

September 13, 2012

Patrick O'Donnell, Clerk of the Legislature
State Capitol, Room 2018
PO Box 94604
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509

Dear Mr. O'Donnell:

Legislative Bill 820 of the 102nd Legislative Session of 2012 requires the Foster Care Reimburesment Rate Committee to report on its activities to the Health and Human Services Committee on or before September 15, 2012.

The attached report provides a progress summary regarding committee activities to date. The report includes meeting minutes from the meetings in June, July and August 2012.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Pristow', enclosed within a large, loopy oval shape.

Thomas D. Pristow, MSW, ACSW, Director
Division of Children and Family Services
Department of Health and Human Services

REPORT FOR: Nebraska Legislature, Health and Human Services Committee
REPORT DATE: September 15, 2012
LEGISLATIVE BILL LB 820, Sections 4 & 5
COMMITTEE NAME Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee
CONTACT PERSON: Sara Goscha, DHHS, 402-471-8404

General Information

LB 820, Sections 4 & 5 requires the Department to create a committee to develop a standard statewide foster care reimbursement rate structure. This will include a statewide standardized level of care assessment and tie performance with payments to achieve permanency outcomes for children and families.

Progress Summary

Since the July 1, 2012 report, the full Committee met in the Nebraska State Office Building in Lincoln on the following dates:

- July 11, 2012
- August 6, 2012
- September 5, 2012

The meeting minutes are attached to this report for reference.

The Nebraska Public Meeting Calendar is being used for meeting notices.

DHHS established public web pages for the Commission activity, and posts final minutes for this committee on-line. <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/childrenscommission.aspx>

The two sub-committees established at the June 20, 2012 meeting met as follows:

The Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Sub-Committee met

- July 9, 2012
- July 30, 2012

Rate discussion included an analysis of the Nebraska FCPAY checklist, the M.A.R.C. study and data, and the USDA Cost of raising children by age group report. These documents include some similar information, however further analysis is required to compare the costs reported. The USDA cost of raising children included additional expense categories already provided by DHHS for children in foster care (e.g. medical insurance).

The sub-committee chose to use the Midwest Urban two parent family as a baseline to calculate the minimum rate to care for a child in foster care. Further methodology and calculations will be shared with the committee for final approval of a baseline rate after the sub-committee completes the final analysis.

The Foster Care Level of Care Sub-Committee met:

- June 28, 2012
- July 11, 2012
- July 30, 2012
- August 17, 2012
- September 5, 2012

The Level of Care sub-committee discussions have centred on researching assessment tools within Nebraska and other states, evaluating their effectiveness, attributes and complications of each. Sub-committee members have taken time to personally contact experts in other states to gain insight into their assessments.

Issues

The Level of Care Assessment sub-committee has received strong recommendations from other states regarding the use of Level of Care Assessment tools, and their use in combination with establishing foster care reimbursement rates.

1. All states interviewed recommended not tying an assessment to foster care payments up front, but instead recommended a "hold harmless" phase where foster parents rates do not change for a period of time;
2. An ongoing quality assurance process is critical to success;
3. Other states recommended training, implementation, ongoing training support;
4. Do not tie foster payment directly to the score from a tool; and
5. Use caution when developing or choosing a tool to ensure the tool or subsequent payment methodology does not include behaviors or conditions that overlap with other services/funding streams (i.e., developmental disabilities, behavioral health, medically fragile, OJS)Recommendations

Recommendations will follow once the sub-committees conclude their work.

An assessment tool and rates are expected to be decided upon in October and November, and will be ready for submission to the Legislature in the December 2012 report.

Enclosures:

Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee meeting activity:

1. June 20, 2012 final minutes
2. July 11, 2012 final minutes
3. August 6, 2012 final minutes
4. September 5, 2012 draft minutes

Minutes

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Thomas Pristow, Director of Children and Family Services at 9:00 am. The Nebraska Open Meetings statute was posted and available.

