

March 19, 2010

Program Connections meeting minutes

Attendees: Doreen Lang, Wendy Metcalf, Molly Bandt, Hannah Picchiottino, Barry Chase, Kelly Maier, Steve Errthum, Rose Prochazla, Milda Aksamitauskas, Shirley Kitchen, Sara Bartz, Rebecca Brueggeman, Margaret Rosenthal, Michelle Pauser, Claire Smith, Liz Maloch and Barbara Stiefvater.

Doreen Lang chaired the meeting, Milda Aksamitauskas took minutes.

- 1) No meeting minutes were available for approval.
- 2) Workers compensation was the first item for discussion. The issue for county workers is that policies (whether workers compensation is counted as earned income or unearned income) is different for different programs. It is error prone and a concern to counties. For FoodShare it is unearned income per FNS regulations. For BadgerCare Plus it could be changed to unearned income, however it would be more restrictive than current policy and the state would lose enhanced funding under ARRA. For child care and W-2, gross income is budgeted and there aren't deductions, so it doesn't make a difference whether workers compensation is considered earned or unearned income. Milda suggested (per Vicki Jessup's research) that the underlying issue is budgeting in CARES and it appears to be in a queue to be fixed. The suggestion seemed to be o.k. with everyone.
- 3) Fraud reporting issue. Counties wanted to make sure they are entering fraud related expenses in correct systems and the data is still being used by departments. It was clarified that starting with January 2010 administrative fraud activity expenses for child care providers and recipients have to be entered through "Core line" system. DCF confirmed that the data is used for budget requests.

Barry Chase gave a handout about benefit recovery functions in CARES. He also emphasized that the data is as good as it is provided by counties and tribes. The administrative memo, outlining fraud procedures, is in a process to be released soon.
- 4) FoodShare change report issue. Sara Bartz claimed that FoodShare change report doesn't give correct income limits and therefore some of her staff do not send the report out to members although it is a requirement to mail out the change report. DHS agreed to look into this. Sara also noted that in some instances ACCESS doesn't give correct income limits. According to Sara, calculating overpayments are a huge workload issue, but her county does not pursue fraud because the correct income limits are not provided to customers. Some other examples of inconsistencies were mentioned. DHS and DCF asked to her to send them the specific examples so they will be looked into.
- 5) W-2 is planned to be in the "Am I Eligible?" module by June 2010.
- 6) Requesting signature on CAF for child care vs. signature page on a summary document for FoodShare and Medical Assistance. DCF noted that the attestations are a

bit different for signatures on CAF vs. the summary document. It was noted as an issue for fraud cases. DCF is researching this issue with their program integrity and legal staff.

7) Self-employment income issue. There was a question what to do with child care client who needs additional hours for child care, however it didn't seem that there was a "significant change" in their circumstances per FS/MA guidance. When the situation was explained in more detailed it seemed there was an agreement that the case worker had discretion to recertify projected income. DCF is planning to look into this issue if they can issue more specific guidelines.

8) Other items. Claire reported that verification checklist letter is now going through focus groups. The letter will be shown at the next meeting. It was also requested that the change report notice would be on agenda at the next meeting. Next meeting is in May.