

First Steps South East First Steps South East

LPCC Quarterly Meeting – Cluster H

Wednesday, May 3, 2023

Call to Order

Meeting called to order by Debbie Collins at 9:04am.

Introductions and Inspirational Story

Amy Kupferer, Service Coordinator, shared a story about a child on her caseload. The child uses a trach tube and has been making wonderful progress. Due to working with OT on vestibular processing, he is now able to tolerate riding in the car without motion sickness. This has opened up a whole world for him since mom can take him to places in the car for more variety in enriching life activities.

Consent Agenda

Motion to approve minutes and consent agenda was given by Scott Merkel and Julianne Jarrell seconded the motion. Minutes and Consent Agenda were approved.

Financial Report

Becky Haymond reviewed the distributed SPOE budget report. The budget target numbers now include the increased SPOE allocation granted by the State that occurred January 1, 2023. The budget report is for the current grant year from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. The SPOE has used the increased allocation to support cost of living increases for existing staff and add Service Coordinators in areas with high caseloads. Before the end of fiscal year on June 30, 2023, the SPOE plans to spend money on materials and equipment.

Other Business

- **Cluster Oversight and System Updates**

- **Provider Networks Update –**

- Julianne Jarrell of Hopewell Center reported that they have welcomed 1 new DT and 1 ST since reporting last quarter. There are two potential candidates – 1 OT and 1 DT.
- Patti Kovacs of NCA Therapy said her agency has welcomed 1 new COTA, interviewing a PT, and arranged ST for the summer. Needing OT in Wayne County and DT in Madison County.

Scott Merkel, Anderson Community Schools, asked for the information about new pay scale rates for First Steps providers to be shared again. Scott would like to share the information with school personnel in his district in case they may be interested in registering as a First Steps provider and helping to serve a few kids. (A link was shared to the state First Steps personnel guide in the meeting chat in response.) Becky Haymond was appreciative of Scott's efforts, saying that First Steps needs more providers in order to meet the needs of families, and so the system welcomes providers who are only available to see a few kids.

- **Training Opportunities –** Training opportunities shared by the group:

- Indiana's Early Intervention Conference 2023 –The conference will be held June 8-9 in Bloomington, IN. The in-person registration is full, however, there is still a virtual live-stream attendance option for a smaller fee of just \$25. The virtual option is for Friday only and includes the keynote speakers and 3 sessions happening in the main room.
<https://earlyintervention.iu.edu/registration/index.html>

Connie Young, FSSA First Steps Outreach Manager, shared that the First Steps state office has hired Amy Torres as First Steps Training Manager. One of many skills that Amy brings is that she is Bi-lingual.

- **Statistical Reports –**

- Statistical report handouts were reviewed which include Referrals, Evaluations, and Initial IFSPs for 2023. Also available is the county breakdown of referrals in 2022. Since the referral numbers indicate a complete rebound back up to pre-pandemic levels, Anne Dolan asked the group if they still felt it useful to include the numbers as far back as 2019. Scott Merkel replied that the schools are continuing to consider numbers pre-pandemic, and he would like to continue to see the history. There was general agreement that we should keep the pre-pandemic numbers in the quarterly statistical reports where available. The evaluation numbers were way up in March.

Becky Haymond noted that unlike some other SPOE office in the state, our SPOE evaluation team and schedulers were able to complete timely evaluations for all children, despite the higher demand. Timely evaluations are a requirement and are defined in federal regulations as within 45 days from the referral date. Fitting in all of the evaluations is made possible in part because our SPOE is completing most evaluations through a virtual video call, and supporting families in accessing the technology as needed. The logistical advantages of virtual evaluations include quickly filling-in openings caused by a last-minute cancellation, and eliminating evaluation team travel time.

The state continues to work on developing reports using the EI Hub system.

If anyone in our LPCC group has a request to see other data, please ask and we can see if it is available.

- **Staffing Update –**

- Becky Haymond from the SPOE reported that the SPOE is hiring for two Service Coordinator positions in Madison County. One position is to replace a Service Coordinator who resigned, and the other is a growth position. There has been one interview so far. Existing staff are helping to cover the workload in Madison County as well as helping to cover for a Service Coordinator on maternity leave. So, our provider agencies, schools, and Head Start partners may see some unfamiliar Service Coordinator names and faces over the next few months.

- **EI Hub –**

As reported by Becky Haymond - Marie Smith, FSSA First Steps Data Manager, is excited to help make improvements to EI Hub. The state, with PCG, is working on a new release for EI Hub. We are anticipating changes, hoping for improvements, and expecting some added functions.

Julianne Jerrell, Hopewell Center, has expressed desire for families and Service Coordinators to be able to access the service notes entered by providers. She is hoping that the provider search function will work properly, and hoping that she will be able to view future authorizations.

