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Summary of Reviews Conducted:
The statewide Quality Assurance process for fiscal year 2014-2015 was a purposeful review of items most pertinent to specific age groups. The process improvement method was a consultation provided by the quality management specialist to the case manager, supervisor, associate director and/or director immediately following each review. During quality management meetings with case management organization leadership the consultation process received high praise as providing specific recognition of strong case work practices and providing valuable instruction for the improvement of specific areas needing improvement. Consultation regarding specific challenges being addressed within a case was identified as a preferred quality improvement process. All statewide quality assurance reviews rated the quality of supervisory reviews and planning for safe case closure as well.

Rapid Safety Feedback Reviews focused on the safety of children ages 0-4 receiving in-home services and items that impact protection from abuse and neglect, and providing services to safely maintain children with their families.

Targeted Well-Being Feedback Reviews focused on children ages 5-12 receiving out-of-home services and items that impact their families’ capacity to provide for their children’s needs, and that the children receive appropriate services to meet their needs.

Targeted Permanency Feedback Reviews focused on children ages 13-17 who entered out-of-home care after their 13th birthday and items that impact placement stability, their achievement of permanency, and continuity of family relationships and preservation of connections.

The statewide Quality Assurance process for fiscal year 2014-2015 also included preparation for the federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) that will begin in April of 2016. Quality Management staff completed federal online training to learn how to appropriately rate a mock in-home services case and a mock out-of-home services case using the federal instructions and case rating portal. Staff also met the requirement to review eight open cases, following the Child and Family Services Review Instrument and Instructions and entering their ratings in the federal portal.

Family Support Services of North Florida designates a Quality Management Specialist position to focus on children ages 0-3. This staff conducts ongoing supplemental reviews of casework practices related to critical processes: supplemental rapid safety feedback review; reunification review; change of placement to relative or non-relative review; and permanency and well-being while in out-of-home care review.

Practice Trends

Safety: The Rapid Safety Feedback Review was completed both as a statewide QA review and as a supplemental review. The Family Assessment Support Team (FAST) diversion program protocol includes more frequent visits to the home, regular staffing of children ages 0-3, and staffing of cases open for long periods of time; increased oversight of the program lends itself to better outcomes as was found.

During fiscal year 2014-2015, our overall performance in the Rapid Safety Feedback Reviews resulted in 86% overall compliance. The statewide Quality Assurance Rapid Safety Feedback review of 96 cases that
were about equally split between diversion services and in-home court-ordered services documented notable strength regarding case managers making concerted efforts to provide services to prevent entry into out-of-home care or prevent re-entry after reunification. With the implementation of the safety methodology practice model mid-year, outcomes of the reviews demonstrated that in the initial stages of the rollout the development of safety plans and the ongoing monitoring of safety plans were areas needing improvement. Documentation of safety assessments of parent homes and documentation of ongoing discussions with parents about the safety of their home environments are areas that will benefit from ongoing practice as well.

The supplemental rapid safety feedback review of 37 cases that were predominately served by diversion case managers documented numerous improvements attributed to ongoing training, quality assurance consultations, and supervision. Initially the agencies were having some trouble with completing appropriate safety plans, i.e. identifying the parent as the person responsible for ensuring safety rather than identifying another family or community support. The majority of the safety plans reviewed now are more specific identifying safety monitors, how often they check on the family and a specific action that will take place if any safety concerns are present. Improvements have also been made in home visit notes such as ensuring the focus child is specifically addressed in every single home visit note.

**Permanency**: During fiscal year 2014-2015, our overall performance in the Targeted Permanency Feedback reviews resulted in 80% overall compliance. The statewide Quality Assurance Targeted Permanency Feedback review of 67 cases documented strong case management practices related to making concerted efforts to achieve reunification which is supported by strong outcomes related to case managers involving parents and children in the case planning process on an ongoing basis. An area needing improvement that was found during this review and also during the last contract oversight unit monitoring is visitation between siblings when they are in different foster care placements. The provider agencies have implemented a corrective action plan which has improved the accomplishment of sibling visitations. Similarly, facilitating parent involvement in their children’s routine activities is another area needing improvement. Parents and children who live apart and siblings who live apart require sustained concerted efforts to maintain their connections.

