

First Steps South East First Steps South East

LPCC Quarterly Meeting – Cluster H

May 6, 2020

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 9:02.

Introductions and Inspirational Story

Debbie Collins is chairing the meeting today since Julianne Jerrell is unable to attend. Anne Dolan welcomed everyone and reviewed list of attendees since she is keeping track. Anne shared special welcome to those attending today who are not typically able to join, but for whom the remote meeting on Zoom has made attendance possible.

For the inspirational story, Becky Haymond shared that a previous First Steps participant received a soccer scholarship.

Consent Agenda

Robin Cully motioned to approve, Scott Merkel seconds, motion approved.

Financial Report

Becky gave overview of financial report handout. The report shows an overage in personnel costs, but the state allows moving money between line items as needed, and the budget is projected to be balanced by the end of the grant period at the end of June. Cluster H and Cluster J is a combined budget.

Other Business

- **Cluster Oversight and System Updates**
 - Provider Networks Update - Hopewell unable to be here today. Patty from NCA states there is nothing new to report from NCA.
 - Quality Assurance State Concern Log – There was one service coordinator concern related to delay of service due to doctor not signing. The concern was addressed by internal training.
 - Cost Participation Suspensions – There are currently no suspensions and no issues with insurance billing. Service Coordinators have been reminded that if families have lost income, adjustments can be made to cost participation.
 - Training Opportunities – The First Steps Conference is cancelled. Reviewed handout regarding conference keynote speakers to be presented now via webinar. Connie Young from the First Steps state office spoke about the state efforts to organize professional development sessions to be offered via remote connection. The sessions are hosted by IU and include therapy discipline specific topics. AEPS training and onboarding training for new providers is also being held virtually.

- Statistical Reports – Handouts provided regarding the Cluster H profile report and related state profile. Another handout was prepared by the SPOE office that summarizes trends in referrals, IFSPs, and assessments. The onset of the COVID-19 public health emergency created a sharp drop in all of these. Referrals are on the rise again. Becky McGuire noted that the percentage of children moving from First Steps to Special Education seems low at 53% since her experience is that more of the kids she serves move to Special Ed. Becky Haymond noted, however, that 53% is higher than the state average. Robyn Culley voiced concern that First Steps is going to get slammed with new referrals as the public health emergency passes, and wants to know if the federal or state is considering waiving the 45 day timeline. Becky Haymond is glad for the ability to provide virtual assessments which offers some flexibility in scheduling. Whitney Austin anticipates that if First Steps gets slammed with referrals, some 45 day timelines may be missed, however, Assessment Team members are eager to get more work, and we may be able to offer Saturday appointments. Becky Haymond praised the Assessment Team and scheduling support who did not miss one day of evaluations. Technology was adopted and handouts provided to families on using virtual tools for evaluations. Service Coordinators have been able to use technology resources also.
- **Old Business**
 - Quality Review Monitoring Update– Cluster H is working on improving three indicators out of compliance as discussed in depth at the last LPCC meeting: Over 30 days Start, Quality Outcomes, and Family Engagement (measured by exit survey). The Over 30 Day Start has continued to be an issue over the most recent reporting period of Oct-Dec. While all children over 30 days for the start eventually got services, the problem is rooted in a lack of providers available. It is understood that both Hopewell and NCA are working very hard to stretch existing and recruit new providers, there just aren't currently enough, and the issue is statewide. In an effort to try to capture a clearer understanding of the problem, the SPOE has proposed to work with the networks to track specifically when service plans are written with "No Provider Available" or "NPA" services. At the next LPCC meeting in August, data should be available for the Quality Indicators of Jan-March.
 - LPCC Office Elections + Current Roster – This is on hold.
 - First Steps Conference – Reviewed during previous training opportunities section of today's meeting.
- **New Business**
 - Transition MOA update – Meeting in person to review the MOA and local transition processes will not be possible this year due to public health emergency. Transition partners have been sent MOA to review. About half have been signed and returned so far. There was general discussion during today's meeting about how transition is happening in the current public health emergency environment. Lindsay Gilbert from Hamilton Co-op is anticipating her program may do evaluation days over the summer to try to catch up. She reports that transition meetings over the phone are going well. Scott Merkel reports than Anderson can't do the standardized assessments virtually.

Muncie reports that they are waiting to do their school assessments. Overall, LEAs feel that the transition meetings via 3 way or 4 way phone call are going well.

- Doctor referrals – A fax blast was organized to get information to all doctor's offices both to share a new state physician's referral form, but also just to let doctors know that First Steps is open and has services to offer families safely during the public health emergency. Service Coordinators faxed a sample letter and fax form. A similar letter was prepared for community partners. It is too early to tell if the effort has resulted in any increase in referrals. The new physician's referral form is now also posted to the SPOE website along with a general public note that First Steps is open during COVID-19. Due to Service Coordinator outreach, the Madison County Community Foundation included First Steps in its community resource list of open services. Connie Young added that at the state level, First Steps has been included in FSSA text message outreach service. Through the state, communication has been delivered to families, providers, daycare, and preschools regarding First Steps COVID-19 policies and services. LPCC coordinators across the state have met a few times to discuss outreach.
- PCG Requirements Sessions – Meetings to form the platform requirements for the new First Steps technology platform are continuing virtually. The meeting for billing was rescheduled for tomorrow. Testing is to begin late fall, with roll out in 2021.
- COVID-19 Update – Becky Haymond provided an update in the Director's report section of the Consent Agenda approved earlier in today's meeting. First Steps services are being offered and delivered in a virtual format. Only 11 families have moved to no services, and everyone else (99%) is getting virtual programming. Connie Young shared that the state First Steps website has the state First Steps COVID-19 policies.

Announcements and Updates

- Headstart and Early Headstart – Robyn Culley shared that no one in her program has good ideas for how to keep toddlers 6 feet apart for social distancing and she is open to suggestions! Headstart has been talking about PPE for staff and want to open. Families want to work. Holly from Muncie Headstart is unsure about how program plans to proceed.
- PPE – Becky Haymond shared info that the SPOE fiscal agent is pre-ordering supplies such as masks, hand sanitizer, and stylus's for signing. There is a source for hand sanitizer from a Monroe County distillery. Becky McGuire shared she knows of a distillery in Anderson offering hand sanitizer. Robyn Culley knows of a church making cloth masks. Lindsay Gilbert has found people offering to make masks on the Nextdoor app.
- Next LPCC Meeting – August 5th.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:06.