

Maryland Department of Human Resources
Advisory Council for Alternative Response

Meeting, July 9, 2013
Minutes

Please note that the July 9, 2013 meeting was held via teleconference.

Council Member Attendees: Pamela Brown, Paul DiLorenzo, Wendy Lane, Joan Little, John McGinnis, Dick Paulman, Melissa Rock, Dr. Albert Zachik, George Randall (for James Trent), Claudia Remington, Vanita Taylor, David Thompson

SSA Representatives: David Ayer, Steve Berry, Shanda Crowder, Debbie Ramelmeier, Carnitra White, Audrey McLendon

Other attendees: Sandra Barnes, Christa Linton, Megan Lucy, Leslie Rozeff, Brian Schleiter, Maria Tillman, Carol Spigner

Welcome and Introductions

In Secretary Ted Dallas' absence, Carnitra White welcomed everyone to the meeting. Carol Spigner reviewed the agenda for the meeting.

Minutes

The June 11, 2013 minutes were approved with revisions to include the recommended changes to the brochures.

Updates

Carnitra White reported that Alternative Response (AR) was implemented July 1, 2013 in the Western Region (Allegany, Garrett, Frederick, Montgomery and Washington Counties). Twenty-two (22) cases out of the 66 cases (32%) investigated were assigned to the Alternative Response track. No issues with MD CHESIIE were reported. The feedback from the jurisdictions was favorable. Frederick County DSS reported that the first family assigned to the Alternative Response track was receptive to AR. Staff also reported a smooth process.

Dick Paulman, Allegany County reported good feedback from staff; they liked the process and the MD CHESIIE process was smooth.

At the August Council meeting, data for the month of July will be available. SSA will continue to monitor the structure and process used to screen in cases to ensure that cases are not screened in unnecessarily.

Workgroup Updates

Practice / Community Partners Workgroup

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Steve Berry, co-chair reported that Phase I completed screening supervisor training on June 26th in Hagerstown. Twenty-two case scenarios were pulled from MD CHESSIE and reviewed for an AR or Investigative (IR) track.

Phase II Central Region completed “train the trainer” with local staff and community members June 27th. The Co-chair meeting was held June 27th. The next Co-chair meeting is scheduled for July 25th; the implementation templates should be completed.

Phase III’s kickoff is scheduled for July 15th at Prince George’s Community College. The scenarios have been revised slightly for the forum based on feedback from the Phase II Forum. The Implementation templates were shared and reviewed with the Directors in preparation for the AR Kickoff.

Phases I and II will hold Co-chair meetings later in July.

The issue was raised that some jurisdictions expect the local law enforcement to attend Family Involvement Meetings and Alternative Response meetings. Based on information shared in the meetings, the law enforcement may decide to bring charges against maltreators. Steve Berry will clarify with jurisdictions that law enforcement should not attend the meetings.

Evaluation Workgroup

Co-chair David Ayer reported that the group reviewed and provided feedback on the community surveys. A list of MD CHESSIE users’ emails were compiled for future use for surveys. The evaluation proposal is under review by the SSA Research Review Board and by Casey Family Programs.

Policy Workgroup

Co-Chair Dick Paulman reported that the MD CHESSIE AR screens are working smoothly. As AR is implemented in the coming year, policy will be reviewed for any necessary revisions.

Communications

Brian Schleter reported that the brochures were distributed to Phase I jurisdictions. The Spanish brochures are being ordered. Carnitra White recorded a blog regarding AR that is posted on the DHR website.

A press release was issued in the Washington Post July 1st. The link to the article will be distributed to the council. Long term plans for communication will be to highlight success stories, emphasize that AR is a change in process and how important it is to Maryland families.

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Pam Brown suggested that English brochures are also given to families with the Spanish brochures to ensure that families have the option of either language.

Steve Berry gave kudos to the Child Welfare Academy for the training conducted.

Wrap up / Next Steps

- SSA will mine data to review and track the cases that are on the Alternative Response Track
- Carnitra White will continue to check in with local directors to offer assistance with implementation