

Nebraska Children's Commission – Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee

Tenth Meeting
July 7, 2015
1:00PM-4:00PM
Airport Country Inn & Suites,
1310 West Bond Circle, Lincoln, NE 68521

Call to Order

Peg Harriott called the meeting to order at 1:03pm and noted that the Open Meetings Act information was posted in the room as required by state law.

Roll Call

Subcommittee Members present: Jodie Austin (1:15), Stephen Bauer, Corrie Edwards, Peg Harriott, Jackie Meyer, Felicia Nelsen, David Newell, Lana Temple-Plotz, and Julia Tse.

Ex-Officio Members present: Jeanne Brandner, Tony Green, Karen Knapp, and Nanette Simmons.

Subcommittee Member(s) absent: Leigh Esau, Susan Henrie, Jodi Hitchler, Bobby Loud, Sherry Moore, and Michaela Young.

Ex-Officio Members absent: Michele Anderson.

Also attending: Bethany Allen, Jerrilyn Crankshaw, Doug Kreifels, Cindy Rudolph, Stacey Scholten, and Sherrie Spilde.

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by David Newell to approve the agenda as written, seconded by Lana Temple-Plotz. Voting yes: Peg Harriott, Stephen Bauer, Corrie Edwards, Felicia Nelsen, David Newell, Lana Temple-Plotz, and Julia Tse. Voting no: none. Jodie Austin, Leigh Esau, Susan Henry, Jodi Hitchler, and Jackie Meyer, Sherry Moore, and Michaela Young were absent. None abstained. Motion carried.

Approval of the April 17, 2014 Minutes

A motion was made by Lana Temple-Plotz to approve the April 17, 2015, minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Corrie Edwards. Voting yes: Peg Harriott, Stephen Bauer, Corrie Edwards, Felicia Nelsen, David Newell, and Lana Temple-Plotz. Voting no: none. Jodie Austin, Leigh Esau, Susan Henry, Jodi Hitchler, and Jackie Meyer, Sherry Moore, and Michaela Young were absent. Julia Tse abstained. Motion carried.

Chair's Report

Update on Committee Membership

Peg Harriott gave a brief Chair's report. She discussed the open membership slots on the Committee. The open slots are: a child advocacy organization that supports young adults who were in foster care as children, and a foster parent who contracts directly with the Department of Health and Human Services.

Legislative Obligation

Peg noted that the Committee had an obligation to make recommendations to the Legislature by July 1, 2016. The next steps of the Committee would be to determine if any adjustments to the rates needed to be made. The last date to present a report to the Commission would be in May, so the Committee will target the March 2016 meeting of the Commission as the date of completion for the report.

Public Comment

No persons present wished to make public comment.

Foster Care Rate Implementation and Action Items Annual Reports

DHHS

Nanette Simmons led the Committee through the DHHS report on implementation. DHHS does believe that the NCR meets the needs for consistency of rates statewide. She noted the efforts that DHHS has made to educate stakeholders and now rarely receives questions regarding NCR use. There are a small number of children who have needs greater than captured by the tool. There may be a benefit to establishing a fourth level beyond enhanced. The children who are in the grey area beyond enhanced were medically fragile, DD, or displayed significant behaviors. Most of this small population was medically fragile.

NFC

Dave Newell led the Committee through the Nebraska Families Collaborative report on implementation. He noted that NFC's report is very similar to the DHHS report. He also remarked that Nebraska's implementation of the rate change was much smoother than that of other states. He also noted that the NCR is an agreement between the foster parent and the child placing agency. Sometimes one foster parent will do more than another foster parent, so the agency will have to supplement to have the child's needs met, and there is no good way to measure additional support from the agency on the NCR.

Probation

Jeanne Brandner gave a presentation on Probation's report. She noted that although LB530 occurred prior to juvenile justice reform, Probation has been engaged and active in the Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee. She noted that Probation does not use SDM, NCR, or CANS

due to the population served. Probation utilizes the intensive parenting level rate, due to the age and needs of the population. She noted that there barriers include the difficulty of finding homes for Probation's population of older children or children with behaviors. Many families also struggle with transportation expenses. Jeanne and Tony agreed that it does not matter if a child is in the child welfare or juvenile justice system, the state must come together to recruit foster homes.

Foster Parent Survey Update

Lana Temple-Plotz discussed the foster parent survey. The Committee discussed some challenges and ideas to identify what the Committee wants to know and how to obtain the information.

Next Steps

Lana Temple-Plotz agreed to continue leading the Level of Care workgroup. A second workgroup to look at the base rates was also re-convened. Jeanne Brandner, Felicia Nelsen, and Dave Newell, and Nanette Simmons will work on examining the base rate.

Plan for July 2016 Legislative Report and Action Item

The Committee previously discussed the plan for the July 2016 report during the Chair's Report.

Report from Group Home Rate Workgroup and Action Item

Doug Kreifels and Cindy Rudolph led a discussion of the Group Home's Report. They discussed the methodology of the report. The report is not a recommendation of rates but it does provide a calculation of the components of the current rates for the purposes of Title IV-E reporting. Cindy noted that the calculation is based on minimum licensing standards, but that most providers operate at a much lower staffing ratio to maintain safety. DHHS is satisfied with the report and considers the mission of the Sub-Committee completed. The group home providers had noted that the rates are not adequate to cover the actual costs of running a group home in a safe manner. The Committee discussed ways to begin work to bring rates in line with costs. After some discussion of proposed group home licensing requirements, Dave Newell made a motion that the Committee ask the Nebraska Children's Commission recommend that DHHS do a fiscal analysis on any proposed change of licensure regulations, and if the proposed change is not cost-neutral, DHHS will supply adequate funding. Corrie Edward seconded the motion. Voting Yes: Peg Harriott, Jodie Austin, Stephen Bauer, Corrie Edwards, Jackie Meyer, Felicia Nelsen, David Newell, Lana Temple-Plotz and Julia Tse. Voting no: none. None abstained. Leigh Esau, Susan Henrie, Jodi Hitchler, Bobby Loud, Sherry Moore, and Michaela Young were absent.

Lana Temple-Plotz made a motion to seek approval from the Children's Commission to further the work of the Group Home Committee and create recommendations for rates based on the methodology already established regarding rates. Jodie Austin seconded the motion. Voting Yes: Peg Harriott, Jodie Austin, Stephen Bauer, Corrie Edwards, Jackie Meyer, Felicia Nelsen, David Newell, Lana Temple-Plotz and Julia Tse. Voting no: none. None abstained. Leigh Esau, Susan Henrie, Jodi Hitchler, Bobby Loud, Sherry Moore, and Michaela Young were absent.

Review of Assignments/Action Plan and Action Item

Peg noted that the workgroups had been reconvened, that a survey for foster parents would be in development, and that a recommendation would go to the Nebraska Children's Commission to continue the work of the Group Home Sub-Committee.

New Business

No new business.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date of the Committee will be in September, with exact date and location to be announced.

Adjourn

Lana Temple-Plotz moved to adjourn, seconded by Dave Newell. The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 pm.