

North Carolina FFTA Meeting Minutes July 10, 2009

Present: Aura Ananic (ESUCP), Michelle Corry (NYAP), Phyllis Stephenson (ESUCP), Leslie Kellenberger (CFSA), Maureen Murray (DUMC), Jean Kenefick (ESUCP), Tom Culver (Kidspeace), Kathy Dobbs (CFSA), Marcia Moore (Triad Treatment), Gina Tipton (Tipton Therapeutic Foster Homes, Karen McLeod (CFSA), Ted Lane (Cardinal Clinic), Julie Ross (Turning Point), Jenny Simmons (Eliada), Kerri Shifflett (Caring Family Network), Jill Krahwinkel (Caring Family Network), Jim Barbee (Wake County Human Services), Jennifer Evans (Wake County Human Services), Regina Arrowood (Catawba County DSS), Kim Morgan (TL Children's Home Inc) .

Introductions

Went around the room and did introductions, Melissa Cole, Dr. Boyd, Dr. Lancaster joined the meeting by conference call

Guest Speaker

Dr. Laura Boyd – Public Policy Updates – Provided update on Senate bill 1217 which would create a new medical assistance category under Medicaid that among other things, would cover Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) services as well as extending medical coverage to children receiving care in inpatient psychiatric hospitals.

Dr. Boyd discussed continued efforts to extend National Accreditation requirements to include CQL as well as California state specific accreditation.

Other legislative efforts include getting a definition of TFC into the language of bills in both the House and the Senate.

- Tom Culver asked if the North Carolina definition of TFC was included in the language that was submitted. The answer was no, but Dr. Boyd requested that we send the NC definition to her and let the group know that she is working on submitting revisions to this definition.
- Karen McLeod asked how much attention this would get this year with all the attention being given to health care reform. Dr. Boyd responded that it would likely be early 2010 before this moves.
- Tom Culver asked if the language NC is submitting today will end up being replaced by the Federal definition once the relevant bill(s) pass. Dr. Boyd responded that states will want to review the Federal language to see if they prefer this over the state language submitted.
- Karen McLeod asked about other states that are being negatively impacted during this time in terms of continued efforts at unbundling of services. Dr. Boyd stated that over 260+ legislators have supported a moratorium on continued activities of

this nature while the bills are being drafted and making their way to approval. Dr. Boyd also stated there is work underway to form alliances to prevent a negative impact on individual states while work is underway to get definitions into statute.

- Karen McLeod asked why when the moratorium was passed that South Carolina was able to still come in and dismantle TFC services. Dr. Boyd said there are a couple of states including Montana, North Carolina and West Virginia that are being subject to continued unbundling efforts in spite of the moratorium.
- Tom Culver asked given this, why North Carolina is sending a definition in if it is going to be rejected because it did not include unbundling. Phyllis deferred this question to Karen McLeod's session of today's meeting.
- Phyllis Stephenson asked if Dr. Boyd had any recommendations for us locally on this, Dr. Boyd responded that we need to all stay on the same page with this so that when our legislators are home in August we share and educate them about our concerns and issues including that there will be a bill sent soon that you will be asked to support and to let them know there are pockets of CMS that are not following the moratorium. She also suggested we may want to send a letter to CMS to remind them there is agreement by Congress in support of a moratorium.
- Phyllis then asked if FFTA has any data to document that unbundling has not been an effective way to serve children. Melissa Cole answered that FFTA does not.

Guest Speaker

Dr. Mike Lancaster – Updates. Dr. Lancaster spoke about anticipating a large portion of Level 3 & 4 group homes being dismantled over time, but the up side of the opportunity to provide community based care for children in TFC. What this means is to lean heavily on a system that is already pretty taxed itself. Up to 1/3 of youth in group home can be returned to their families or to TFC with support including day treatment, home based services. Looking at information on gaps of service for the up to 1900 youth that will need to be moved out of group and residential homes including approximately 300 in the custody of juvenile probation. Dr. Lancaster encouraged everyone to be looking at evidence based TFC models.

- Tom Culver asked which specific evidence based models are being used including the Oregon Social Learning Model, as well as Together Facing the Challenge and the Pressley Ridge model that focuses more on managing behaviors in the moment.
- Karen McLeod asked about language that indicates elimination of Level 3 & 4 group homes on or before 10/1/09. Dr. Lancaster responded that this is changing all the time, not sure what the current status is of the 10/1 date.