Roll Call, Present:

Jodi Allen	Rosey Higgs	Gregg Nicklas
Leigh Esau	Joan Kinsey	Barb Nissen
Sara Goscha	Karen Knapp	Charlie Ponec
Carrie Hauschild	Carol Krueger	Thomas Pristow
Susan Henrie	David Newell	Cory Rathbun
		Lana Temple-Plotz

Absent:

Jackie Meyer, Bev Stutzman, Debbie Silverman

Also in attendance: : Kerry Winterer, DHHS, CEO

Cynthia Brammeier, DHHS Special Projects

Nathan Busch, Western Service Area Administrator

Open Meetings Law

Sara Goscha, Special Projects Administrator for Children and Family Services, provided a presentation on the general guidelines for open meetings and public records requirements. By default a quorum for the committee is 10 members and for simple motions to carry, a majority of voting members present in the quorum is required.

Self Introductions

Committee members introduced themselves. A roster of committee members with contact information will be sent to committee members.

Agenda

A motion was made by Gregg Nicklas to accept the agenda as presented, seconded by Cory Rathburn. Voting Yes: Jodi Allen, Rosey Higgs, Gregg Nicklas, Leigh Esau, Joan Kinsey, Barb Nissen, Sara Goscha, Karen Knapp, Charlie Ponec, Carrie Hauschild, Carol Krueger, Thomas Pristow, Susan Henrie, David Newell, Cory Rathbun, and Lana Temple-Plotz. No opposition. Absent: Jackie Meyer, Bev Stutzman, Debbie Silverman. The motion carried.

Adopt Roberts Rules of Order

A motion was made by Dave Newell to accept Roberts Rules of Order for the committee meetings, Karen Knapp seconded the motion. Voting Yes: Jodi Allen, Rosey Higgs, Gregg Nicklas, Leigh Esau, Joan Kinsey, Barb Nissen, Sara Goscha, Karen Knapp, Charlie Ponec, Carrie Hauschild, Carol Krueger, Thomas Pristow, Susan Henrie, David Newell, Cory Rathbun, and Lana Temple-Plotz. No opposition. Absent: Jackie Meyer, Bev Stutzman, Debbie Silverman. The motion carried.

Public Notice of Meetings

A motion was made by Cory Rathburn to use US Mail or e-mail to members for future meeting notices, and the Government Public Meetings web page for the public, seconded by Rosey Higgs .

Voting Yes: Jodi Allen, Rosey Higgs, Gregg Nicklas, Leigh Esau, Joan Kinsey, Barb Nissen, Sara Goscha, Karen Knapp, Charlie Ponec, Carrie Hauschild, Carol Krueger, Thomas Pristow, Susan Henrie, David Newell, Cory Rathbun, and Lana Temple-Plotz. No opposition. Absent: Jackie Meyer, Bev Stutzman, Debbie Silverman. The motion carried.

Overview of Foster Care in Nebraska

Sara Goscha presented materials provided to the committee, and an overview of Foster Care in Nebraska.

Creation of Sub-Committees

A motion was made by Gregg Nicklas to create a Level of Care Assessment Sub-Committee consisting of the following members: Lana Temple-Plotz (Chair), Rosie Higgs, Carol Krueger, Dave Newell, Barb Nissen, Susan Henrie, Joan Kinsey, Karen Knapp and Carrie Hauschild, seconded by Carrie Hauschild . Voting Yes: Jodi Allen, Rosey Higgs, Gregg Nicklas, Leigh Esau, Joan Kinsey, Barb Nissen, Sara Goscha, Karen Knapp, Charlie Ponec, Carrie Hauschild, Carol Krueger, Thomas Pristow, Susan Henrie, David Newell, Cory Rathbun, and Lana Temple-Plotz. No opposition. Absent: Jackie Meyer, Bev Stutzman, Debbie Silverman. The motion carried.

A motion was made by Charlie Ponec moved to create a Foster Care Rate Sub-Committee consisting of the following members: Sara Goscha (Chair), Gregg Nicklas, Leigh Esau, Charlie Ponec, Cory Rathbun, Karen Knapp, Jodi Allen, Joan Kinsey, and Carol Krueger, seconded by Leigh Esau . Voting Yes: Jodi Allen, Rosey Higgs, Gregg Nicklas, Leigh Esau, Joan Kinsey, Barb Nissen, Sara Goscha, Karen Knapp, Charlie Ponec, Carrie Hauschild, Carol Krueger, Thomas Pristow, Susan Henrie, David Newell, Cory Rathbun, and Lana Temple-Plotz. No opposition. Absent: Jackie Meyer, Bev Stutzman, Debbie Silverman. The motion carried.

