**Child Protection Accountability Commission**

**Joint Committee on Substance-Exposed Infants/Medically Fragile Children**

**Friday, May 13, 2016**

**Minutes**

**ATTENDEES:**

Dr. Allan DeJong, A.I. DuPont Hospital

Dr. David Paul, CCHS/DHIMIC

Dr. Jerry Gallucci, DHSS

Dr. Judith Gorra, DHSS/CDW

The Honorable Felicia Kerr

Bridget Buckaloo, Beebe Hospital

Rebeca McMillan, Children & Families First

Joann Bruch, DFS

Trenee Parker, DFS

Janice Tigani, Esq., DOJ

Aleks Casper, March of Dimes

Heather Baker, March of Dimes

Nicole White, Brandywine Counseling

Tania Culley, Esq., OCA

Cathy McKay, Connections

Grace Courtney, DHSS

Lisl Phelps, DHSS

Nancy Oyerly, Nanticoke

Lauren Brueckner, CASA

Jennifer Donahue, Esq.

1. Committee Member Introductions

Jennifer Donahue chaired the meeting welcoming everyone and facilitating introductions.

1. Approval of March 18, 2016 Minutes

Upon Motion and no objection, the minutes from the March 18, 2016 meeting were approved.

1. Status of SEI House Bill 319

Tania Culley stated that the original Bill 268 passed the House Judiciary Committee; however, it was re-filed as HB 319 as a result of various amendments agreed upon after the meetings with Rep. Ruth Briggs King and Rep. Melanie Smith. DSCYF also requested that a fiscal note accompany the bill. Dr. Paul voiced concern about the terminology used in the bill may be confusing for some agency partners and it may be difficult to implement. Jen Donahue confirmed that the Committee will be drafting a Memorandum of Understanding in order to clarify the terminology and the roles/responsibilities of all agencies involved in the SEI and his/her family.

1. In-Depth Technical Assistance Application

Jen Donahue reviewed the application with the Committee members and stated that all agencies will need to assist with the completion of the application and provide any necessary data. The Committee voted to move forward with the application and Jen Donahue agreed to circulate a summary of the application to the Committee members for feedback and to have a completed draft circulated prior to the next meeting on July 15, 2016.

1. Update on SEI Reports and Substance Abuse Liaisons

Joann Bruch provided an update on the expedited substance abuse liaison referrals from January through March 2016. There were 9 referrals from investigation in New Castle County, of which 6 came from Christiana and 3 from St. Francis. 5 of the 9 referrals resulted in engagement with the liaison. In Kent County, there were 10 referrals from investigation and 2 referrals from treatment, of which 10 came from Kent General and 2 from Milford Memorial. 8 of the 10 referrals resulted in engagement with the liaison. In Sussex County, there were 5 referrals from investigation, of which 4 came from Beebe and 1 from Nanticoke. 4 of the 5 referrals resulted in engagement with the liaison. Joann noted that the liaisons remain involved in the case throughout the investigation process. Tania Culley requested that, at the next meeting, DFS provide feedback from the AOD liaisons about how the process is going within the hospitals.

Jen Donahue noted that there were DFS coding errors at the hotline level in 2015 and 2016 that have resulted in higher reported numbers for SEI’s. For example, in 2015, DFS reported 299 drug-exposed or FASD cases that were screened in for investigation. However, after the IC’s office reviewed each case, there were 116 coding errors found. As such, the true number of screened in SEI cases in 2015 was 191. As of 5/6/16, DFS reported 229 hotline reports involving SEIs. However, there were 42 coding errors. As such, the actual number of SEI’s screened in for investigation as of 5/6/16 was 108. In light of these discrepancies, it was discussed that the fiscal note attached to HB 319 may need to be adjusted accordingly.

Jen Donahue also provided the types of substances that are occurring in the SEI cases. For the 108 screened in cases, 38 included marijuana only, 21 included opiates only, and 34 cases involved poly-substances (2 or more) that included 18 opiate cases.

Cathy McKay discussed the methadone program offered at Connections and stated that there is a key collaboration between DFS and the clinics. She stated that the statewide clinics serve approximately 2000 people per day, with Millsboro providing methadone and other services to approximately 700 people per day. Pregnant women who are receiving methadone in the statewide clinics and are drug tested from a weekly to monthly basis for illicit drug use. She stated that women need higher doses of methadone during pregnancy in light of the increased blood production. However, the doses are reduced after the baby is born, which will result in drowsiness during that time until the mother acclimates to the lower doses.

Cathy indicated that Suboxone is not yet approved by the FDA for pregnant women; however, it is preferable for infants since the withdrawal symptoms seem to be less severe than with methadone. She stated that New Expectations is an alternative program for some pregnant women who are addicted, instead of incarceration. Currently, there are 15 women in the DOC program and half are receiving methadone. Cathy noted that methadone is a better alternative because it is provided in measured doses and it blocks the effects of illicit drugs, thereby reducing the risk of diseases associated with intra-venous illicit drug use.

1. DHMIC Standards Committee and 6 Triggers

Aleks Casper stated that the Standards Committee approved the 6 triggers to be included in the Hospital High Risk Medical Discharge Protocol on 3/28/16. As such, this protocol will be amended to include the triggers and will be utilized by hospitals and DFS when appropriate for SEIs in the interim until the SEI bill becomes law.

1. Partnership with OB/gyn’s and AOD providers/ECHO

The Committee members discussed linking OB/gyn providers with substance use disorder treatment providers. Christiana and Brandywine Counseling have partnered to provide this linkage, and New Expectations provides education and treatment services for 26 pregnant women. Aleks mentioned that LARC is also provided at Christiana, and Bridget Buckaloo stated that same day contraceptive access is also provided at La Red in Sussex County. Cathy McKay stated that Connections is looking into whether a nurse practitioner can be trained and utilized statewide to actually insert the devices.

Dr. Gallucci stated that there is a large grant available to assist Delaware with developing the ECHO tele-health program for ob/gyn consultation with providers of chronic pain medication and medication assisted treatment.

1. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Committee will occur on Friday, July 15, 2016 from 9:30 – 11:30am at Bayhealth – Kent General Hospital, Board Room, 640 S. State Street, Dover, DE 19901.

1. Public Comment

No public comment was received and the meeting was adjourned.