



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Charlie Crist
Governor

Robert A. Butterworth
Secretary

DATE: August 1, 2007

TO: Regional Directors, and Circuit Administrators

THROUGH: George Sheldon, Assistant Secretary for Operations
David Fairbanks, Assistant Secretary for Programs

FROM: Patricia Badland, Director of Office of Family Safety

SUBJECT: Family Safety Quality Assurance Action Plan

PURPOSE: This memorandum provides information on the quality assurance responsibilities for the Family Safety program, including planning for future improvements. It should be shared with your Community Based Care Lead Agencies and with Sheriff's Offices conducting child protective investigations. In order to provide better accountability for child protection in Florida, this memo:

- Requests your help in identifying "lessons learned" from the past year's quality assurance experience, as input for the Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement (QA/QI) model to be developed by September 30.
- Defines the necessary quality assurance activities for the period August – September 30, 2007.

This memo will be the subject of a conference call to be held with Regional Directors/Zone Administrators within the next week.

BACKGROUND: As a follow up to the Organizational Review Report, Secretary Butterworth directed that the Assistant Secretary for Programs work with the Assistant Secretary for Operations, the Director of Strategic Planning and Innovation, and appropriate field personnel, to develop a comprehensive QA/QI model by September 30, 2007. The model must ensure accountability for both state-operated and contracted child welfare programs.

LESSONS LEARNED: We are requesting that each Region/District/Circuit work with their CBC lead agencies and Sheriff's Offices to document lessons learned from our quality assurance experiences in FY 06-07. Specifically, we are asking for a brief summary of the following points from each Region/Zone, broken down by CBC, Sheriffs Office, and DCF Child Protective Investigations:

1317 Winewood Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0700

Mission: Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

1. What aspects of last year's quality assurance approach were effective in reviewing and improving the quality of services?

- Provide examples of issues identified in Child Protective Investigations (CPI) reviews, Tier 1 reviews, and/or Florida Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) that were addressed.
- Describe the analysis, action plans, status reports, tools, techniques, etc. that were used to improve performance.
- Attach examples of documents (including reports, analyses, plans and status reports) that were useful in improving performance.

2. What aspects of last year's quality assurance approach were not effective in reviewing and improving the quality of services?

- Describe examples of aspects that were not effective, the reasons they were not effective and whether they should be modified or discontinued in the future.

3. What recommendations do you have for improving our quality assurance approach in the future?

This should be sent to Pat Badland by August 15.

ACTIONS REQUIRED August – September 30, 2007:

Headquarters Office of Family Safety

- The Office of Family Safety will lead the design of the QA/QI model. The model will be developed in cooperation with the Assistant Secretary for Operations, the Office of Strategic Planning and Innovation, and representatives from the field. Input from your responses to items 1 – 5 above will be a major source of information as we develop the model.
- QA staff previously assigned to the Research and Design Unit in Quality Management now report to Sallie Linton in the Office of Family Safety.
- The Office of Family Safety will continue to work with their Regional Family Safety counterparts and federal representatives to ensure that preparation is completed in a timely fashion for the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) to be conducted in January 2008.
- The Office of Family Safety will coordinate the Sheriff's Peer Review Process. This will include working with Regional Family Safety QA staff to ensure that the Department continues to assist the Sheriff's Offices in conducting these reviews during the regular timeframe. John Harper in the Office of Family Safety will have lead on this effort.
- From time to time, the Secretary or his designee may assign a Region/Zone to conduct a special QA review on a high profile case. Effective immediately, the draft reports that result from these reviews will be reviewed by the Office of Family Safety, and the Program Director will be the final signatory.

