

Alternative Response (AR) Advisory Committee

March 26, 2021

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Webex Online Video Conferencing System

I. Call to Order and Welcome

Nebraska Children’s Commission Policy Analyst, Laura Opfer welcomed everyone and called the meeting of the Alternative Response Advisory Committee (AR) to order at 9:02 a.m. Opfer asked Adam Anderson to call roll through introductions.

Laura Opfer noted that the Governor extended the Open Meetings Act waiver until then end of April, 2021.

II. Roll Call and Introductions

Committee Members present (14):

Alise Baker

Jarren Breeling

Patrick Carraher

Jennifer Carter

Monika Gross

Sarah Helvey

Alex Hilderbrand

Bri McLarty

Michelle Oldham

Carey Potter

Jan Reeves

Susan Thomas

Mikayla Wicks

Reggie Young

Committee members absent (3):

Michelle Paxton

Karine Sokpoh

Ivy Svoboda

A quorum was established.

Guests in Attendance (10):

Adam Anderson.....

Nebraska Children’s Commission

Laura Opfer.....

Nebraska Children’s Commission

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 Meeting 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 on the Nebraska Children’s Commission website.

III. Approval of Agenda

It was moved by **Monika Gross** and seconded by **Pat Carraher** to approve the **agenda** as presented. There was no further discussion. Roll Call vote as follows:

FOR (14):

Alise Baker

Jarren Breeling

Patrick Carraher

Jennifer Carter

Monika Gross

Sarah Helvey

Alex Hildebrand

Bri McLarty

Michelle Oldham

Carey Potter

Jan Reeves

Susan Thomas

Mikayla Wicks

Reggie Young

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAINED (0):

ABSENT (3):

Michelle Paxton
Karine Sokpoh
Ivy Svoboda

MOTION CARRIED

Items in the minutes do not follow the original order of the agenda.

IV. Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Jennifer Carter and seconded by Carey Potter to approve the [January 22, 2021 minutes](#) as presented.

There was no further discussion. Roll Call vote as follows:

FOR (14):

Alise Baker
Jarren Breeling
Patrick Carraher
Jennifer Carter
Monika Gross

Sarah Helvey
Alex Hildebrand
Bri McLarty
Michelle Oldham
Carey Potter

Jan Reeves
Susan Thomas
Mikayla Wicks
Reggie Young

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAINED (0):

ABSENT (3):

Michelle Paxton
Karine Sokpoh
Ivy Svoboda

MOTION CARRIED

V. Co-Chair Vacancy and Appointment Process

Children's Commission Policy Analyst, Laura Opfer reminded the members of the statutory requirements of the AR Committee and gave a brief update regarding the process of Co-Chair nominations and appointments. She noted that Susan Thomas and Monika Gross have expressed interest in the Co-Chair positions on the AR Committee.

Opfer gave an update regarding the pulse survey sent to members prior to the meeting. She answered questions from the survey regarding the focus of the Committee. She noted that members will discuss strategic planning later in the agenda. She also shared that the scope of the Committee will also be broad enough to focus on aspects outside of the Alternative Response program. Opfer continued by sharing the Committee Timeline. She noted that Subcommittees or Workgroups will be formed and can have members outside of the membership of the Committee.

Opfer answered questions regarding the duties of the Chair and Co-Chair. She noted that Commission Administrative Assistant, Adam Anderson will send the governing documents with the meeting minutes.

VI. DHHS Update

DHHS Program Specialist, Mikayla Wicks shared a map of service areas and AR caseworkers and caseloads. Wicks noted that the Eastern and Southeastern Service Areas have the highest levels of cases. She noted that AR doesn't have a closure date. She noted that all caseworkers are carrying a mixed caseload between AR and Traditional Response (TR) cases. Wicks added that tribal cases look a little different and that she will work with Amanda Docter to make sure the numbers are accurate. She shared that the Division of Children and Family Services (CFS) is looking at doing a deeper AR training after the initial new worker training. Wicks noted that the AR regulations have been approved by the Attorney General and are

now at the Governor's Office for approval since February. She added, once approved they will take effect after five days. Wicks continued, there will be another set of regulation changes submitted due to [LB 1061](#).

Wicks answered questions regarding Eastern Service Area, noting that Omaha AR workers are employed by the CFS. AR workers in Eastern have higher caseloads, but do not carry a mixed caseload. If a case goes to TR it is transferred to Saint Francis.

Wicks answered questions regarding backlog and visitation timeframes. She also noted that AR caseloads follow Initial Assessment (IA) caseload sizes.

Wicks discussed Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA). She will share a list of assessments and the role of the assessments along with due dates for them at future meetings.

Mikayla will share upcoming criteria changes with Adam Anderson to share with the Committee Members. She noted that exclusionary criteria will move from 25 to 20. She noted that priority one cases will now be eligible for AR, however the Hotline will screen for all exclusionary criteria. Mikayla will be reviewing the intakes to see if this change will impact caseloads. AR Red Team criteria will move from 11 to 7.

VII. Strategic Planning

Laura Opfer shared questions in the chat for group breakout sessions: 1. What values do we share that can guide the work of this Committee? 2. How do we measure a success of the AR program and a success of the AR Committee? 3) What data or information do we need to measure success? Groups reported out to the full Committee after a brief discussion period.

- a. Bri McLarty, Jennifer Carter, Michelle Paxton, Susan Thomas
 - i. Bri McLarty shared their group discussed balancing risk. The group also discussed equity statewide. Is there a way to help or identify that as a problem? Lastly, the group discussed oversight. What does oversight look like? Treatment Teams, 1184, or something new?
 1. Data points could include pilot families to check in with them to view their success. To look at the families that took advantage of AR and those that didn't to see if they came into the system later. Another data point could be to see if AR cases have transferred to TR to examine success but also to see if there could be another exclusionary criteria.
- b. Alex Hildebrand, Jan Reeves, Monika Gross, Pat Carraher
 - i. Monika Gross shared they discussed family integrity and safety, and also workforce stability. Success could be measured by not reentering care, adding value to the system, families. Success could be also measured through the workforce. Monika answered a question regarding workforce, noting that often workers see this as a point in time and not a career.
 1. Data points include reentry numbers, caseworker turnover, caseloads, workers feel supported, training, and lines of communication at DHHS.
- c. Alise Baker, Jarren Breeling, Mikayla Wicks, Reggie Young, Sarah Helvey
 - i. Reggie Young shared they discussed specific personal experiences with AR. He shared that a specific value they shared was experience with the child welfare system. They discussed that measuring success revolved around worker success and growth, noting that new workers learn that parenting is hard. It may be too early to determine what that success would look like, but it is tied to. Sarah shared that it important to get the data points and perspective from many stakeholders.
 1. Data points would include data that was shared via Mikayla's presentation earlier in the meeting.

Laura Opfer will put together a list of shared values and data points to bring it to the next meeting. She will work with Mikayla Wicks to pull some relevant data.

VIII. Public Comment

Laura Opfer opened the floor for public comment. There was no members of the public in attendance.

IX. New Business

There was no new business.

X. Upcoming Meeting Planning

The next meeting will be held May 28, 2021, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. with a lunch break. Location and details will be sent to members and posted to the Commission website at a later date.

XI. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Adam Anderson

DRAFT