

Child Protection Accountability Commission

Joint Committee on Substance-Exposed Infants/Medically Fragile Children

Friday, March 24, 2017

Minutes

ATTENDEES:

Dr. Allan DeJong, AI Dupont
Dr. Judith Gorra, CDW
Dr. Jane Ierardi, Nemours
Bridget Buckaloo, Beebe Healthcare
Nikole Papas, BCCS (via telephone)
Joan Kelley, CDRC
Crystal Sherman, DHSS
Grace Courtney, DHSS
Lisl Phelps, DHSS
Trene Parker, DFS
Linda Shannon, DFS
Janice Tigani, Esq., DSCYF
Jennifer Donahue, Esq., IC
Aleks Casper, March of Dimes
Kelly Ensslin, Esq., OCA
Tania Culley, Esq., OCA
Rebeca Heistand, CFF
Melanie Subers, Health Options
Karen Kelly, Bayhealth
Pamela Laymon, Bayhealth
Michele Savin, CCHS
Nancy Oyerly, Nanticoke
Jackie Mette, Esq., DSCYF
Wendy Felts, St. Francis
Emily Knearl, DHSS (via telephone)

I. Committee Member Introductions

Jennifer Donahue chaired the meeting welcoming everyone and facilitating introductions.

II. Approval of Minutes

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

III. Update on SEI reports to DFS

Jen Donahue and Trenee Parker reviewed the SEI reports to DFS in 2016 and 2017 (year to date). In 2016, DFS received 431 reports and as of 3/20/2017, there were approximately 104 reports.

IV. Aiden's Law – Infants with Prenatal Substance Exposure Bill

Jen Donahue provided an overview of the final draft of the bill emphasizing the changes made from last year's bill, including using the term "notification" in lieu of "report," creating a new Chapter 9B, and ensuring that the Plan of Safe Care addresses the needs of both the infant and the affected caregiver. Jen advised that the bill will likely be introduced by Rep. Melanie Smith in early April.

V. Substance Abuse Liaisons

Trenee Parker provided an update on the referrals for Substance Abuse Liaisons for mothers who give birth to a SEI. DFS intends to continue utilizing these liaisons when the Plan of Safe Care protocol is rolled out and implemented.

VI. In-Depth Technical Assistance update

Emily Knearl and Jen Donahue reported that the Core Team attended the IDTA Policy Academy in Baltimore, MD in February, 2017. The team developed a draft State Action Plan that includes the following 4 State Goals:

1. Recommend universal screening of pregnant women for early identification of substance use so that women and their families may be linked to appropriate services, including treatment, prenatal care, home visiting and other supports as needed.
2. Build a system of care and provide educational resources so that medical providers, including obstetricians/gynecologists, birth hospitals, treatment providers and social services agencies have the tools they need to help pregnant women in the prevention, recognition, and treatment of substance use disorders and related services for affected children and families.
3. Implement a universal statewide protocol for the preparation and monitoring of Plans of Safe Care for infants with prenatal exposure and their affected families.
4. Maintain an awareness of the effects of stigma in discouraging pregnant women from treatment or prenatal care, as well as the importance of non-judgmental medical provider support so that women feel safe in discussing substance use or abuse.

Emily further explained that our team created a survey for birthing hospitals and a survey for OB/gyn practitioners in order to determine screening and testing policies for pregnant women.

Jen noted that the IDTA experts, Jill Gresham and Ken DeCerchio, will be conducted a site visit to Delaware on May 17 and 18, 2017. It is the plan to have them attend the CPAC meeting on May 17 and the SEI Committee meeting on May 18.

VII. Additional Discussion

Jen also indicated that Dr. David Paul will be applying for a grant through the American Academy of Pediatrics for funding to support a public awareness campaign of the dangers of marijuana use during pregnancy. The Committee agreed to write a letter in support of the grant.

There was further discussion about medication assisted treatment for pregnant women and how the MAT clinics/agencies would assist with the Plans of Safe Care for those women who are in compliance with their treatment. Pamela Laymon mentioned that the Suboxone and Subutex private providers should be contacted and notified about Plans of Safe Care requirement.

Finally, Melanie Subers from Health Options provided information about the program available for pregnant women, including home visiting and other supports.

VIII. The next meeting of the Committee will occur on Thursday, May 18, 2017 from 9:30 – 11:30am at DFS University Plaza, Newark, DE.

IX. Public Comment

No public comment was received and the meeting was adjourned.