

OPEN MEETING MINUTES

Name of Governmental Body: Governor's Birth to 3 Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC)		Attending: Virginia Brath, Provider (Chair); Jennifer Bibler, Department of Public Instruction (DPI) /Early Childhood Special Education; Jacci Borchardt, Provider; DeAnaa Witt, Department of Children and Families (DCF); Kristine Nadolski, DPI/McKinney-Vento; Rosemarie Navarro-Red Hail, Parent; Deb Rathernel, DHS/Division of Medicaid Services; Trisha Wicinsky, County Representative; Rebecca Jarzynski, Personal Preparation; Kelly Pethke, County Representative Council Members Excused: Linda Hall, DHS/Office of Children's Mental Health Jenna Jacobson, State Representative/Legislator Theresa Wixom, Parent State Attendess: Tessa Freedberg (BCS), Elias Garringer (BCS), Laura Triller (BCS), Lana Edwards (RESource), Becky Hoffman (RESource), Michelle Davies (RESource), Dan Kramarz (BCS), Lori Wittemann (BCS), Regena Floyd-Sambou (BCS), Public Attendees: Saah Hardin (Service Coordinator, Dane County)
Date: 1/24/2024	Time Started: 9:00AM Time Ended: 12:00PM	
Location: Virtual Zoom Meeting		Presiding Officer: Ginger Brath

Minutes

Welcome

- Call to Order, Greetings, and Introductions
- Council Members Updates and Announcements
 - No announcements

Public Comments:

- Sarah Hardin, Service Coordinator in Dane County, joining the meeting as public attendee.
- No public comments.

General Business

- Approve Meeting Minutes from October 18, 2023:
 - Trisha Wicinsky to approve.
 - Jacci Borchardt seconded. Motion passed.

Annual Performance Report (APR)

- Tessa Freedberg provided an overview of the Annual Performance Report due to Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) on February 1, 2024. This APR reports findings from the period July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023 (FFY 2022).
- Briefly reviewed the 11 Indicators, comprised of 5 compliance and 6 performance indicators.

- Wisconsin was in “Meets Requirements” for FFY2021 and anticipates a determination of “Meets Requirements” for FFY2022.
- Wisconsin did not experience any slippage in indicator data for FFY2022.
- Wisconsin increased percentage from previous year for Indicator 5 and 6 (Child Find)
 - Indicator 5: Child Find (Birth to 1) remains slightly below FFY2022 target.
 - BCS recognizes the opportunity to continually improve upon referrals and enrollment for Indicator 5 for children birth to 1.
- Several factors are believed to be contributing to the increase in Indicator 3: Child Outcomes:
 - Ongoing technical assistance on behalf of the BCS team
 - Enhanced and targeted effort in the Professional Development system, “EI in WI”
 - ARPA-funded “Child and Family Pandemic Recovery Grants”
 - Continuing Program Review Protocol implemented via MetaStar
 - Adjusted scoring to metric for local determinations to increase weight on child outcomes
- Continued efforts towards improving Indicator 3: Child Outcomes include:
 - Continue professional development focus via our professional development platform “EI in WI”
 - Analyze highlights from the ARPA-funded “Child and Family Pandemic Recovery Grants”
 - Conduct second year of Annual Determinations Technical Assistance Forums with sessions dedicated to child outcome practices
 - Collect and analyze results from the ARPA-funded Infant, Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Pilot with University of Wisconsin
- Initiatives in FFY2022 to increase survey response rate in Indicator 4: Family Outcomes data:
 - Information of the survey included in the quarterly “All in For Kids” newsletter
 - Providing electronic version of the surveys to families with ability to self-select language preference
- BCS recognizes the need to improve upon representativeness in the Family Experience Survey response rate. Initiatives taken to improving upon representativeness include:
 - Developing “learning tracks” for the early intervention workforce on “EI in WI” with emphasis on family engagement and culturally responsive practices
 - Publishing “Child Find Outreach Resources” to improve local outreach efforts to underrepresented populations
 - Provide individualized technical assistance from designated state staff to develop strategies for improving response rate

