

**First Steps South East
LPCC Quarterly Meeting
Cluster J
August 19, 2022**

- I. Call to Order
 - Called to order at 9:35 by Tillie Allgood, Chairperson

- II. Introductions and Inspirational Story
 - Two inspirational stories were shared. Becky Haymond shared a story about a parent who called into the SPOE office to give special praise to her service coordinator. The service coordinator was on the phone with the parent when the parent stopped talking and the service coordinator could still hear a child in the background. The service coordinator called 911 and asked that someone check on the household. It turns out mom had had a seizure, and her toddler was with her. Mom was so thankful for the care of her service coordinator.

 - Kim Fledderman shared that she ran into the family of child she saw previously in First Steps. The learned the child, who was treated in First Steps for mild cerebral palsy and sensory processing issues, has an associates degree in engineering technology and is getting married. This reminded Kim of the impact First Steps has on families and the lives we touch.

- III. Consent Agenda Items
 - Consent agenda items reviewed. Kim Fledderman motioned to accept the consent agenda including the minutes. Molly Cleek moved to second. Approved by consensus.

- IV. Financial Report
 - SPOE Financial report handout reviewed by Becky Haymond. The report shows the expenses for the full grant year that ended June 30, 2022. The entire grant was expended and a little more. Personnel costs account for 95% of all expenses. The SPOE continues to try to reduce expenses in other areas such as supplies and rent. The new grant year began July 1, 2022 and is for the same amount as the previous year. The SPOE is expecting the state to announce a new RFP (Request for Proposal) asking for application bids for entities to deliver SPOE services beginning July 1, 2023. Kim asked typically how long is the SPOE RFP awarded for, and Becky replied the RFP is typically awarded for two years.

- V. Other Business
 - Cluster Oversight and System Updates
 - Provider Networks-
 - Kim Fledderman, Developmental Services (DSI), that the network has been struggling to meet the demand for services, which she understands to be an issue not unique to just Developmental Services. Kim shared that something that seems to be working is that DSI has been offering families DT weekly in person with a virtual co-treat for other disciplines. The cellular internet in Vevay is not very good, so that makes things more difficult there. The DT's are now getting full, so hoping to talk with families about the possibility of reducing therapy at the time of the annual plan to help with waitlist.
 - Missy Myers, Collaborating for Kids, reports that her network is using the state's retention and recruitment grant to give retention bonuses as well as sign-on bonuses.
 - Molly Cleek, Kids Only, reports her network continues to look for a magic wand in order to both keep the providers they've got and get additional providers. The network is asking providers to see what they can do to reach more kids.

 - Connie Young reported on behalf of State First Steps that the state does hear the pain of the networks. State staff Christina, David, and Maggie were in Washington, DC, at a conference focusing on addressing the personnel shortages in early intervention across the nation. The State First Steps office has called together a meeting for SPOE directors and Network Agency

directors to discuss the provider personnel challenges. Connie has continued to reach out to professors in schools across the state to seek opportunities to engage future professionals to consider pursuing early intervention careers and jobs. The state is anxious to problem solve.

Becky added she is happy to spread the word about that the opportunity for college loan forgiveness to those working for non-profit organizations.

- Training Opportunities –
 - Connie Young, FSSA- Indiana First Steps, shared information about some upcoming free Webinars. Also, the Early Intervention Conference committee is looking for additional members to help plan the 2023 conference.
 - Anne Dolan, First Steps South East, shared information about the upcoming free Heart to Heart virtual conference for families and professionals presented by Indiana Family to Family, an organization supporting families with children with special health care needs.
 - Sara Cummins, FUSE Inc., shared information about the Fall Inspiring Abilities Expo to be held at Perry Meridian High School on the southside of Indianapolis in Cluster G. The event will feature many vendors and is free and open to families from any county.
 - Additional training opportunities info can also be found in the First Steps newsletter.
- Statistics – Referrals, Evaluation, and IFSPs counts were shared in the chart format developed by the SPOE office. Referrals saw a swell in March and April. There were also a high number of children that came into our Cluster J area as a transfer from other Clusters. Evaluations saw an increase during May and June. The majority are completed virtually, but the SPOE can and will arrange for an in-person evaluation if necessary. Parents have largely been fine with virtual evaluations. The SPOE can loan technology to family if needed in order to access virtual evaluation or services, and another option is that Service Coordinators can go to the family home with their device to provide access to a virtual evaluation if needed. The number of initial IFSPs in 2022 is on track to meet or exceed initial IFSP numbers for 2021 by the end of the year.
- Staffing Update – Service Coordinators in our Cluster are meeting with families in homes with the option of conducting some meetings virtually as appropriate. Specific guidance has been provided by the SPOE to prioritize family needs and best practice when it comes to visiting in the home. Janell and Whitney have been a huge help to Service Coordinators who are all either newer to their role, or still building knowledge of using EI Hub. Service Coordinators have also been able to help cover extra service areas as needed. An OT and a DT have been added to the evaluation team. Julina Smith, OT, has left the evaluation team and will be missed.
- EI Hub –

