

Pennsylvania Office of Children, Youth, and Families

Building Systems of Care for Children and Families:

A Developmental Project for County-based Systems of Care for Children with Behavioral Health Needs, Involved with Child Welfare or Juvenile Justice, and their Families

September 5, 2003

Project Overview:

Secretary Estelle Richman of the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) has convened and organized a Children's Cabinet, Children's Commission, and Children's Behavioral Health Task Force to develop a statewide plan that moves aggressively toward implementing sustainable county-based Systems of Care for children, families, and adults served by DPW and other State Departments. This major reform initiative will build on existing policies, programs, and practices, focusing initially on children with severe emotional and behavioral needs and multi-system involvement. The Office of Children, Youth, and Families (OCYF) is supporting this reform agenda through a number of initiatives, including this demonstration project to develop systems of care in select counties for children with behavioral health needs and child welfare and juvenile justice involvement, and their families. Consistent with DPW strategic objectives, these locally organized systems of managed services and resources will operationalize a system of care practice model designed to DPW standards and tailored to the local needs and goals of children, youth, and families served by OCYF and Juvenile Justice. They will address the full range of risk and need for these populations, including prevention, early intervention, and intensive case management of those in, or at imminent risk for, out of home and community placement.

Consistent with long-standing Pennsylvania values and traditions, these systems of care will:

- Directly support the dignity and integrity of families, cultures, and communities.
- Sustain the connection between children, families, and communities
- Keep children safe and healthy.
- Organize and deliver services and resources across all child-serving systems that enable healthy social, emotional, and physical development across life domains.
- Fulfill the mandates and responsibilities of OCYF and the Department of Public Welfare.

Project Goals:

To establish systems of care that advance with the DPW reform agenda, this project will:

1. Confirm a practice model

The project will develop and organize the fundamental parameters of a practice model consistent with System of Care principles and practices and DPW goals and objectives for system reform, including operational capacity to effectively fulfill OCYF mandates and responsibilities for child safety, permanency of living, well being, and Juvenile Justice mandates and responsibilities for community safety.

Core elements of this practice model are:

- **Accountability to core principles** of strength-based, family-focused, child-centered, culturally competent practices for all those participating in the delivery of care.
- **Organized arrays of community-based professional services and community resources**, across child-serving systems, providers, and professional disciplines, that address the specific needs, strengths, goals, and desired outcomes of targeted populations of children and families, in the communities and neighborhoods in which they live.
- **A disciplined, value-based process for designing, organizing, and managing individual plans of care that** engage children, youth, and families and organize services and resources to support strategies for addressing individualized youth, family, and community goals. All Plans of Care will be grounded in a thorough assessment of strengths, risks, and needs that results in defined goals and strategies to which all system participants are accountable.
- **System management** through ongoing data-based monitoring of critical performance and outcomes indicators that ensures direct accountability to the needs, goals, and desired outcomes of children and families, at the systems level, community level, and direct service delivery levels. Data-driven Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) processes will monitor critical aspects of service delivery and outcomes, delivering reports to all constituents and stakeholders that support management, planning, and decision-making at all levels.
- **Direct and meaningful family and community involvement** in planning, management, and evaluation at the system level, community level, and individual child and family level.
- **Flexible funding that supports individual plans of care**, across government systems and private providers, with extensive support for involvement of naturally occurring community supports and resources.

- **Ongoing involvement with other DPW programs and initiatives serving children and families** to assure strategic coordination with the DPW reform agenda.

2. Develop operational prototypes, based on core elements of the practice model, in select demonstration counties.

The project will select and quality up to ten demonstration counties that indicate appropriate levels of interest, commitment, and capacity to develop demonstration systems of care for the target population. These counties will participant in a collective learning and development process to organize existing county structures and resources to operationalize the system of care practice model.

3. Review DPW policies and recommend needed reform

DPW is committed to developing statewide practice standards that may be flexibly implemented at the county level to accommodate local needs, strengths, and concerns. This project, as a leading-edge participant in this broader DPW system reform initiative, will identify needs for change and/or adjustment of state policies to support the operational practice model and remove existing bureaucratic barriers to it. The Project will recommend actions to DPW and the Children's Cabinet.

4. Establish direct, ongoing linkages and liaisons with ongoing DPW system reform initiatives

Parallel, and potentially overlapping, projects for system of care development are underway in OMHSAS, Juvenile Justice, and other systems. This project will work with all related initiatives across government departments to assure effective coordination of strategies and activities toward common goals. It will assure coordinated planning and implementation and avoid the pitfalls of competitive, parallel projects.

5. Organize and deliver training, technical assistance, teaching tools and learning experiences.

Systems of care are community partnerships among government, families, service providers, and the community. The project will promote ongoing learning for skills and knowledge needed in these partnerships to operationalize systems of care. This includes specific strategies for training and technical assistance for OCYF, Juvenile Justice, OMHSAS, other child-serving systems, families, providers, and community leaders in local jurisdictions throughout the State. All learning experiences will focus on specific skills and knowledge needed to address system development, specially tailored to the unique needs, strengths, and concerns of community partners.

Project Management Structure

This project is designed, organized, and managed as component of the OCYF Program Improvement Plan (PIP), with full participation and shared responsibility at all levels by OMHSAS and the Children's Bureau. The PIP is designed to improve child welfare practices, based on Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) findings, and will specifically address tasks related to developing a child welfare system of care practice model at the system level, local community level, and direct practice level. As such, it is an integral component of the broader DPW reform agenda.