Council Discussion on APR

- BCS answered a clarifying question on what constitutes as “Timely Services” for Indicator 1 posed by a council member. BCS confirmed that “Timely Services” is defined as services provided within 30 days of the child’s enrollment into the Birth to 3 Program.
- Target Setting:
 - A question was asked on how the targets are set and how they change each year. Context was provided on how Wisconsin resets their targets every five years to be approved by OSEP. Two cycles ago, Wisconsin reset targets high. With the help of the ICC and local programs, Wisconsin reevaluated targets to accurately reflect positive growth in local programs and attainable thresholds that still increased year over year. A caveat was made that every state saw decreases in data performance as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Wisconsin is now reporting numbers similar to pre-pandemic levels.
- Family Outcomes Data and Performance:
 - Wisconsin recognizes that the actual response rate is reasonable in the survey realm, but the representativeness within the survey response rate is not aligned with program enrollment data. There is a higher response rate from white families than any other populations.
 - BCS requested input and recommendations from the ICC in family outcomes, specific towards improving upon representativeness within survey response rate as indicated in the APR briefing. BCS enlisted the ICC’s expertise in brainstorming strategies to receive more balanced responses from Birth to 3 Program families.
 - Council members provided the following as opportunities to increase survey response rate:

- A council member expressed success in utilizing parent advocates that are diverse themselves to promote messages within the community.
- A council member suggested that the survey be included in the last home visit summary in some way, whether a link or QR code for families to be informed while still enrolled in the Birth to 3 Program.
- A council member suggested texting families with the survey link.
- A council member inquired about the languages the survey is translated to and opportunity for more languages to be readily available. Staff informed member that the survey is currently available in English and Spanish, yet there is opportunity to explore translation services to provide the survey outside of the two existing languages.
- A council member suggested working with community partner agencies and organizations to find the best methodology for their specific populations and demographics.

Approval of APR

- Motion to approve and submit FFY2022 APR on behalf of ICC:
 - Rosemarie Navarro Red Hail to approve.
 - Kelly Pethke seconded. Motion passed.

Part C Grant Application

- Tessa Freedberg shared an overview of the Part C Grant budget categories and solicited council input on opportunities for adjustments in anticipation of planned posting in March 2024.
- Grant application will be posted for public comment 60 days prior to the State's submission date to OSEP
- Fiscal Year 2024 Part C funds become available July 1, 2024.
- Federal guidelines require us to include our proposed allotment and to assure it does not supplant other funds. Each state allots their funding differently.
- Grant funds have remained relatively the same over the years
 - In FFY2023, Wisconsin received \$8,515,069
 - In FFY2024, Wisconsin anticipates the same amount

Council Discussion on Part C Grant Application

- BCS informed the Council that it plans to allocate the same amounts from FFY2023 to FFY2024 in each category. In FFY2023, BCS allocated a total of \$1,589,179 to Category B of the Part C Grant Application. BCS requested input and recommendations on Category B: "Maintenance and Implementation of Activities for Lead Agency and ICC" from the Council.
- Council members provided the following recommendations for Category B expenditures:
 - Council members encouraged the continued funding for trainings across the state to promote consistency and helps with programmatic equity regardless of where a child resides. There was support to continue focus on successful implementation of evidence-based tools and ensuring providers are utilizing tools in the same way for ongoing assessments and outcome scoring.
 - State staff inquired about other events or scholarships across the state to further support the early intervention workforce.
 - A council member suggested Illinois State University's Master program in Developmental Therapy that focuses primarily on sensory needs (hearing and vision issues). The council member shared the current issue of lack of qualified providers to support this population of children and offering financial incentives to the workforce to receive the degree could boost the number of qualified providers in the state. Council member will follow up with State staff on the program's remote capabilities for potential funding opportunity.

Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program Data

- Quarter 4: Program Enrollment, Transition, and Services
 - Elias Garringer, the Birth to 3 Program Data Manager, provided a summary of Quarter 4 (October – December 2023) data.

- **Referral: Preliminary Data for Q4** shows that referrals for 2023 have remained consistent throughout the year. The decrease in October, November, and December data is due to the data log in the reporting system. The trends are most likely to increase once the data is up to date. The demographic breakdown shows that majority of Birth to 3 Program referrals are males and white. The primary referral source is physicians at 49% and then a parent or relative at 25%.
- **Enrollment: Preliminary Data for Q4** shows a similar demographic breakdown as the referral summary.
- **New Enrollment: Preliminary Data for Q4** shows that new enrollment stays similar to the disenrollment rates. The most common area of delay upon enrollment is communication and the most common diagnosed conditions upon enrollment are significant prematurity and down syndrome.
- **Early Intervention Services** The Birth to 3 Program Data Manager shared a chart that reflects the services that have been documented on a child's IFSP during Q4. The two main services documented and received on a child's IFSP were service coordination (100%) and communication (77%).
- **Disenrollment: Preliminary Data for Q4** is pulled at a specific point in time and once the data matures the numbers are likely to increase. Disenrollment reasons for children *under* 3 was successful completion of IFSP or family chose to discontinue services Disenrollment reasons for children *over* 3 are referred to LEA and LEA found eligible for special education

