

Friday, November 15, 2019
Central Jersey Family Health Consortium - MidJersey Cares – REIC
Lakeside East Office Complex
30 Silverline Drive, Suite 1
North Brunswick, NJ 08902

Public Meeting 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

A regular public meeting of the New Jersey State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) was held on Friday, November 15, 2019 at the Central Jersey Family Health Consortium, MidJersey Cares, REIC in North Brunswick, New Jersey. The meeting was called to order at 11:02 a.m. by Catherine (Kate) Colucci, Acting Chair. A quorum was declared.

Attendance – Maintained by the Department of Health

Welcome – Kate Colucci welcomed attendees, read the Welcome Statement and announced the next SICC public meeting scheduled for January 24, 2020.

Introductions – SICC members introduced themselves followed by the REIC Directors and public members.

Approval of Minutes – Motion from Kate Colucci to approve September 20, 2019 meeting minutes; meeting minutes approved.

SICC Member Updates:

- Joyce Salzberg announced that Sunny Days will be sponsoring a conference in Orlando, Florida in November. Joyce also reported her visit to China. She had been invited by the Chinese government to discuss potential training and services for children with Autism. She had the opportunity to visit several special needs schools in the country. Sunny Days is in negotiations with China in regard to training physicians, teachers and families.
- Chanell McDevitt announced that the insurance open enrollment has commenced until December 15, 2019.
- Rosemary Browne announced that she will be retiring effective December 1, 2019. SICC members thanked her for her years of support and hard work.

SICC Standing & Ad Hoc Committees:

1. Administrative/policy – Chanell McDevitt, Chair – no update
2. State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)/Assessment – Rosemary Browne, no update
3. Service Delivery – Joyce Salzberg, Chair reported:
Four members of the committee met on October 10, 2019 at Sunny Days Corporate Center for two hours. Prior to the meeting Joyce Salzberg and K.D. Holmes met with

Susan Evans. As a result of that meeting, there were three mutual interests that emerged. One interest included exploring a state-wide implementation of virtual therapy (VT), VT can potentially be an advantage for those with hearing impairments. Sunny Days has California's protocols on how to implement VT. In New Jersey, if VT is implemented, personnel standards would need to be revised. Susan Evans stated she will review Texas' draft VT regulations and share it with the committee. Joyce is working with Sharon Walsh on the topic. Joyce mentioned that an efficacy study on VT is being conducted. VT is not a service for all families.

***ACTION:** Joyce will discuss the outcome of the committee discussions on VT at the next SICC meeting.*

Discussion:

Chanel McDevitt inquired as to what services can be provided virtually.

Joyce Salzberg stated that physical and speech therapies as well as developmental intervention can be provided virtually.

Kim Peto inquired if the reimbursement rate for VT services is the same as face-to-face.

Another topic of discussion the committee raised was on practitioners with dual roles; how is the service charged, i.e., by the service or by the profession/discipline?

4. Higher Education – Kate Colucci, Chair, reported:

The committee held two meetings; one of which was a conference call with Susan Evans, Kristen Kugelman and other NJEIS staff. The committee did not feel they were making progress regarding mentorship for EI practitioners. With guidance from Susan Evans and Kristen Kugelman, the committee decided to focus on bringing a consistent message about NJEIS to Higher Education Partners in collaboration with NJEIS staff..

The committee's first step is to update the NJEIS information PowerPoint and to develop a brochure. These resources will then be made available to those that meet with college and university personnel.

Lead Agency Report – Susan Evans, Interim Part-C Coordinator

1. **Part C Administration - State Business:**

- Rate Study – the Department continues to prepare the needed internal information to conduct a Rate Study. Sandy Howell has taken the lead on this project.
- The DOH is working with the Executive Directors from the Regional Early Intervention Collaborates (REIC) on “refreshing” the roles and responsibilities of the regional offices. A survey will be sent to the Early Intervention Providers (EIPs), Service Coordination Units (SCUs) and the SICC asking for their input on the role of the REICs. The survey consists of nine questions.
- Family Cost Participation (FCP) monitoring – the monitoring team, Audry Searles and Alvina Seto developed a training to help to improve the processes and to support the SCUs with carrying out the FCP requirements. This development was a result of

the 2018 on-site visit from Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The final report to OSEP on the first year's activities is due November 30, 2019.

OSEP is requesting NJ to collect and maintain family tax information. The DOH is working on that initiative. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) reported similar conclusions in that there needs to be a tighter monitoring process. The FCP handbook will also be updated and open to public comment.

- Staffing plan – the DOH has a staffing plan that is being addressed based on priorities set by the department leadership. There are several positions identified: Procedural Safeguards Office (PSO) in need of a PSO Officer, Family Coordinator and administrative support. In addition, staffing to include a Service Coordinator Liaison, Child/Family Outcomes Specialist and the Part-C Coordinator position.

2. Part C Administration – OSEP

- DOH met its timeline for submitting the 618 data on “Children Exiting” and “Dispute Resolution” to OSEP. There were 22 Dispute Resolution requests, up from the six filed last year. Many of the complaints are related to family billing and other issues.

Joyce Salzberg asked if there was anything that the system has learned from it.

Susan Evans stated that there were some lessons learned. For example, the data may lead to needed training or monitoring.