Project management structure will include:

➤ **A primary work group from OCYF, OMHSAS, Children's Bureau, and family representatives**

This core work group will organize and coordinate the process, and produce work products necessary for each task. Working closely with all stakeholders and constituents, it will be responsible for:

- Developing a comprehensive work plan
- Developing core elements of the practice model.
- Developing guidelines and templates for organizing and implementing the practice model at the county/ community level.
- Identifying, organizing, coordinating, and delivering training and technical assistance as needed and appropriate.
- Identifying and coordinating linkages with other DPW initiatives for system reform.

➤ **A Cross County Implementation Team from the Demonstration Counties.**

Organized teams of key stakeholder representatives from demonstration counties will be directly involved in all work products, for overall policy and planning and direct application to implantation at the individual county level. Representatives on each County Team should include:

- Child Welfare
- Mental Health
- Juvenile Justice
- Managed Behavioral Health
- Families
- Community Leadership

Representatives from individual county implementation teams will participate in a Cross-county Implementation Planning and Review Team. This group will meet regularly for planning and review of the implementation process, and all work products from the primary work group.

- **A System of Care Advisory group** of critical stakeholders and constituents for review and comment on the process and work products. Its primary responsibilities are:
 - Represent key stakeholders and their strengths, challengers, and interests in establishing locally organized systems of care.
 - Review and comment on planning and implementation goals, strategies, and process.
 - Provide technical assistance to the project for specific tasks.

Membership will include representatives from:

- Child serving systems.
 - Communities
 - Families and consumers
 - Providers.
 - Managed Behavior Health
- **The OCYF PIP work group** to review state and community challenges and resources for organizing and implementing child welfare systems of care practice model. It will identify, organize, and coordinate existing resources for reform. It will also identify and remove bureaucratic barriers to organizing and implementing systems of care. OCYF work group will continue to build on CFSR findings to develop policy recommendations to support Child welfare Systems of care and other PIP objectives. The OCYF PIP group will also identify parallel initiatives and establish a structure and culture for coordination and collaboration among initiatives for common goals.
 - **Department of Public Welfare System Reform Work Group** to organize and coordinate this, and other, projects in the context of a broader reform initiative for reorganizing and managing services, resources, and practices for children and families. This group will work closely with the Children’s Cabinet and a Children’s Commission representing the full range of stakeholders and constituents to develop a comprehensive reform agenda for the organization and delivery of services for children and families under the Department of Public Welfare.

Year I Tasks and Objectives:

Overall objectives for the first year of this project are:

- 1. Operational systems of care for children with mental health needs and involvement with child welfare and juvenile justice in 6-10 counties based on local organization of critical System of Care elements.**
- 2. Identification and removal of critical bureaucratic barriers identified as obstacles to operational child welfare systems of care.**

3. Coordination with other state and local initiatives for expansion of operational systems of care to additional populations and child serving systems Consistent with DPW Reform Objectives.

Tasks:

Year One (September 1, 2003- August 31, 2003) will involve two phases:

- I. Planning and organizing child welfare systems of care in select demonstration counties.**
- II. Implementing child welfare systems of care in targeted counties.**

Phase I: Planning and organizing tasks: September 1, 2003-February 1, 2004

- 1. Develop core practice model** elements at system, community, and direct practice levels.

Working closely with all constituents and stakeholders, the project will produce:

- A practice model that integrates system of care structure and functions with child welfare and juvenile justice practices. The practice model will be grounded in, and accountable to, core system of care principles, as an organized system at the county level that builds on extensive work done by OCYF and Juvenile Justice to develop common practices.
 - A comprehensive work plan for implementation of demonstration counties, with critical tasks and responsibilities for all activities related to goals described above.
- 2. Design and organize a self-assessment and implementation planning process for participating demonstration counties** for capacity needed to operationalize the system of care practice model.

Demonstration counties will organize individually and collectively to assess existing capacity and needs for organizing and implementing critical system of care elements. The Project Management Team will provide assistance through technical tools and facilitated processes for capacity assessment and system of care planning and organization. A County self-assessment process will be facilitated by:

- A comprehensive tool that guides and organizes self assessment for System of Care Capacity in demonstration counties, on dimensions of:
 - Service/ resources array
 - Disciplined process for developing individual Plans of Care
 - System management
 - Funding

- Family/ community involvement
 - Fidelity to core principles.
- A plan for facilitating individual and collective county self-assessment processes for organizing necessary information, activities and resources.

Following self-assessment, each demonstration county will develop an implementation plan for establishing system of care capacity for the target population of children and families. The process will involve both individual county planning and collective activities drawing on group learning and support. Each implementation plan will include:

- Goals
- Critical tasks and activities
- Work products
- Milestones
- TTA requirements.
- Bureaucratic policy changes

The Project Management Team will facilitate and support this process through:

- Outline for individual county work plans that provides template for organizing critical tasks and activities needed to build on self-assessment findings and develop core system of care capacity.
- A facilitated process for collective and individual county-based implementation planning and organization.

3. Support county-based system of care implementation through organized, training and technical assistance for demonstration counties.

Training and technical assistance will be available to support planning and implementation. A pool of state and national resources will be identified for use in this process.

Working closely with all stakeholders and constituents, the project management team will develop:

- A pool of identified training and technical assistance resources available to support implementation tasks.
- A training and technical assistance model that identifies appropriate training and technical assistance needs for implementation tasks and needed skills.
- A budget for training and technical assistance.
- A schedule and agenda for training, technical assistance and organized learning experiences consistent with goals and tasks of the self-assessment, work plan process.