



Meeting Summary November 18, 2016

An official public *meeting* of the New Jersey State Interagency Coordinating Council was held on Friday, November 18, 2016, at Sunny Days Early Childhood Development Services in Manalapan, New Jersey. The meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m. by Catherine Colucci, Acting Chair and declared a quorum was present.

ATTENDANCE – Maintained by the SICC

WELCOME – Catherine Colucci, Acting Chair

Ms. Colucci welcomed attendees. At her request, SICC members and public members introduced themselves and identified their connection with early intervention.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Joyce Salzberg recently presented at ASHA
- Danielle Anderson Thomas shared highlights of the Oct 21 statewide conference focusing on best practices serving children and youth experience homelessness. Shakira Linzey and Jerrice Moore had a table with materials to share representing the New Jersey Early Intervention System (NJEIS).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the September 23, 2016 were unanimously approved as amended upon motion by Rosemary Browne and Kim Peto. The minutes were amended to represent the fact that Joyce Salzberg offered to co-chair a potential committee that the SICC is considering forming in response to the sustainability presentation.

LEAD AGENCY—New Jersey Department of Health (DOH)

Terry Harrison, Part C Coordinator, presented the following information on behalf of the Lead Agency:

1. **Procedural Safeguard Report (PSO)**- The PSO received zero (0) formal complaints since the last SICC meeting. To date for this state fiscal year, informal requests total 2,628. The informal complaints are primarily related to missed services, services not being provided timely or services that were disrupted. PSO Office continues to address the physical therapy needs in Ocean and Atlantic counties and is reviewing two allegations of fraud, waste, abuse. It has been one year since Joe Pargola resigned the position of PSO Coordinator. Barbara Massey King and Beth Lohne continue to work closely under the supervision of Assistant Commissioner Lisa Asare.

Discussion from the Council included the possibility of forming a committee to understand how to use practitioner resources most appropriately. Consideration of hosting a statewide recruitment event in the spring to showcase early intervention. Ms. Colucci, representing higher education reported that she would be interested in working on this project. Because early intervention is interdisciplinary in nature, a recruitment/informational event should also be interdisciplinary. This topic will be added to the January SICC agenda.

2. **Family Cost Participation Report:** A revenue collection of \$7.3 million is forecasted for SFY17 based on current claiming. Last year's estimate was 6.8 million and actual collected was \$6.3 million. The number of families approaching suspension remains varies little month to month. However; some families are staying in suspension longer than previously reported.
3. **Annual Part C Steering Committee Meeting-** A notice was distributed by email to the Part C Steering Committee announcing the annual meeting date of January 18, 2017 at Mid-Jersey Cares REIC to review and discuss the NJEIS Annual Performance Report and SSIP update. The APR submission is due February 1, 2017 and the SSIP submission date is April 1, 2017. All SICC members are invited to attend and provide input.
4. **NJEIS Referral Data:** Ms. Harrison shared a report and presentation on the topic of "Trends in Referral Data". Noted was the differences in data reported based on a single point in time such as the December 1 federal child count versus birth cohort data that looks at children by birth year over the three years that they may be referred to NJEIS. The birth rate has declined in NJ but NJEIS referrals have increased and the eligibility rate on referrals received has increased. A decrease in ineligibility may be a result of an increasing use of developmental screening to identify children potentially in need of referral to NJEIS. The Office of Special Education Programs is focusing on child find efforts specific to at risk factors such as children in poverty, subject to substance abuse and maltreatment. NJ continues to be below the national average for children with Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs), birth to age one (.7 versus 1.15%). However, NJEIS continues to be above the national average for children birth to age three (3.61 vs. 2.95%).

NJEIS birth cohort data documents the number/percentage of children that are known to NJEIS over the birth to three years of age out of the birth population. The 2012 birth cohort data documents that 19% of children born in 2012 were referred to NJEIS; 17% were evaluated and 13% found eligible.

Questions related to child find and referrals:

- Is developmental screening improving and resulting in more appropriate referral to NJEIS (lower ineligibility rates)?
- What is the appropriate % of children birth to age one that NJ should have under an IFSP for the federal point in time child count?
- Should NJ consider changes to eligibility criteria? (New York increased eligibility criteria for communication delay)
- What data needs to be reviewed related to at risk factors and potentially targeting child find efforts to increase the birth to age one point in time child count (poverty, substance abuse, maltreatment)
- **SICC Committees:**
 1. **Service Delivery-** Joyce Salzberg, Chair, distributed minutes and reported on meetings from October 26 and November 2, 2016.
 2. **Family Support:** No update.
 3. **Learning Challenge:** Barbara Tkach, Chair, reported that Head Start is interested in providing a presentation to the SICC.
 4. **Administrative:** Chanell McDevitt, chair reported on the need to confirm FY17 meeting dates. Thanks to everyone for updating biography information. SICC webpage will be updated.

Old Business: Change in SICC meeting date from January 20, 2017 to January 27, 2017.

New Business:

1. David Holmes of the Alliance for the Betterment of Citizens with Disabilities, Barbara Carey, Recruiter from Theracare, Ginny Lynne, EIP Director of Children's Specialized Hospital presented on the topic: "EI Provider Sustainability". The agenda included a need to address sustainability; financial facts regarding NJEIS provider rates; and infrastructure concerns regarding recruitment, retention & compensation, training and supervision, technology, and employee benefits.

The presenters requested the following support from the SICC:

- Request support from the Commissioner for an increase to the fees in the SFY 2018 budget;
- Consideration of a rate study to provide the services in the present value of the dollar;
- Consideration of a cost study based on the specific disciplines and their adequacy to support the EI system;
- Build into the State budget an annualized cost of living increase based on the CPI or MEI; and
- Conduct an analysis of the long-term savings to the tax payer due to the early intervention System;
- Advocate to have the proposed Management Information System funded, contract awarded and implemented; and
- Assist in developing a strategy with the colleges and universities to increase the number of therapists, increase training to better prepare new graduates to enter early intervention, and increase flexibility of COTA and PTA roles in early intervention.

Discussion

Recruitment and Retention: Suggested consideration be given to recruiting therapists working with older adults who may be dissatisfied with their current situation with interest in EI or assisting with a recruitment fair to attract both new graduates and experienced therapists. Comments included concerns about the cost of recruitment and retention activities in addition to providing supervision and training critical to sustaining a quality program.

Fiscal Sustainability: Catherine Colucci acknowledged that the SICC heard the concerns but time to discuss and respond is needed to determine the role and actions the SICC will take. After some discussion, Joyce Salzberg and Joe Holahan presented a motion to put together a special committee to review the issues presented. The motion was not voted on by the SICC at this meeting and will be put on January 2017 agenda for continued discussion.

Adjournment --1:45

Upon motion by Michelle Safrin and Kim Peto and unanimously carried.

Approved as Amended: 1.27.17