The local SPOE office has now trained all of their Service Coordinators to use the Case Management Module in EI Hub. The roll-out process by the local SPOE was very intentional – starting small, and with thoughtfully selected activities. Data activities that Service Coordinators have been trained to do in EI Hub include entering demographic data, completing provider changes, and submitting EI Hub exits. The local SPOE has reorganized the methods of completing intake by dividing intake activities into two parts – the first part over the phone for collecting demographic information, and the second in-person for a family interview and gathering signed consents. While Service Coordinators are using EI Hub to enter some data, the SPOE office staff data entry still handles entering many other data entry including initial and annual IFSPs. The local SPOE has held periodic EI Hub chats to Service Coordinators that SCs can attend to get more review and ask questions about using EI Hub. Two EI Hub chats for Service Coordinators have been held so far. In implementing the new intake processes for Service Coordinators, we have learned that it is most convenient for Service Coordinators to enter the demographic data into EI Hub from a location with good internet, so it works well for Service Coordinators to take the information over the phone and type it directly into a computer connected to the internet in the office (or home office). By contrast, when the family assessment and consent signatures are done in the home, the information requested is well suited to personal conversations and interactions versus computer data entry. In general, parents are comfortable sharing their home internet connection with Service Coordinators.

Connie Young, FSSA Indiana First Steps, spoke up to give kudos to our SPOE and Becky in particular for staying positive and pioneering with EI Hub. Becky gives kudos with Whitney and Christal. Becky states Christal has been phenomenal in finding short cuts and work arounds for addressing EI Hub challenges. Missy Myers, Collab for Kids, agrees EI Hub has been challenging, but is hopeful about the new Project Manager for PCG name Shaton. Shaton is super responsive and it seems PCG is really taking feedback from the network agencies. Kim Fledderman gives Missy kudos for all the work Missy has done in sharing helpful feedback with PCG. Molly Cleek seconds. Aaron also says thank you to Missy on behalf of the network agencies.

Kim Fledderman asked if Service Coordinators can see the therapy visit notes that have been entered into the Service Logging Module. Becky answered that only SPOE staff with Administrative permissions have access to this feature, and that PCG is figuring out how to allow viewing access that is just limited to a Service Coordinator's assigned kids. Christy Hales (Service Coordinator) says having access to view the therapy notes would be super helpful. Becky states that the PCG lead (named Shaton) has been made well aware of the desire for the access for Service Coordinators as everyone in the state has been asking.

SPOE data entry staff continues to enter the ICD-10 codes. Cluster J – Send to Becky. Cluster H codes are being sent to Chrystal.

Connie reports that the Learning Management System is being updated (LMS). Missy is happy that the state has granted some of her network agency interns access to the LMS for access to some professional training.

- Old Business
 - Retention and Recruitment Grant – Like many of the network agencies, the local SPOE received a grant from Indiana First Steps to be used for retention and recruitment purposes. The local SPOE has divided the allocation among the personnel of contractors and staff with 100% of the amount received going out to personnel as bonuses and 0% going to other SPOE costs.
- New Business
 - Legislative Update – Kim Fledderman provided an update that a small group of Network Agencies from across the state working on preparing to ask for more money to fund First Steps during the upcoming Indiana State Legislative Budget Session. Based on the First Steps rate study completed a few years ago, many more millions of dollars are needed. Kate from INarf met with the small group and gave some suggestions based on her experience with legislative advocacy. Right now is the time to come up with a plan. In 2019 advocates organized to write to legislative representatives. Now there is a push to get families involved, such as families like Kim's own who used First Steps in the past. INarf has offered to provide a voter voice link. We can give the link to families that includes talking points. Things like sending pictures of kids and kids doing therapy can be very effective in showcasing the importance. Sara Cummins asked if there is anything she can do. She has a child who is a First Steps graduate and is not above bringing her kids to the state house. She knows other families also – including some families with kids who now have jobs and can support themselves. Connie reported that there is now a large First Steps poster hanging in the walking tunnel to and from the state house, so hopefully that will help reinforce awareness among the legislative representatives. In a related note, Connie is wanting to identify some self-advocates (adults with disabilities) to bring their voice to the First Steps Interagency Coordinating Council at the First Steps state level.
 - Quality Review – The First Steps state office has scheduled a Quality Review of the Cluster J records for this coming September 26 and 27. Results from the Quality Review should be available for the November LPCC meeting.

- Conference Committee – as mentioned earlier in the meeting, the Indiana Early Intervention Conference Committee is inviting new members. Please contact the committee if interested.

VII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned 10:31. Next meeting November 18, 2022 at 9:30 as scheduled.

Attendees:

Aaron Brown	Bedford Outpatient Therapy Specialists
Amanda Hardin-Morton	Major Hospital
Amy Marine	CASY – Child Care Resource and Referral
Anne Dolan	First Steps South East
Becky Haymond	First Steps South East
Brighttany Pollitt	First Steps South East
Brittney Dick	First Steps South East
Christy Hales	First Steps South East
Collette Bronkella	Madison Consolidated Schools
Connie Young	FSSA- First Steps Indiana
Elaine Studdard	Pediplay
Janell Foley	First Steps South East
Jill Turner	King’s Daughters’ Hospital
Kari Sheward	Tangram
Kim Amberger-Fledderman	Developmental Services, Inc.
Missy Myers	Collaborating for Kids
Molly Cleek	Kids Only
Sara Cummins	FUSE, Inc.
Sarah Bishop	First Steps South East
Tillie Allgood	South Central Community Action Program (SCCAP) Head Start