

Children's Issues Committee, September 15, 2020, 1:00pm

Children's Administrators Forum Update – Gwenda Summers

July Minutes and September Minutes

Gwenda reported that the CAF met in July and September. She reported that the discussion among this group continues to be robust. Culturally competent services were discussed in July. Resource sharing took place and many ideas were shared. School interaction with CMHs was discussed at the September meeting as well as CLS and respite services. Gwenda stated that capacity and knowing when to use these services were also discussed. Group asked if there was an update on 31N funding. Gwenda stated direct provision as well as access & referral services are some covered items, but some schools are directly employing folks for services. Group also discussed tiered referrals for children who need services.

DHHS Updates – Kim Batsche-McKenzie, Justin Tate & Mary Chaliman – MDHHS

Mary Chaliman stated that working on emergency rules for restraint & seclusion has been the foremost item being developed recently. Alternatives for this are being worked on. QRTP is being developed to replace child caring institutions. An independent assessor will do an assessment to see if the child truly needs to be placed in a QRTP. The assessment tool is called CANS (Children's Assessment of Needs and Strengths) and was created by Dr. John Lyon. Kim reported that transitioning of children is happening rapidly, and this is placing pressure on CMHs for services to be provided. She stated that there has been an uptick in placement requests at Hawthorn as well. Hawthorn is no longer calling the waiting list a "waiting list", it is now an "Admission pool". Julie Bayardo agreed that placement requests are increasing, and they are continuing to experience frustrations with placement in the Central Michigan area. She stated that this issue needs to be addressed either here or in the Children's Administrative Forum, but the need to find somewhere other than Hawthorn to place children is a great need. Connie agreed that this was occurring in her area (Livingston County) as well. A conversation needs to take place on this for child welfare and the mental health mandate. Group also discussed probate judges, and how the variance of who hears the case and how they feel about placement in residential, can be the deciding factor in how the child's services will be determined. Kim will take these issues back to DHHS. Kim spoke about a press release concerning youth and COVID. Pat Weighman stated that the Kalamazoo area is seeing problems with capacity in CLS & Respite services as well. Providing these in-home services is more difficult now than prior to COVID issues arose. Group discussed whether a regional approach with DHHS Directors would be a good idea. Group also discussed and agreed that working with local DHHS offices can be beneficial as well. Kim then reported on Behavioral Health services during school hours. She stated that DHHS is compiling guidance which is being reviewed by Department heads for approval to be issued to schools.

She also reported that there is a class action lawsuit which is in the interim settlement phase. The State is working with complainants' counsel to determine an implementation plan. This is an EPSDT lawsuit. The Children's Service Agency and Medicaid Services are at the table for discussion on this issue as well.

Legislative Update – Alan Bolter

Alan gave updates on the budget, stating that we are 16 days away from the end of this fiscal year. The House and Senate may have reached an agreement to propose to the Governor for moving forward with the FY21 budget. The anticipated deficit for that fiscal year looks to be about \$1.7 Billion as opposed to original projections of about \$3 Billion. He then spoke about HB 5298 (PRTF Bill). This bill, which would create Psychiatric Rehabilitation Treatment Facilities for children, is moving through the House and will likely pass. Alan reported that SB's 672 & 673 (Certificate of Need) are being discussed in the House tomorrow. He stated that the Association is opposed to SB 672 which would eliminate CON as this will NOT increase access to beds and loses the oversight function needed in this process. SB 673 is tied to this bill. Alan then reported that HB 5832 which is concerning Crisis stabilization units will be discussed on Thursday. The Association has worked hard to make sure language was added to ensure contracts with CMHs are in place for these units to be established.

Alan reported that there will likely be NO further federal funds coming to help with State budgets in the form of stimulus dollars regarding COVID related issues.

COVID-19 Roundtable Discussion

Children and Family Specific Data, Trends and Programming Needs

Group discussed items that were being done in different areas. Newsletters, trainings on coping with COVID issues, and flyers with information on warm helplines and services being offered were some items discussed.

ACMH Update – Jane Shank

Jane reported that at the beginning of the COVID pandemic, ACMH saw a reduction in the requests for services, but now, six months into the pandemic, they are overwhelmed with calls and requests. She spoke about the need to continue to stay connected with each other in order to continue to alter and improve services for children. Jane reported that ACMH is going to be holding a virtual conference and urged everyone to attend if they could. She will send information to the group on how to join. She stated that moving forward into 2021, this group will need to remain focused on having the voices of families and children with SED be heard.

Committee Focus Areas for 2020 Identified at previous meeting:

Policy, Advocacy, Input & Themes, Deconstructing Youth Suicide, Service Delivery Flexibility, and Staff Retention. Also, Collaborative efforts to support students, especially those expelled, suspended or at risk with mental health needs, Child Psychiatric Beds, and Service Models for transition age youth. Meeting adjourned at 2:12pm.