – forward data from foster parents across the state to Lana for placement on the public site; contact CSA Administrator.

**Karen** – compile feedback from HHS staff in NSA and forward to Lana for placement on public site; contact Deb Silverman in WSA.

**Carol** – compile feedback from staff at NCH on current tools and CANS and forward to Lana for placement on public site; check back with Jodi Allen in SESA.

**Susie** – compile feedback from staff at South Central Behavioral Health on current tools and CANS and forward to Lana for placement on public site.

**Dave** – send contact information on CANS creator, Dr. Lyons, to Lana so she can invite him to a meeting.

#### **Future Meeting Dates**

- a. Monday, July 30, 10 am – 12 pm, NSOB, LL-F
- b. Friday, August 17, 1-3 pm, NSOB, LL-F
- c. Wednesday, September 5, 10 am -12 pm, NSOB LL - F
- d. Monday, September 17, 10 am – 12 pm, NSOB, LL - F
- e. Thursday, October 11, 12:30 - 2 pm, NSOB, 5C
- f. Monday, October 22, 10 am-12 pm, NSOB, LL-F
- g. Wednesday, November 14, 12:30 -2 pm, NSOB, LL-F