**Well-Being**: All three of the statewide Quality Assurance Targeted Feedback reviews rated frequency and quality of case manager visits with the child and rated frequency and quality of case manager visits with the parents. With very few exceptions case managers visit the children on their case load as required; the ongoing need is to improve the quality and documentation of the visit. Overall, case managers need to improve documentation of parent-baby interaction for the 0-4 age group and improve documentation of having meaningful conversations with both age groups of older children during visits with them. Case managers rate strongly across all age groups for the documentation of meaningful conversations with parents during visits. Safety methodology case practice supports improved quality of visits with parents as it focuses on parental behavior change in response to services.

During fiscal year 2014-2015, our overall performance in the Targeted Well-Being Feedback reviews resulted in 70% overall compliance. The Well-Being Feedback review of 56 cases found strong case work practices related to the assessment of educational and mental/behavioral health needs then ensuring the provision of services to meet the needs. These strengths are also reflected on the Department of Children and Families Community Based Care Scorecard.
**Supervisory Consultations:** During fiscal year 2014-2015, our overall performance for the item related to Supervisory Consultations resulted in 74% overall compliance. All three of the statewide Quality Assurance Targeted Feedback reviews rated supervisory consultations. With the implementation of the safety methodology practice model mid-year, supervisor consultations are now required at specific decision-making points in the case; this is in addition to the required quarterly supervisory reviews. Supervisor consultations and supervisory reviews were rated as strengths for two age groups—the 0-3 age group and the 13-17 age group; likely due the specific focus on safety for the youngest children receiving in-home services and the specific focus on independent living skill development for the teens in out-of-home care. Supervisor consultations and supervisory reviews were rated as an area needing improvement for the children ages 5-12.

**Safe Case Closure:** During fiscal year 2014-2015, our overall performance for the item related to Safe Case Closure resulted in 76% overall compliance. All three of the statewide Quality Assurance Targeted Feedback reviews rated safe case closure. Again, case planning for safe case closure was rated as strengths for two age groups—the 0-4 age group and the 13-17 age group, likely due the specific focus on safety for the youngest children receiving in-home services and the specific focus on independent living skill development for the teens in out-of-home care. Case planning for safe case closure were rated as an area needing improvement for the children ages 5-12.

**Other-ongoing supplemental reviews:**
The Quality Management Specialist dedicated to the 0-3 age group completed **135 supplemental reviews of placements with relatives and non-relatives**. During fiscal year 2014-2015, our overall performance for this review resulted in 79% average overall compliance. This review focused on home studies being completed and approved, including required background screens, prior to the child being placed in the home. An area needing improvement was getting the documentation uploaded into the FSFN file cabinet and an improvement has been made in this area, although reminders are still needed.

The Quality Management Specialist dedicated to the 0-3 age group completed **70 supplemental reviews of reunified children**. During fiscal year 2014-2015, our overall performance for this review resulted in 88% average overall compliance. This review focused on the approval of the reunification home study, including required background screening; the completion of a reunification staffing; completion of required weekly visits and assessment of the child at each visit. There were some issues with not following the process of ensuring a reunification staffing was held and documented in FSFN, but after providing feedback regarding this process, this is rarely missing on current reviews.

The Quality Management Specialist dedicated to the 0-3 age group is an active participant on the safe-babies task force initiative. Following the training meeting in Tampa she requested the development of a new review which began in June to look at the well-being and permanency of children receiving out-of-home services. The 0-3 Specialist completed **12 supplemental out-of-home care reviews**. During fiscal year 2014-2015, our overall performance for this review resulted in 79% average overall compliance. This review found that case managers need to better document their assessment of parents and referrals for services. Family service counselors’ documentation of their observations of the child’s development at this young age as well as how they are interacting with the caregivers was another area identified as needing improvement.
Addressing Findings

The Quality Management Specialists address findings during the consultation following each review, requests corrections of deficiencies noted and monitors until the deficiencies are corrected. The Director of Quality Management sends quarterly data reports with discussion regarding areas needing improvement to the case management organization (CMO) Directors. The Director of Quality Management engages CMO Directors during the monthly FSSNF Directors’ Meeting as needed to discuss solutions specific areas needing improvement such as re-introducing the use of family trees to improve the identification of potential relative care givers.

In addition to addressing specific findings, outcome data from the reviews is used by FSSNF senior management to assess and incentivize the case work practices of the case management organizations. Quality management data reports are provided to the senior leadership team quarterly and quality management data reports are considered in the annual determination of the “CMO of the Year Award.”