First Steps South East

LPCC Quarterly Meeting – Cluster H

Wednesday, February 7, 2024

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 9:02am.

Introductions and Inspirational Story

Holly Leisure, Vice-Chairperson is leading the meeting today. Several people are in attendance who have not attended in a little while, so everyone introduced themselves. Everyone is encouraged to ask clarifying questions if there is anything discussed that you do not understand.

Julianne Jerrell from Hopewell Center shared an inspirational story about a community family who is giving some profits from their baking business to Hopewell. The family was introduced to Hopewell when their child, now 21 years old, received early intervention. The baked goods are being sold at Gathered Finds, located in Anderson at College and 53rd St.

Becky Haymond shared she was really inspired with the opportunity to attend the Division of Early Childhood Conference which inspired her to propose a presentation at the upcoming Indiana Early Intervention Conference. The conference had some specialized training sessions focused on Service Coordination.

Consent Agenda

Motion to approve minutes and consent agenda was given by Julianne Jarrell and Scott Merkel seconded the motion. Minutes and Consent Agenda were approved.

Financial Report

Becky Haymond reviewed the distributed SPOE budget report. The budget numbers show for the time period starting from the start of the grant year of July 1, 2023, so we are about 50% through the year. Computer upgrade expenses will be coming in the materials category of the budget report later in the grant year.

Other Business

Cluster Oversight and System Updates

- Provider Networks Update
 - Julianne Jarrell of Hopewell Center reported that there is not too much new news at Hopewell. The new Speech Therapist is up and going and increasing her hours quicker than expected.
 - Tammy Miller of NCA Therapy said they have several new providers starting, but the onboarding takes a few months to get providers up and running.
 - Becky Haymond from the SPOE mentioned that two additional members have been added to the Assessment Team to assist on an as needed basis. The OT added speaks some Spanish.
- Training Opportunities Training opportunities shared by the group:
 - More info was shared about the upcoming Indiana Early Intervention Conference 2024 set for June 13-14, 2024 in person in Bloomington. Early bird registration cost is \$100, then goes up to \$125. There is a virtual attendance option with a cost of \$50. For anyone wanting to stay at the Marriot Hotel, the conference link to special pricing is not working, but you can call the hotel directly and ask for the conference rates. Be sure to ask for "Early Intervention"

Conference" instead of "First Steps Conference". Two Service Coordinators from our Cluster H are on the conference planning committee.

Statistical Reports –

- Statistical report handouts were reviewed which include Referrals, Evaluations, and Initial IFSPs for the entire 2023.
 - Referrals It was noted that the number of referrals is almost back to pre-Covid levels. The numbers show what counties in the Cluster have the highest number of referrals.
 - Evaluations Becky noted that Evaluations in our Cluster are typically able to be scheduled with two weeks notice. This is better than in several other parts of the state, and is a good element of service to our families. Robyn Duffy wants to understand the SPOE decision to recommend virtual evaluations, i.e. if reducing travel time was the primary consideration. Becky said there are multiple pieces to the recommendation. There is an advantage to families to get eligibility established quickly. There is an advantage also for maintaining assessment team workforce across all counties since reimbursement consistency is better when last minute family cancellations occur as assessment team members are paid on contract only for completed assessments. The difference can be completing 5 assessments per day versus 2 assessments depending on the scenario. Assessments requested to be in person do take more planning and so are not available as quickly. Robyn from Head Start reports on the benefits when the Head Start teachers participate in the Assessments for any of the Head Start children who receive First Steps at the Head Start location. It's a win-win for the staff and the child. Becky reaffirmed that First Steps wants to have community partners as contributors throughout the First Steps process. Scott Merkel asked for clarification on the what the IFSP statistics show in regards to how Initial Assessments might be different than Annual Assessments. Becky explained that the statistics presented for IFSPs does only show the new IFSP written. IFSPs are planned for one year and near the end of that year, a new assessment occurs which includes consideration of the progress reports. Sometimes, if a new medical diagnosis has occurred in the past year in a high-risk category, it is acceptable for the annual assessment to be completed by one assessment team member only and the assessment team member can confirm ongoing need via paperwork review.