Scott Merkel, Anderson Community Schools, has a wish for LEAs to be able to access the 5 month, 10 month, and Exit progress reports. He is aware that his LEA colleagues in Cluster G have this capability. Becky Haymond explained that the SPOE in Cluster G has uses a separate file sharing system outside of EI Hub that makes that possible.

- **Old Business**

- **LPCC Officer Elections: Nominating Committee –** Anne Dolan gave an update that the nominating committee activities since the last meeting. According to our local LPCC by-laws, the officers will serve July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2025. Four identified candidates for Chairperson were contacted by the

committee, however, all declined. In all cases, the candidates declined due to personal concerns about the demands of other professional duties. The candidates for Vice-Chairperson and Secretary have agreed to be nominated. The slate of officers is:

Chairperson – Vacant

Vice-Chairperson – Sarah Haisley, Ivy Tech

Secretary – Holly Leisure, TRC Head Start

Until a chairperson is elected, the duties of chairing the meeting will be done by the Vice-Chair, or in the case of absence of the Vice-Chair, the Secretary.

Debbie Collins, current LPCC Chairperson, opened up the proposed nominations for discussion. After no one volunteered any comments on the nominations, Julianne Jerrell motioned to accept the slate of officers. Everett Hicks seconded. Majority votes in favor (Scott, Everett, Julianne, Patti, Sarah, Debbie). The rest of the attendees abstained or were not voting eligible.

Anne Dolan thanked Debbie for her past service as Chairperson, and thank the incoming officers for their willingness to serve.

- **State Budget Bill** – The state legislature has passed a budget that includes a 7.3 million dollar increase for the state First Steps program.

- **New Business**

- **SPOE Grant Award starting July 1, 2023** – Becky Haymond share that the grant to provide SPOE services for Cluster H starting July 1, 2023 has once again been awarded to Aging and Community Services dba Thrive Alliance. Thrive Alliance was also again awarded the grant for Cluster J. The contract will be for two years. Becky thanked those LPCC members who provided reference letters of support.
- **New Address: 1201 E. 5th Street Suite 201, Anderson, IN 46012** – The Anderson SPOE office for Cluster H has moved to a new location. Since the early intervention records are kept digitally instead of in paper files, less office space was needed for storing records. Renting less space will save money. The new location is at the Anderson University Campus. There is more security which is good for the limited office staff, and the location is lively. The phone number to the office remains the same. The remaining paper files are now stored in the Columbus office.
- **LifeCourse Training Cohort** – The Indiana Division of Disability and Rehabilitation Services (DDRS) has adopted a framework for person-centered planning name Charting the LifeCourse which was developed in Missouri. DDRS wants to bring the LifeCourse tools and methods into all of the programs in its division of FSSA, which includes First Steps. Components of LifeCourse may be useful for First Steps staff regarding how to speak to families, how to plan with families, and how to plan transition to preschool. Five staff from our SPOE will be going through the six-week LifeCourse training to become LifeCourse Ambassadors – 3 Administrators, 1 Service Coordinator from Cluster H, and 1 Service Coordinator from Cluster J.

Announcements and Updates

- **Medically Complex Warrior Publication (Aged and Disabled Waiver for Families)** – Anne Dolan shared a handout that was presented to Service Coordinators recently. The handout makes it clear why children and families may benefit from this resource that starts with the seemingly unfitting word “Aged”. Family caregivers can be paid for the extra supports they give to their kids with medical complexity.
- **Early Years Initiative Grants** – Anne Dolan shared a link and brief description of a grant opportunity. <https://earlylearningin.org/early-years-initiative/>. Since the grant purpose is to enhance any program serving children ages 0-3, Anne is thinking many LPCC members may be interested. If any grants are awarded from this program to services in Cluster H, Anne would like to know in order to develop a

referral relationship if one does not already exist. There are also a wide range of Indiana county and state statistical reports about early childhood on the site's Data Dashboard.

- **Next LPCC Meeting** – August 2, 2023 at 9 am, will be virtual.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned.

Attendance:

Austin	Whitney	First Steps South East, SPOE Supervisor
Collins	Debbie	LPCC Chairperson; Infancy Onward Consultant
Dolan	Anne	First Steps South East, LPCC Coordinator
Duffy	Robyn	Head Start, Carey Services
Foley	Janell	First Steps South East, Service Coordinator Lead
Haymond	Becky	First Steps South East, Program Director
Henson	Carrie	First Steps South East, Service Coordinator
Hicks	Everett	Ivy Tech
Jarrell	Julianne	Hopewell Center
Kovacs	Patti	NCA Therapy
Kupferer	Amy	First Steps South East, Service Coordinator
Leisure	Holly	TRC Headstart
Merkel	Scott	Anderson Community Schools
Price	Sarah	Muncie Schools
Rogers	Ali	First Steps South East, Service Coordinator
Schwering	Sharon	First Steps South East, Service Coordinator
Tirado	Rose	First Steps South East, Service Coordinator
Young	Connie	First Steps Indiana Outreach Manager, FSSA