

Foster Family-based Treatment Association
North Carolina Chapter Meeting
Greensboro, NC
November 13, 2009

MINUTES

Introductions:

Everyone introduced themselves.

Update from Laura Boyd, FFTA Public Policy & Government Relations Consultant:

Laura called in to update the group on several public policy issues:

FFTA continues to find co-sponsors for S.1217, the Medicaid Services Restoration Act. Attention of healthcare reform is slowing this process down a bit.

Laura had a conference call earlier this month with 4 CMS department heads to discuss S. 1217 and to clarify the status of unbundling of TFC services. Laura explained to our group that CMS is incorrectly instructing regional CMS offices to unbundle services, because they misunderstood the 'retracted' Rehab rule. In her conference call with the CMS staff members, it became clear to her that CMS misunderstands the nature of TFC bundling, what is allowable within a TFC bundle, and that there are other ways to have transparency and accountability with the use of bundling. Laura hopes in the near future to meet with the department head from the CMS Finance Group which is the group that administers payments and payment methodology. In addition, Laura will meet with Cindy Mann, the head of CMS, in January 2010.

While in D.C. earlier this month, Laura met with a Chief Staff member at the House Ways and Means committee to explain the confusion at CMS. The staff member was quite concerned and expressed the willingness to help clarify these issues with CMS. In addition, FFTA continues to work closely with child welfare and children's mental health advocates in Washington, DC, who are standing ready for grassroots advocacy work on Capitol Hill.

Finally, we are working with many other child welfare advocates to ensure that TFC is defined in the healthcare reform bill.

It was noted that Representative Etheridge has been elected to the Ways and Means Committee. As such, providers in North Carolina may be asked in the future to contact him about TFC-related issues.

Update from FFTA National Office, Melissa Cole, Administrator

Aside from the Public Policy work that FFTA is doing, as reported by Laura Boyd, Melissa provided the following updates from the FFTA National Office:

- FFTA currently has 391 members, with 18 of those in North Carolina. Most members are located across the U.S., with a few members in Canada.
- FFTA is the only National Association representing TFC providers and hosts the only conference on TFC. FFTA complements the work that the state associations do, but focuses specifically on TFC.

- Most of what FFTA accomplishes is a result of the work of the FFTA committee and chapters. She encouraged everyone to get involved in an FFTA committee and offered to send the committee list out to everyone.
- Two major upcoming events: the 7th Annual Public Policy Institute & Advocacy Day, May 3-4, in Washington, DC, and the 24th Annual Conference on Treatment Foster Care, August 1-4, 2010 in Nashville, TN.
- The Research Committee is finalizing its “Measuring Consumer Satisfaction Resource Guide,” which will be sent electronically to member in early 2010. They are also planning for two new projects for 2010: A Survival Guide on System Changes in Child Welfare, will look at the impact that policy changes, such as privatization, levels of care, performance-based contracting, etc. have on providers and how to prepare for those changes. The other project is to create a resource guide of practice models that are being used in TFC. Examples of the types of models that may be covered in the guide, include the Mockingbird program, working with sibling groups, etc.
- FFTA publishes two newsletters. The FFTA FOCUS newsletter comes out quarterly and features articles written by professionals in the field. The monthly TFC e-News has short tidbits of information and refers readers to on-line resources on a variety of topics.
- Anyone with questions about FFTA or who is a member needing assistance, can contact Melissa Cole at the FFTA office (800) 414-3382, ext. 113 or by email: mcole@ffta.org
- Frank Crawford, of Youth Homes in Charlotte, serves on the FFTA Board of Directors. Phyllis Stephenson, Easter Seals UCP has been nominated and it is anticipated that she will be elected to the Board of Directors at the upcoming Board meeting next week.

Update from Karen McLeod, CEO, Children and Family Services Association-NC

Election of Officers for 2010

The membership elected the Chapter Officers for 2010:

Chairperson: Phyllis Stephenson, Easter Seals UCP

Vice-Chairperson: Leslie Kellenberger, Children and Family Services Association-NC

Secretary: Jenny Simmons, Eliada Homes Inc.

Treasurer: Jean Kenefick

Inviting Non-Members to Chapter Meetings

FFTA members discussed whether or not to allow non-members to attend the chapter meetings.

Members stated that the information they receive at chapter meetings are considered a membership benefit. After discussion, the group agreed to allow non-members to attend two chapter meetings. After that time, if the agency would like to attend any other meetings, they will need to become an FFTA member.

The next Chapter meeting will be held on **January 29th, from 11:30am-2:30pm** at the same place-Cutting Board Restaurant in Greensboro. We hope to have Laura Boyd join us in person, along with Karen McLeod.