Note: At this point in the meeting, we skipped to the New Business section of the agenda to allow the guest speakers from BISC to share.

New Business (Part 1)

BISC Project, Indiana University – The three BISC team members attending today introduced themselves and gave and overview of the study history and participation. BISC stands for Behavior Interventions for Social Communication. Slides were presented. The BISC Research Project is enrolling interested First Steps providers. See the provided meeting handout for details. Participants receive various types of benefits and takes place over 24 weeks. Technology is utilized making travel unnecessary. Providers can't be doing the FGRBI training at the same time as the BISC Research Project. The BISC team members are open to doing in-service presentations to provider groups during the recruitment period.

Note: At this point in the meeting, skipped back to the Statistical reports section of the agenda.

• IFSPs (Individualized Family Service Plans)—It was noted that the statistical report seemed to show about the same number of referrals as the previous year, but more evaluations and more Initial IFSPs than the previous year. The conclusion is that more children are presenting with higher needs than the previous year which is leading to more families concerned enough to make time complete the evaluation process and more children being eligible and getting signed up for an IFSP. Julianne noted that the SPOE's effort with reports is appreciated since the state is not able to provide the reports that show these statistics, so the SPOE has established a way to track. The state is working on being able to track these statistics again as they did once did with profile reports several years ago. Tammy with NCA noted that her agency feels the impact of more children needing services than before. Tammy reports that there are 845 families being served by NCA right now which is the highest number ever.

Staffing Update –

 Becky Haymond from the SPOE reported that staff have welcomed three babies recently, so three staff are on parental leave.

o El Hub -

- Becky Haymond, SPOE Director, says that there are no current EI Hub updates, but there is a version release being planned for the future. The SPOE is providing continuous training to Service Coordinator through monthly mini-trainings. The mini-trainings focus a lot around using EI Hub components.
- Tammy Miller, NCA Therapy, reports she feels that EI Hub has been performing a little better recently regarding speed of loading. There were some times when the system wasn't working, and her staff did not want to temporarily use paper forms, so that speaks well to the system that staff would prefer to be able to use the system over paper record-keeping as in the past. Tammy asked for clarification from Becky if there were any open Service Coordinator positions right now, and Becky replied that the SPOE is currently fully staffed.
- Julianne Jerrell, Hopewell Center, reported that she agrees the system seems to be processing a bit faster. Julianne is happy that the active authorizations now show provider names. Julianne wishes families and Service Coordinators had access to therapy session notes that are saved in EI Hub. She would also want to see future authorizations. Tammy agrees it is handy to be able to see the session notes as an administrator. Becky says that only SPOE administrative staff can see the notes. Service Coordinators can't see the notes, but it is the state's long-term plan to make it possible for Service Coordinators.

Old Business

 LPCC Meeting Dates 2024 – Meeting dates for our Cluster H quarterly LPCC meetings were set at our last meeting in November and were sent out by Anne to the group. If you need a copy, you can reach out to Anne.

New Business (Part 2)

Transition MOUs – The state requires that Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) are maintained between Early Childhood Transition partners including LEAs (Local Education Associations) and Head Starts. The current Memorandums are up for renewal by July 1, 2024. Partners can expect communication from the SPOE before the end of March concerning plans to review and renew each MOU. The group discussed options for LPCC Meetings for 2024. Becky is not aware of any changes in the agreement between the state First Steps program and the Department of Education, so the text of the Memorandum is likely to be the same as the current agreement with only a change to the dates. The SPOE will likely use the same process to discuss the MOU with partners by offering a joint Zoom meeting

