



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Rick Scott
Governor

David E. Wilkins
Secretary

DATE: March 15, 2012

TO: Regional Managing Directors

THROUGH: ^{Patricia Armstrong for} John Cooper, Assistant Secretary for Operations
Debra Ervin Debra Ervin, Acting Director Family and Community Services

FROM: Patricia Armstrong, LCSW, Director Office of Child Welfare *PA*

SUBJECT: Oversight of Psychotropic Medication for Children in Out-of-Home Care

PURPOSE: This memorandum is a follow-up request to the December 2011 memorandum regarding the accuracy of the psychotropic medication data in FSFN.

BACKGROUND: In November 2011 the Administration for Children and Families notified state child welfare directors that states must strengthen systems of prescribing and monitoring psychotropic medication use among children in foster care. The Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act of 2011 (Public Law 112-34) includes new language concerning the social, emotional and mental health of children who have experienced maltreatment. Florida's Five Year State Child and Family Services Plan must now include details about how emotional trauma associated with maltreatment and removal is addressed, as well as a description of how the use of psychotropic medications is monitored. Please read ACF's Information Memorandum (ACYF-CB-IM-1 1-06) on the new law here:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/laws_policies/policy/im/

The Department is monitoring psychotropic medication via the weekly Psychotropic Medication Report posted on the Department's Child Welfare Data Repository and via periodic ad hoc reports.

In December 2011 regions were asked to work with community-based care agencies to review and clean up the psychotropic medication data in FSFN as appropriate. At that time, we noted that psychotropic medication prescriptions were not being "end dated" and therefore data reports indicated children were taking multiple medications. Additionally, there were a high number of prescriptions that were more than a year old and should have been end dated.

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

An ad hoc report was run on March 13 to assess current data for the above two issues. Almost 18% of all prescriptions in FSFN continue to have a prescription begin date that is more than a year old. We know that all stimulants (most ADD and ADHD medications) require a new prescription every 30 days, and the maximum shelf life for any prescription is one year. Additionally, there are 96 children who have multiple active prescriptions for the same medication. Although we have improved, more work remains.

Psychotropic Medications for Children in Out-of-Home Care

	December 2011	March 2012
% of Active Prescriptions More Than One Year Old	40.1%	17.6%
Number of Children with Multiple Active Prescriptions of the Same Medication	185	96

Source: FSFN March Ad Hoc Report

It is critical that information regarding the use of psychotropic medication is current and accurate as part of each child's medical history in FSFN. This includes documenting when a child begins taking each medication, based on the date the medication is prescribed or reauthorized. Each time a child receives a new prescription, or has a prescription re-authorized, that prescription must be entered into FSFN with a new prescription begin date. This is required even if the new prescription or re-authorization is to continue a current medication without any changes. It is not necessary to enter this information into FSFN each time a medication is refilled, only when a new prescription is required in order for the child to continue receiving the medication.

Concomitantly, the prescription "end date" must be entered into FSFN when either the child stops taking the medication or the prescription expires (including refills), whichever comes first.

ACTION REQUESTED: Contract managers must work with CBCs to ensure there is a continuous review of psychotropic medication data in FSFN for children in out-of-home care, and information is updated as needed. Report listings containing data on each active prescription for every child in out-of-home care are posted to the Imaging Lite section of the DCF Web Portal weekly. The Office of Child Welfare will run another ad hoc report in April.

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you have any questions or need additional information please contact Keith Perlman at keith_perlman@dcf.state.fl.us or 850-717-4675 or Eleese Davis at eleese_davis@dcf.state.fl.us or 850-717-4650.

Attachment

cc: Pete Digre, Deputy Secretary
DCF Contract Managers
CBC CEOs
Sheriffs' Offices