Report to the Legislative HHS Committee and Children's Commission

A motion was made by Dave Newell to approve the report with amendments reflecting sub-committee member names and listing handouts included in the first meeting, seconded by Barb Nissen. Voting Yes: Jodi Allen, Rosey Higgs, Gregg Nicklas, Leigh Esau, Joan Kinsey, Barb Nissen, Sara Goscha, Karen Knapp, Charlie Ponec, Carrie Hauschild, Carol Krueger, Thomas Pristow, Susan Henrie, David Newell, Cory Rathbun, and Lana Temple-Plotz. No opposition. Absent: Jackie Meyer, Bev Stutzman, Debbie Silverman. The motion carried.

Future Meeting Dates

Sara Goscha reviewed future meeting dates and times. All meetings are scheduled in the Nebraska State Office Building, Lower Level A, Lincoln, NE

- a. Wednesday, July 11, 2-4 pm
- b. Monday, August 6, 9-11 am
- c. Wednesday, September 5, 1-3 pm
- d. Thursday, October 11, 2-4 pm
- e. Wednesday, November 14, 2-4 pm

Adjournment

A motion was made by Gregg Nicklas to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 am, seconded by Charlie Ponec. The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 am.

NEBRASKA FOSTER CARE REIMBURSEMENT RATE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, July 11, 2012

2:00 -3:30 PM CST

Nebraska State Office Building

301 Centennial Mall South, Lower Level A

Lincoln, Nebraska

1

1. **Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 PM by Thomas Pristow. Members were welcomed. An announcement was made of the placement of the Open Meetings Act Information in the back of the room, along with the public copy of the agenda and materials for this meeting.

2. **Roll Call:**

Members present:

Jodi Allen	Carol Krueger	Thomas Pristow
Sara Goscha	David Newell	Cory Rathbun
Susan Henrie	Gregg Nicklas	Bev Stutzman
Rosey Higgs	Barb Nissen	Lana Temple-Plotz
Joan Kinsey	Charlie Ponec	

Members absent: Carrie Hauschild, Karen Knapp.

DHHS Staff: Cynthia Brammeier

3. **Approval of Agenda**

There is time for public comment on the agenda today; speakers will have three minutes each to speak about items on the agenda.

A motion was made by Gregg Nicklas to accept the agenda as presented, seconded by Charlie Ponec. Voting Yes: Jodi Allen, Sara Goscha, Susan Henrie, Rosey Higgs, Joan Kinsey, Carol Krueger, David Newell, Gregg Nicklas, Barb Nissen, Charlie Ponec, Thomas Pristow, Cory Rathbun, Bev Stutzman, and Lana Temple-Plotz.

Absent: Leigh Esau, Carrie Hauschild, Karen Knapp, Jackie Meyer, Debbie Silverman.

The motion passed.

4. **Approval of Minutes:**

A motion was made by Rosey Higgs to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by Cory Rathbun. Voting Yes: Jodi Allen, Sara Goscha, Susan Henrie, Rosey Higgs, Joan Kinsey, Carol Krueger, David Newell, Gregg Nicklas, Barb Nissen, Charlie Ponec, Thomas Pristow, Cory Rathbun, Bev Stutzman, and Lana Temple-Plotz.

Absent: Leigh Esau, Carrie Hauschild, Karen Knapp, Jackie Meyer, Debbie Silverman.

The motion passed.

5. **Public Comment:** None.

6. Leigh Esau, Jackie Meyer, and Debbie Silverman are now present at the meeting.

7. **Comments from the Director.**

Director Pristow shared his thoughts on foster care services in Nebraska, and cooperative efforts to improve the system for Nebraska's children.

8. **Old Business**

a. Sub-Committee Reports

- Standard Level of Care Assessment Sub-Committee Report - Lana Temple-Plotz
The Level of Care Sub-Committee has met twice since the June 20 committee meeting. Assessment tools from Oklahoma, Virginia, Wisconsin, Nebraska's

NEBRASKA FOSTER CARE REIMBURSEMENT RATE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, July 11, 2012

2:00 -3:30 PM CST

Nebraska State Office Building

301 Centennial Mall South, Lower Level A

Lincoln, Nebraska

2

FCPAY, and NFC's are being reviewed by the committee. Discussion included treatment level needs and foster home placements. The deadline for an assessment tool is December; however, continuous review of tools and processes is expected.