- Tom Culver asked if anyone has seen standards around the level of involvement with the family, Phyllis answered 60 minutes per week per child of supervision has been the standard, but that the current definition does not specify this.

Guest Speaker

Melissa Cole – FFTA Updates Melissa discussed the challenges related to the costs of implementing evidence based models including Multi-Dimensional Treatment Foster Care. Melissa presented a brief overview of what FFTA is and does for those present who may not be a member of FFTA. Effort is primarily on Federal issues that impact Therapeutic Foster Care. Melissa discussed the mission, focus and priorities of FFTA including:

- The upcoming FFTA Conference in Atlanta in August which typically includes 700 – 800 people and about 30 people are registered from North Carolina.
- Evidence Base Practice Resource guide
- Ongoing posting of articles on the FFTA website
- Development of satisfaction surveys for TFC

Guest Speaker

Karen McLeod – CFSA presented on State Updates/Service Definitions-Budget. Karen presented an update on the status of the state efforts. There is a 4 billion dollar deficit and looking to offset it with Federal dollars, a revenue package and by doing cuts. There is not a state budget yet, we are currently functioning under 85% of last year's budget through July 15. Suggestions include modernizing taxes such as intranet, services such as lawn care, hair care, etc., taxing individuals defined as wealthy (200K annual or more). The Senate and House are in disagreement in how many taxes to put in the budget in order to balance it. The projected result will likely be massive cuts in Medicaid that will impact TFC including:

- 3.5% cut in Medicaid reimbursement
- PRTF beds are on a wait list already, so with a 3.5% Medicaid cut the impact will be significant especially combined with the flat rate for these beds that have been in place for a number of years for many providers
- The 12 Case Management definitions will be collapsed into one definition to save 50 million in the first year and 80 million in the second year
- 75 additional dollars in discretionary savings with unidentified sources
- Significant cuts in juvenile justice/diversion programs including Therapeutic Wilderness camps closing, multi-purpose treatment homes, etc.

When you take all of these services out, what you have left is very spotty community based services and nowhere for kids to go except jails. The big picture of what is happening is lots of different services closing at the same time and this will result in a lot of kids dumped on DSS or they will be end up in acute inpatient due to decomposition as well as a lot more institutionalization and public safety issues. Anticipating lawsuits in order to get kids what they need.

Working on risk tools for TFCs to use to offset the lack of information provided on children placed. There is a lot of resistance from the department, criticism includes that it

will be harder to place kids and that the tool is not strengths based. Questions include things like history within the previous 12 months of psychosis, inpatient, physical aggression, impairments in daily living, medical assistance daily, substance abuse, criminal justice involvement, probation, history of sexually aggressive or sexualized behaviors, history of fire setting, victim of sexual abuse, AWOL, school expulsion.

Karen shared that TFC will not be defined as an enhanced service and will fall under Residential. This is important because the new Community Support definition will exclude the provision of Community Support in enhanced services but that then TFC may fall under the 120 day definition. This needs to be clarified.

There will be another continuing resolution next week, there is a push by the Speaker of the House to get this done by next Friday (July 17th). Of concern is that there are not enough votes to approve anything over 1 Billion dollars which means most of the cuts listed above are likely to go through. If new money comes in it will go first to Juvenile Justice, Department of Corrections, HHS and Education. The provisions will likely begin upon enactment which will likely be retroactive to July 1 with the exception of the Medicaid cuts.

Work is underway on definitions for Day Treatment, Inpatient child Crisis Stabilization (less than 7 days) as a transitional service between the PRTF and the TFC.

The legislature has been approached that we need to raise revenue; the Senate and the Governor are in support of this, but not necessarily the House. Karen suggests that we call our legislators, especially the House "Blue Dogs".

Minutes Approval

As the meeting ran over time, the minutes for the 3/12 and 5/21 meetings were deferred to the September meeting.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held on Friday October 2nd.

Dr. Boyd may be available in September/October on a Friday to participate in our next FFTA meeting.

Miscellaneous/Announcements

- Training opportunities were reviewed
- Maureen discussed her training on July 30th which is an abbreviated version of the 2 day training of the trainer.
- Maureen also shared that Duke is in the process of a 5 year study of youth in group homes and will include the effects of the current group home closure.

Meeting Adjourned @ 2:45 pm.

Reminder: Next Meeting: FRIDAY OCTOBER 2, 2009

Minutes submitted by: Michelle Corry; FFTA North Carolina Chapter Secretary