- and offering the option for visiting individually virtually and/or in person to discuss. The MOUs, once all signed, will be posted on the local First Steps website by July 1 due date. Robyn asked if the SPOE has the new contact for Jay County Head Start (Robyn will send contact to SPOE as follow-up). Anne Dolan mentioned that the local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) services are also helpful partners when it comes to families preparing for preschool-age Transition.
- State Quality Review Compliance The State First Steps program completed a review of the SPOE's Early Intervention Records for Cluster H and has provided a written report of the results to the SPOE. In many areas the SPOE met the performance targets, but there were are few areas of not meeting the target: 1) 30 day start of service from IFSP date - Delays in the Start of Service are due to limited number of available providers. 2) The 45 days from referral to IFSP written – The SPOE is reviewing the internal processes with Service Coordinators in order to improve in this standard. 3) Timely Transition Meeting prior to 90 days before child's third birthdate - The time when this timeline was missed occurred when a Service Coordinator staff person left their position without good documentation. Julianne commented that overall, the results seem pretty good for the SPOE. Afterall, the 30 day start challenge due to limited provider ability is not something the SPOE can control, and the Transition timeliness calculation is due to only missing one meeting date out of the group reviewed. Julianne wants to know how this SPOE did in comparison to other SPOEs around the state. Robyn replied to Julianne that the ICC (Interagency Coordinating Council) was provided with results from all Clusters and Robyn can attest that other SPOEs had similar results. Becky noted that one area where our SPOE did very well in comparison to some other SPOEs is in getting evaluations scheduled promptly. Stacey Wright at the SPOE office works very hard to rearrange the evaluation schedule when families need to cancel to reschedule promptly. The performance report discussed today is the State reviewing our SPOE, however, our SPOE also has internal review staff to stay on top of quality. In addition to the State Quality Review of Records report, the ICC meeting included a First Steps program report to the Governor which should be available to the public soon.

Announcements and Updates

Holly opened the floor for announcements and updates from any attendees.

- April is Child Abuse Prevention Month Tashia Weaver with Firefly Family & Child Alliance shared information about many events coming up Jay County Pinwheel Motorcyle Ride April 20th, Blackford County Superhero Walk April 17th, Delaware County Superhero Walk April 1st, Randolph County Touch-a-Truck April 6th. Events have community resource tables and activities for families.
- o **CASY Webinar** Ben Flick with CASY Child Care Resource and Referral shared that CASY is having a virtual year in review presentation on February 29th that everyone is invited to.
- Anderson Preschool Expo Scott Merkel shared that Anderson Intermediate School will be hosting a
 family event on Saturday 9th geared toward sharing resources with families with preschool children.
 There are also plans to set up a preschool registration in April and an open house for Service
 Coordinators and providers to build understanding of the developmental preschool and programing.
- First Steps Wants Event Info Becky mentioned that First Steps is interested in sharing info to families about child friendly events, so please continue to share info with Anne and Becky so that it can be funneled to Service Coordinators to share with families. In Cluster H, we also have a contracted person who can represent First Steps at events if staff aren't available.
- Next LPCC Meeting May 1, 2024 at 9 am, will be virtual.

Adjournment

Robyn moved to adjourn meeting. Julianne seconds. Meeting adjourned 10:34am.

Attendance:

Austin Whitney First Steps South East, SPOE Supervisor
Cougill Mikayla First Steps South East, Office Manager
Dolan Anne First Steps South East, LPCC Coordinator

Duffy Robyn Carey Service Head Start

Ferguson Ginger First Steps South East, Service Coordinator Flick Ben CASY Child Care Resource and Referral

Foley Janell First Steps South East, Lead Service Coordinator and Trainer

Gilbert Lindsey Hamilton Boone Madison Special Services Haymond Becky First Steps South East, Program Director

Hicks Everitt Ivy Tech

Henson Carrie First Steps South East, Service Coordinator

Horn Kathryn BISC Project, Indiana University

Jarrell Julianne Hopewell Center

Kupferer Amy First Steps South East, Service Coordinator Larcom Rose First Steps South East, Service Coordinator

Leisure Holly East Coast Migrant Head Start
McGeary Addison BISC Project, Indiana University
Merkel Scott Anderson Community Schools

Miller Tammy NCA Therapy

Ploughe April Transition Resources Head Start

Schwering Sharon First Steps South East, Service Coordinator

Shaffer Susan Transition Resources Head Start

Watkins Rylie Reid Hospital

Weaver Tashia Firefly Children & Family Alliance Zook Lucy BISC Project, Indiana University