- Rates Sub-Committee - Sara Goscha

The Rate Sub-Committee met once since the June 20 committee meeting. Legislation required analysis using the Meeting the M.A.R.C. report, which was distributed at the 6/20/12 meeting. The "USDA Expenditures on Children by Families, 2011" was distributed on 6/20/12, and was used by the sub-committee. A comparison of the two reports, with merged and averaged data from the USDA report will be presented at the next sub-committee meeting.

- b. July 1 Report, Final Submission - Sara Goscha

A copy of the July 1, 2012 Report to the Legislature HHS Committee was distributed to the committee.

9. New Business

- a. Foster Care Stipend Survey - Leigh Esau

Leigh conducted a foster parent survey and presented results verbally. At the August meeting, she will present the materials in writing.

10. Next Meeting: August 6, 9-11 am, NSOB LL-A

11. Adjourn:

A motion was made by Debbie Silverman to adjourn the meeting at 3:30pm, seconded by Barb Nissen. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30pm.

1. **Call to Order** :

Sara Goscha called the meeting to order at 9:00AM. Director Pristow is out of town, and sends his regrets.

An announcement was made that this is a public meeting, and a copy of the Open Meetings Act Information is in the back, as is an agenda for this meeting.

2. **Roll Call, Present:**

Sara Goscha	Carol Krueger	Charlie Ponec
Susan Henrie	Jackie Meyer	Debbie Silverman
Rosey Higgs	David Newell	Bev Stutzman
Joan Kinsey	Gregg Nicklas	Lana Temple-Plotz
Karen Knapp	Barb Nissen	

Absent:

Jodi Allen	Leigh Esau	Carrie Hauschild
Thomas Pristow	Cory Rathbun	

DHHS Staff: Cynthia Brammeier

3. **Approval of Agenda**

It was moved by Gregg Nicklas to approve the agenda as presented, Rosey Higgs seconded the motion. Voting Yes: Sara Goscha, Susan Henrie, Rosie Higgs, Joan Kinsey, Karen Knapp, Carol Krueger, Jackie Meyer, Gregg Nicklas, Barb Nissen, Charlie Ponec, Debbie Silverman, Bev Stutzman, Lana Temple-Plotz. No abstentions. Absent: Jodi Allen, Leigh Esau, Carrie Hauschild, Thomas Pristow, Cory Rathbun. The motion carried.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

It was moved by Jackie Meyer to approve the minutes of the July 11, 2012 meeting as presented, Debbie Silverman second the motion. Voting Yes: Sara Goscha, Susan Henrie, Rosie Higgs, Joan Kinsey, Karen Knapp, Carol Krueger, Jackie Meyer, Gregg Nicklas, Barb Nissen, Charlie Ponec, Debbie Silverman, Bev Stutzman, Lana Temple-Plotz. No abstentions. Absent: Jodi Allen, Leigh Esau, Carrie Hauschild, Thomas Pristow, Cory Rathbun. The motion carried.

5. **Public Comment:** There was no public comment.

6. **Old Business**

- Sub-Committee Reports - Handouts were added to the public copy of the agenda for the meeting in the back of the room as they were presented in the meeting.
- Standard Level of Care Assessment Sub-Committee Report: Lana Temple-Plotz presented materials and information regarding the sub-committee efforts to date.
 - The sub-committee met on July 11 and 30. Several assessment tools have been and are being reviewed from several states. A recommendation is expected in September or October to this group.
 - Several states recommend not tying an assessment tool to payment amounts immediately.

- Rates Sub-Committee: Sara Goscha presented rates from the sub-committee.
 - Data analyzed included the M.A.R.C. Report, USDA cost of raising a child in the Midwest, and FCPAY.
- The Legislative report is due September 15. Sara Goscha discussed the content of the report; a draft will be presented at the September 5 meeting for committee review and approval.

7. New Business

- Foster Care Stipend Survey - Leigh Esau was not available, this will be presented in September.

8. Next Meetings:

- September 5, 1-3pm, NSOB LL-A; Sara asked that members send Cynthia Brammeier agenda items for the next meeting.
- October 11, 1-3pm, NSOB LL-A
- November 6, 1-3pm, NSOB LL-D

9. Adjourn

It was moved by Debbie Silverman, and seconded by Karen Knapp to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 10:10am.

