

## **Early Childhood Task Force minutes 10-27-2021, 9:30 am**

This meeting was held via zoom with the following present:

Ginger Knisley, Missy Park, Carolyn Baker, Rachael Patterson-Rahn, Melissa Daugherty, Amy Hayes, Tessa Schroeder, Jolene Dilks, Kathy Osipowicz, Devan Cress, Malia Love, Venissa White, and Paula Vandervelde.

The agenda and previous meeting minutes were accepted as written

Ginger gave an **administrative update** including updates regarding FY22 funding, IWF projects, Resilient Communities work, and Designation.

### **Child Care/Preschool**

Jolene shared that staffing is still a very big issue. They have done a big push on Facebook and Indeed to look for new staff so they can get children in off the wait list. There are currently about 30 children on their waiting list. They are finishing up ASQ screenings and making referrals to AEA. Lack of transportation with the school district is also an issue and SEIBUS charges \$25 per child per month and only operates on a regular schedule which does not allow for snow days, early out days, etc.

Amy is wrapping up immunization audits as the state moved up the deadline significantly. She has done some on site visits for health and safety and injury checklists. Staffing in child care remains a big issue. Very high turnover is evident in the number of requests she gets for CPR for new staff. There is a great need for quality staff who will stay.

Malia is working with providers to renew their QRS applications before the IQ4K system drops in on April 1<sup>st</sup>. All consultants are heading to Davenport to train on the new IQ4K system. She is also working on a survey to providers regarding transportation and is open to suggestions for additional questions or topics. She is producing this survey in response to a lot of calls regarding transportation, especially in Lee County. Some providers are thinking of dropping registration simply because they cannot get transportation arranged with the school districts. Central Lee busses to the Y centers in Donnellson but that appears to be all that is offered in Lee County.

Ginger shared that provider forums will be reinstated beginning November 15<sup>th</sup> when Group Partners will be sharing information on how to navigate the marketplace as they believe many providers are eligible for low or no cost health coverage.

### **Oral Health**

Rachael shared she learned during provider outreach in August and September that no area private dentists are accepting Medicaid which is now on a 2 payer system. Families with Medicaid dental coverage only have the CHC clinics to go to which makes ECI funded services even more important than ever before. The LCHD is ready and waiting to do the silver diamine treatment on willing clients and may initiate it at Head Start. They are using items purchased at the end of FY21 as incentives for consent return rates at sites. They also are making use of a new robust auto texting system for follow up with families. Rachael also shared LCHD staff are going through the process to become certified navigators for the health care marketplace system.

### **Mental Health (no update this month)**

#### **Family Support**

Melissa reports not much is new. They are working on recruiting new families and are changing the focus of their outreach to stress school readiness. The ECTF members suggested distributing information on all family support programs with food pantry boxes and Christmas for Kids/Toys for Tots efforts.

VBPAT is doing home visits and groups primarily in person but still offering virtual option. The biggest issues facing families are housing and child care. There are huge waitlists for housing and some families have actually dropped from the program due to having to move to find housing.

Missy also has openings in her program. They are using end of the year items purchased as incentives for home visit participation. They are promoting family activities with interaction. She reports a slowdown in incoming referrals and that the birth rate at FMCH seems lower in recent months.

Missy has noticed families staying in the program longer, once enrolled, now that in person visits have resumed.

Ginger asked for all ECTF members to be vigilant in the community and report back anything learned as to why families are not enrolling in family support. Across both counties there is a significant number of open slots in programs.

**Other programs/business:**

Kathy shared that there will be a child passenger safety event at the LCHD parking lot in partnership with the Lee County Sheriff's department Saturday, November 6<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Missy suggested Kathy check to see if any LCHD staff will be on hand to have the building open for restroom use. Malia asked if CPS techs could have CCR&R parent outreach materials on hand at the event and Kathy said yes. They will be mailed to Ginger.

The next ECTF meeting will be on Wednesday, November 17, 2021 at 9:30 am via Zoom

gk