Kate Colucci asked if there were any other type of family complaints.

Susan Evans reported that issues related to FCP were a common theme and sometimes families requested a change in practitioner.

- The Annual Performance – OSEP has extended it for another year. There will be a new plan in 2020, however, the perimeters of the plan are not clear. DOH will present the APR data at the January 24, 2020 SICC meeting. The SICC is required to sign off on the APR submission or can create and submit their own Annual Report.
- The APR steering committee is scheduled to meet on January 7, 2020 at Mid-Jersey REIC. The Committee will need to set targets for specific indicators.
- The State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) is due April 1, 2020 along with “December 1” and “Settings” data.” As part of the NJ SSIP, Kristen Kugelman is working with Ladacin Network in Monmouth County on social/emotional development. Jen McConnell and Kristen Kugelman provided some technical development on strategies to engage families based on the PIWI model. Strategies included reflective supervision. For example, practitioners implemented social/emotional strategies and then discussed what worked, what did not. Out of 19 interested practitioners, five participated in the reflective supervision. Another conference call will be scheduled to get additional practitioners involved. They will

try to provide support once a month; it is a place practitioners can go to problem-solve.

3. **EIM/PCG** – the State data team comprising of Sasha, Bob and Steve is solidifying itself in new and exciting ways. The team meets with PCG on a weekly basis. The Electronic Enrollment Webinars held in October will be archived.

The return to “90-day-window” for logging is scheduled on or about January 1, 2020. A tutorial for practitioners on how to log services will be available in December.

4. **Recoupment** – 72% has been recouped for advanced payment. Eight EIPs are paid in full for all their advanced payments. The DOH is in conversations with some EIPS that needed extensions.
5. **Procedural Safeguards** - The Southern REIC has been addressing family’s invoice questions. The staff has been cross-referencing invoices with what has been paid to what is outstanding in order to reconcile family invoices.
6. **The Family Cost Participation Program** - currently there are 27,379 families with an outstanding balance, however, it does not mean they are delinquent. There are 10,100 families that are active in the system and 17, 279 that are inactive. There is a total outstanding FCP of \$4,470,911.84.

REIC – Data Update

1. Andrew Wintringham, Data Manager from MidJersey Cares, REIC provided a presentation on the status of the Data Departments.

Initially, all paper work was sent to the REIC Data Departments for entry into SPOE which would generate billing authorizations. As of December 1, 2017, the transition from SPOE Database to Early Intervention Management System (EIMS) began.

EIMS is a live, web-based system whereby all users (Service Coordinators, Early Intervention Practitioners, etc.) are responsible for entering their data directly into the system. There were many obstacles with the transition to EIMS which resulted in a very large number of data not being entered into the system, which in effect, affected the billing for enormous numbers of services provided creating a “Backlogging Project”

Backlogging Project – Each REIC Data Department was given an Excel spreadsheet containing services logs from EIPS within their region that they were unable to log. Between the four REICS, they were tasked with resolving over 150,000 service logs. In collaboration with the SCUS and EIPs, the Data departments gathered the necessary paperwork and entered each one into EIMS manually. Prior to entering data into the system, each record needed to be reviewed and any detected errors corrected before entering into EIMS.

The project included multiple rounds and phases and went on for almost nine months. The Data Department needed to create a detailed Excel spreadsheet to ensure everything was accounted for. In addition, the Data Department personnel went to SCUs. As a

result of those visits, an additional 30,000+ service logs were entered. To date, almost all records have been entered into EIMS.

Moving forward the Data Department will be providing training and technical assistance to the field. For example, the Data Department will assist both SCUs and EIPS on data issues related to reactivating or inactivating records, when and where to access Service Logging or Wizards, address entering an IFSP issues, extensions, and periodic reviews.

In addition, the Data Department will run reports from EIMS including, but not limited to, Primary Referral Source, Children that Aged Out, Children Needing Assignment, etc. The Data Department will assist in analyzing the data. For example, looking at referral rates to assist with Child Find efforts, The Data Department can look at No Practitioner Available (NPA) data. What service(s) are NPA and where does NPA happen (Count(ies)?

New Business – none reported

Old Business

- NJEIS Mission Statement – statement to be reviewed when SICC member seats are filled.
- SICC appointments – Kate Colucci has made numerous attempts to inquire about the status of appointments; to date no response.
- SICC meeting locations – Kate Colucci asked if there were any suggestions. Sandra Howell stated that the meetings should be centrally located. Joyce Salzburg requested that Sunny Days be considered again for meetings and there were no objections to this voiced. The SICC then discussed best location for the next year and agreed to continue at MidJersey Cares.
- Kate Colucci stated the meetings will continue at MidJersey Cares REIC and the discussion on location will again be addressed during summer 2020 when the 2021 calendar is setup.

Public Comment

- Kristen Carew, DAWN Center for Independent Living, Morris County SCU – shared a request from a parent regarding the portal available to families for billing. The parent requests that the portal be made available for families to read practitioner notes on services provided to the child and family.

Susan Evans reported that the DOH is looking at ways to upload documents in EIMS as well as obtaining electronic signatures; which may be a more viable solution for family access to practitioner notes.

Adjournment - 12:32 p.m. upon motion by Kate Colucci and unanimously carried.