1. Welcome & Call to Order

Thomas Pristow called the meeting to order at 1:02pm.

2. Roll Call, Members Present:

Jodi Allen	Rosey Higgs	David Newell
Leigh Esau	Joan Kinsey	Barb Nissen
Sara Goscha	Karen Knapp	Charlie Ponec
Carrie Hauschild	Carol Krueger	Thomas Pristow
Susan Henrie	Jackie Meyer	Cory Rathbun
		Lana Temple-Plotz

Absent: Gregg Nicklas, Debbie Silverman, Bev Stutzman

Staff present: Cynthia Brammeier, DHHS

3. Approval of Agenda

It was moved by Charlie Ponec to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Rosey Higgs Voting yes: Jodi Allen, Leigh Esau, Sara Goscha, Carrie Hauschild, Susan Henrie, Rosey Higgs, Joan Kinsey, Karen Knapp, Carol Krueger, Jackie Meyer, David Newell, Barb Nissen, Charlie Ponec, Thomas Pristow, Cory Rathbun, Lana Temple-Plotz. Absent: Gregg Nicklas, Debbie Silverman, Bev Stutzman. The motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Charlie Ponec to approve the minutes with the time of today's meeting changed to 1-3pm, seconded by Carol Krueger. Voting yes: Jodi Allen, Leigh Esau, Sara Goscha, Carrie Hauschild, Susan Henrie, Rosey Higgs, Joan Kinsey, Karen Knapp, Carol Krueger, Jackie Meyer, David Newell, Barb Nissen, Charlie Ponec, Thomas Pristow, Cory Rathbun, Lana Temple-Plotz. Absent: Gregg Nicklas, Debbie Silverman, Bev Stutzman. The motion carried.

5. Director Comments:

Thomas Pristow reported attending the FFTA (Foster Family Based Treatment Association) meeting recently.

Thomas discussed the evaluation of Tier 3 Foster Care Rates, and changes that are being considered for this category. A menu approach to purchase additional services for a period of time is being considered. These may be services provided by an outside source, e.g. family support.

Gregg Nicklas joined the meeting at this time.

6. Public Comment: There was no public comment.

7. **Sub-Committee Reports:**

- i. Level Of Care Sub-Committee, Lana Temple-Plotz reported on activities, and provided a handout listing the states interviewed and assessment tools reviewed to date. Michigan is an additional state contacted. Data collected to date will be available on the website. The sub-committee is looking for SDM compatible assessment tools. The next meeting is September 17, 2012.
- ii. Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Sub-committee, Sara Goscha reported on activities. The sub-committee plans to recommend rates in October, allowing a month of analysis with both sub-committees before the November meeting and a final recommendation to the Legislature in December. Transportation requires more analysis.

8. **Legislative Report:**

Sara Goscha presented a draft report for review. Karen Knapp moved to accept the draft report with additions in the 'Issues' topic, to read

1. *All states interviewed recommended not tying an assessment to foster care payments up front, but instead have a "hold harmless" phase where foster parents rates do not change for a period of time;*
2. *An ongoing quality assurance process is critical to success,*
3. *Other states recommended training, implementation, and ongoing training support;*
4. *Do not tie foster payment directly to the score from a tool; and*
5. *Use caution when developing or choosing a tool to ensure the tool or subsequent payment methodology does not include behaviors or conditions that overlap with other services/funding streams (i.e., developmental disabilities, behavioral health, medically fragile, OJS).*

Voting yes: Jodi Allen, Leigh Esau, Sara Goscha, Carrie Hauschild, Susan Henrie, Rosey Higgs, Joan Kinsey, Karen Knapp, Carol Krueger, Jackie Meyer, David Newell, Gregg Nicklas, Barb Nissen, Charlie Ponec, Thomas Pristow, Cory Rathbun, Lana Temple-Plotz.
Absent: Debbie Silverman, Bev Stutzman. The motion carried.

9. **Foster Care Stipend Survey:** Leigh Esau reported on the Foster Care Stipend survey conducted. This information was shared via email earlier.

10. New Business: There was no new business.

11. **Next meetings:**

- October 11, 2012 1-3pm, NSOB LL-A
- November 14, 2012, 2-4pm, NSOB LL-A

12. **Adjournment:** Cory Rathbun moved to adjourn the meeting, Jodi Allen seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 1:55pm.