Region Family Safety Quality Assurance

- The transfer of Family Safety Quality Assurance staff to the Regional Directors was effective July 1, 2007. These staff will report to the Regional/Zone Family Safety Program Administrator. The current staffing allocation will continue through September 30 pending completion of the statewide model.
- Semi-Annual CPI Reviews.
 - Some Regional QA staff are still working to complete their January - June 2007 District-level CPI reviews. These district-level reviews should be completed and reports sent to Regional Directors, with copies to Pat Badland, by August 15, 2007.
 - Regional QA Staff should prepare a schedule for conducting semi-annual CPI reviews at the circuit level during FY 07-08. Quality Assurance Reviews of CPI services at the circuit level should use a random sample of all reports closed in the six-month period preceding the review. The sample size should provide a 90% confidence level and a 10% confidence interval. The sample should be drawn without respect to judicial status. Schedules should be submitted to Pat Badland by August 15, 2007.
 - For circuit level CPI reviews to be conducted before September 30, 2007, the Regional Family Safety QA staff should use the current review instrument.
 - Tier 2 validation of CPI data is discretionary until we can assess the benefits of this process. Technical assistance at the Tier 2 level is still strongly encouraged.
- During the interim period, Regional Family Safety Quality Assurance staff will not conduct the Tier 2 validation reviews for CBC lead agencies, while the benefits are assessed.
- Regional Family Safety Quality Assurance units will continue to conduct child death reviews, and respond to requests for special reviews, including targeted reviews on matters such as:
 - Licensing
 - Independent living
 - Federal funding
 - Customer requests for independent reviews
- The Regional Family Safety Program Office will retain responsibility for the Adoption Review Committee. Regional Directors may choose to assign these duties to the Regional Family Safety Quality Assurance staff.
- The Regional Family Safety Quality Assurance staff will continue to participate in the preparation and conduct of the Child and Family Services Review scheduled for January 2008.
- The Regional Family Safety Quality Assurance staff will be asked to collect information on a quarterly basis regarding Child Welfare Legal Services performance. This follows a recent decision by the Legal Services Workgroup. Please designate an individual who can assume this responsibility as of October

and provide Pat Badland with contact information by August 15. Details on this assignment are forthcoming.

- As a follow-up to the recent reviews of the Courtney Clark case, the Regional Family Safety Quality Assurance staff will be asked to review the CBC procedures on reunification to ensure adequacy and compliance with DCF policy. Directions on this assignment will be forthcoming.
- The Sheriffs Peer Review process will continue as last year, with Central Office and Regional QA staff providing support to the Sheriff's Offices in conducting these reviews. The Office of Family Safety will contact the Regional Directors to request QA staff support for this function, as the reviews are scheduled to begin in September.

Community Based Care Agencies

- CBC lead agencies should continue Tier 1 reviews for the first quarter of FY 07-08, in accordance with their approved Quality Management Plan, pending completion of the new QA/QI model. This includes taking timely and appropriate improvement action in response to findings.
- The Quality Assurance Improvement Workgroup convened earlier this year recommended a change to the sample size. This change was implemented in April 2007. A 90/10 sample of population served will be selected every six months for case review. Each sample will be based on active and closed cases during the previous six-month period. The first quarter Tier 1 results should be reported to Pat Badland in accordance with the timeframes in the Quality Management Plan.
- Additional improvements recommended by the Quality Assurance Improvement Workgroup (i.e., streamlined data reporting, sampling of special populations, etc.) will be considered during the development of the QA/QI model.
- When the QA/QI model is completed, each CBC will be asked to revise its quality management plan to reflect the new model.
- All CBC FY 06-07 Tier 1, 3rd and 4th quarter data should be provided to Pat Badland no later than August 15, 2007.

Contract Oversight Unit

Contract Oversight Unit (COU) will continue to perform an annual review of Community Based Care lead agency contract compliance. COU will also coordinate its reviews with Region licensing reviews of lead agencies, if requested by the Regional Director before August 15. Please contact your local COU Manager or Diane Dusenbury, Chief of Contract Oversight, with any questions or requests.

CONTACT INFORMATION: Should you have questions on this, please contact Pat Badland, at (850) 488-8762 or SunCom 278-8762.

cc: Don Winstead, Deputy Secretary
Steve Holmes, Director of Strategic Planning and Innovation
Diane Dusenbury, Chief of Contract Oversight
Regional Family Safety Program Administrators
Regional Quality Assurance Managers
CBC Contract Managers