Council Discussion on Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program Data

- A council member pointed out that Asian and Native American populations are not matching the state demographics. Although they represent smaller populations in Wisconsin, this presents an opportunity for improved outreach.
- Similarly, Head Start appeared lower on the list of primary referral sources and provides an opportunity to build partnership with Head Start programs to ensure early identification for children eligible for Birth to 3 Program services and help increase our Indicator 5 data performance.
- An inquiry was had around the reasoning why communication was a broad bucket of services whereas other therapies, such as physical and occupational, were individually listed out. This begs the question of what is being included in this category outside of speech therapy and why speech therapy isn't its own category.
- Discussion was had around disenrollment data and the second most common reason for disenrollment for children under 3 is families choosing to discontinue services. Council members would like to know why 32% of families are choosing to discontinue services before the child turns 3. BCS will explore opportunities to analyze this data further to provide additional context. The Program Participation System (PPS) has limited capabilities of providing additional information to the reasoning behind discontinuing services. BCS will look to see if there are meaningful ways to collect this information.
- Discussion was had around services listed for actively enrolled participants, specifically for service coordination. A council member, who is also a provider, shared insight into entering data into PPS and with the teaming model, every child technically receives every discipline. Another provider clarified that there are two ways to view this information. Data captured in PPS is reflecting active visits versus teaming. However, there is variability in interpretation and implementation of entering data. There are no specific trainings for entering services provided. An opportunity exists to clarify these data fields in the PPS across the Wisconsin's local programs.

Professional Development Resource Update:

- Becky Hoffman provided an overview of the ARPA-funded Research to Practice Project's "Approved Tool List", which includes developmental screening tools, eligibility evaluation tools, ongoing child assessment tools, and family assessment tools. In 2024, Resource plans to focus on ongoing child assessment with family assessment research with their higher education partners.
- Lana Edwards shared more information on Resource's in-person events and opportunities for collaboration. Resource received positive feedback from participants of their in-person events. In October 2023, Resource hosted evaluation exploration events, where 64 counties attended.
- Lana Edwards shared about the creation of the interactive transition timeline soon to be released in close partnership with Department of Public Instruction. The timeline outlines the process of transition with specific roles and responsibilities of Part C and Part B providers throughout each stage.
- Resource announced the launch of their Ambassador Program at the ICC meeting.

Council Discussion on Professional Development

- A council member inquired about how RESource plans to evaluate the success of their online learning bundles. RESource confirmed that in the new learning tracks will be knowledge checks. Those knowledge checks will be sent to the program's leadership as a way to measure staff's knowledge and retention of the material.

BCS Updates:

- New Prior Authorization Process for Therapy Providers in the Birth to 3 Program Providing Cotreatment
 - Laura Triller explained the new policy for cotreatment services to provide Birth to 3 Program therapy providers to administer cotreatment services to Birth to 3 Program participants. "Cotreatment" is defined as simultaneous treatment by two providers of different therapy disciplines during the same time period. Cotreatment may be authorized when the treatment approach is medically necessary to optimize the member's benefit from therapy. The new policy is outlined here: <https://www.forwardhealth.wi.gov/kw/pdf/2024-01.pdf>.
 - Previously, providers were required to submit both a prior authorization for Birth to 3 Program services and a prior authorization TA form for cotreatment to receive prior authorization for all Birth to 3 Program services. The new policy eliminates the requirement of submitting prior authorization TA form to receive prior authorization for all Birth to 3 Program services.
 - The new policy gives Birth to 3 Program IFSP teams the authority to determine cotreatment needs by eliminating the need for a separate prior authorization, the need for an external entity to approve cotreatment, and the need to wait for approval of cotreatment by external entity.
 - Council member requested that education be provided to county programs for continued consistency of practices and guided direction.
- Updated Katie Beckett Renewal Flyer:
 - BCS shared the new Katie Beckett Renewal Flyer for distribution. BCS is highly invested in informing families of the Medicaid coverage renewal process to ensure families do not lose coverage due to confusion or lack of awareness. The flyer is publicly posted on the DHS website: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p035553.pdf>

Wrap Up & Overview of Future Agenda Topics:

- May 17, 2024, Circles of Life Conference, Stevens Point, WI, 9 AM – 12 PM
- September 11, 2024, Virtual
- November 6, 2024, Virtual

Rosemarie Navarro Red Hail motioned to adjourn

Seconded by-Kristine Nadolski seconded

Adjourned 11:10 AM

Prepared by: Tessa Freedberg on 1/24/2024.

These minutes are in draft form. They will be presented for approval by the governmental body on: 5/17/2024