

## **Child Protection Accountability Commission**

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

**Thursday, May 18, 2017**

#### **Minutes**

##### **ATTENDEES:**

Dr. Allan DeJong, AI Dupont  
Dr. Jane Ierardi, Nemours  
Bridget Buckaloo, Beebe Healthcare  
Emily Knearl, DHSS  
Crystal Sherman, DHSS  
Grace Courtney, DHSS  
Lisl Phelps, DHSS  
Julie Leusner, PBH  
Trene Parker, DFS  
Linda Shannon, DFS  
Colleen Woodall, DFS  
Jennifer Donahue, Esq., IC/OCA  
Kelly Ensslin, Esq., OCA  
Aleks Casper, March of Dimes  
Heather Baker, March of Dimes  
Rebeca Heistand, CFF  
Melanie Subers, Health Options  
Lena Thompson, United  
Michele Savin, CCHS  
Pam Jimenez, CCHS  
Nancy Oyerly, Nanticoke  
Wendy Felts, St. Francis  
Cathy McKay, Connections  
Ann Pedrick, CDRC  
Joan Kelley, CDRC  
Dan Maas, PC HIDTA  
Jill Gresham, CFF/IDTA  
Ken DeCerchio, CFF/IDTA

##### **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 March 24, 2017 meeting were approved.

### III. Update on SEI reports to DFS

Jen Donahue and Trenee Parker discussed the SEI notifications to DFS in 2017. As of 5/5/17, there were 141 reports to DFS, of which DFS screened in 98 for investigation. There have been 2 deaths and 2 near deaths of SEIs so far this year. Since 2015, there have been 7 deaths and 10 near deaths. Jen reported that 30% of the 141 mothers have a prior documented SEI. Almost 38% of these mothers have a documented mental health history and 37% have a prior DFS history as a child. Jen reported that the SEI database will now capture zip codes where mothers reside.

Heather Baker reported that for the first quarter of 2017, there have been 99 NAS infants, of which 91 were funded by Medicaid.

There was some discussion surrounding safe sleeping instructional tools for mothers and Wendy Felts indicated that there is a new safe sleep video that features herself and her 2 boys. The group also talked about how mothers' methadone dosing after the infant is born can sometimes be too high thereby causing her to fall asleep while holding the infant. Pam Jimenez and Cathy McKay discussed the need to titrate mothers' dosages by 10mg after the birth. Dr. Ierardi stated that the women's prison has a policy of weaning the mother completely off of methadone after the baby is born.

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

Jen Donahue provided an overview of HB 140 and advised that the bill was heard in the House Judiciary Committee last week and was unanimously approved to be released to the House Appropriations Committee to address the fiscal note of \$285,000. That Committee will likely meet in early June. It was further agreed that there should be a delay in implementation of the law in order to allow for policy updates, training, and the plan of safe care pilot program. Jen also indicated that Rep. Briggs King has a pending bill to designate the third week of September as Infants with Prenatal Substance Exposure Awareness Week. Finally, Jen advised the group that Aiden's father, Doyle Hundley, pled guilty to Murder by Neglect and is facing 15 years to life in prison. The prosecutors recommended 30 years, but the sentencing Judge will have the discretion to sentence him up to life in prison.

V. In-Depth Technical Assistance Presentation

Jill Gresham, our IDTA change leader, provided a power point presentation on the state and national trends regarding SEIs and substance abuse, CAPTA, best practices, and lessons learned by other IDTA states. Jen Donahue reviewed the IDTA State Action Plan Goals as follows:

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 Knearl reviewed the results of the survey to birthing hospitals and a survey for OB/gyn practitioners in order to determine screening and testing policies for pregnant women. Emily noted that we only had 11 replies from ob/gyn practitioners so the plan is to introduce a shortened version of the survey at the next ACOG Meeting on June 15.

Ken DeCerchio noted that Delaware has done a great job at collaborating and pulling together as a team from various domains and agencies. He stated that we are ahead of the curve and that other states are reviewing Aiden's Law.

VI. The next meeting of the Committee will occur on Friday, July 14, 2017 from 9:30-11:30am at Kent General Hospital in Dover, DE.

VII. Public Comment

No public comment was received and the meeting was adjourned.