



Protection Committee
Richard Stagliano, Chair
Liza Kirschenbaum, Esq, Vice-Chair
September 23, 2020
Virtual Meeting
Minutes

In Attendance:

Greta Anderson	NJ DCF – Institutional Abuse Investigation Unit (IAIU)
Joyce Applegate	Catholic Charities
Eileen Caraker	Gloucester County Prosecutor’s Office
Esther East	Jewish Family Services
Martin Finkel	CARES Institute
Marilyn Gorney-Daley	NJ Department of Health
Joanne Hatt	Passaic County Prosecutor’s Office
Liza Kirschenbaum	CASA of New Jersey
Lisa Landsman	Trainer/Consultant
Nydia Monagas	NJ Children’s Alliance
Sonia Moticha	Department of Education
Clinton Page	NJ Department of Children & Families
Nora Pearce	Trainer/Consultant
Jane Reynolds	Mercer County Prosecutor’s Office
Tara Rizzolo	Embrella
Richard Stagliano	Center for Family Services
Jennifer Underwood	NJ Department of Community Affairs
Lorene Wilkerson	NJ Child Placement Advisory Council

Staff:

Daniel Yale	NJ Department of Children & Families
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Introduction and Welcome

The meeting was called to order and the Open Public Meetings notice was read. A brief welcome was provided by Richard Stagliano and each member provided a brief introduction.

Review and Approve June 10, 2020 Minutes

The June 10, 2020 minutes were approved with the following edit: On page 5, change the word “force” to “require”.

DCF Quality Standard Development – Barriers to Services Survey

Daniel explained that the Quality Standard Development – Barriers to Services Survey was sent to all members after the presentation by Charyl Yarborough at DCF’s Office of Quality. The intent was that there would be some discussion and any comments/ideas would be sent to Charyl to improve the survey. Dr. Finkel observed that he did not see any mention of accessibility to teletherapy as a mode of receiving services. Dr. Finkel stated that teletherapy can be very effective, often times as effective as in-person therapy. The no show rate is lower, it is more convenient and less expensive than



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traditional therapy. Liza felt that there is a need to pinpoint transportation issues as it can be a problem in some areas of the state. Liza also stated that there are issues with children and families being able to access the internet as well as having the necessary equipment to do so. Tara Rizzolo felt that hours of operation and appointment availability should also be included. There was also an issue regarding the use of the term “patient” rather than “client” throughout the survey.

Committee Initiatives

The Digital Realm of Child Abuse Workgroup

Lorene Wilkerson advised the Committee that the workgroup recently met and has prepared a document containing an introduction and background to be attached to the survey results when submitting to the NJ Department of Education (DOE). There is no timeframe regarding when these documents will be submitted due to COVID-19. Lorene asked if this document should be reviewed by the Task Force prior to submission. Richard and Dr. Finkel agreed that the document would need to be reviewed by the Task Force. Dr. Finkel asked the workgroup about the initiative by the NJ DOE to put in standards for this issue. Sonia Moticha explained that the 2020 NJ Student Learning Standards were passed this year with a goal of being implemented in schools, depending on the subject area, 2021 or 2022. The workgroup thought that this would be an opportune time to share these recommendations as the planning process is underway. The workgroup asked the Committee to approve these documents so that the Task Force can approve at their next meeting. Liza made a motion to approve the narrative report from the Digital Realm of Child Abuse workgroup to be forwarded to the DOE for consideration. The Committee voted to approve the motion.

Juveniles with Sexually Inappropriate Behaviors Workgroup

Richard informed the Committee that the Juveniles with Sexually Inappropriate Behaviors workgroup met at the end of July and asked Nydia to provide a summary of what was discussed. Nydia stated that when Dr. Krupnick was heading the workgroup, the focus was mainly on the adjudication of youth and how to ensure that they were engaged in appropriate services as well as enhancing training for those professionals who work with that population. The workgroup has decided to shift the focus to school-aged children who are engaging in sexually inappropriate behaviors. Nydia informed the Committee that the New Jersey Children’s Alliance (NJCA) has provided training for professionals in the state to be able to provide Problematic Sexual Behavior – Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (PSB-CBT), an evidence-based treatment. Nydia explained that they had a difficult time getting referrals for treatment.

The workgroup is trying to figure out how to capture data for this type of case and what is happening when these calls are being made to CSOC or DCPD. The data includes how the calls are being coded, are services being provided, are referrals being made, etc. The workgroup is also looking into DCF policy regarding child on child sexual contact. Unfortunately, the policy deals strictly with those in caregiver roles and the workgroup is looking at those cases where the child is not in a caregiver role.



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Dr. Finkel stated that when there is no caretaker involved, DCPD handles the case as a child welfare investigation. Dr. Finkel stated that he informed DCPD in the past that all of these cases should be investigated as child abuse cases and should be referred to an Regional Diagnostic Treatment Center (RDTC). About 40% of the cases that are seen at the CARES Institute are child-on-child sexual contact. Dr. Finkel stated that he is concerned that, due to a lack of resources, these cases will be referred to community providers rather than the specialized services that are offered through an RDTC. Dr. Finkel felt that the first step is to determine what is being done. If what is being done doesn't meet the needs, we need to think about changing the scope of practice. Dr. Finkel stated that perhaps they need to look at changing the statutory mandate of DCF through legislation. Nydia explained that two states, Kansas and Missouri, have passed legislation that mandates their child welfare agency get involved in these types of cases. Nydia stated that if we can address the issue without having to go that route, it would be ideal. Nydia informed the Committee that some Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) have been successful in getting DCPD to follow through with these types of cases, especially when they have a very good relationship with the DCPD office.

Nora Pearce volunteered that she and Lisa Landsman could follow up with their peer group, attorneys and DCF staff, to see what their experience had been with these types of cases. Greta informed the Committee that she has made inquiries to DCF's IT department to determine if a checkbox for this type of case can be included on referrals to DCF so that data can be gathered regarding the number of these types of cases being referred to DCF. Liza asked if this request could include this type of checkbox for all referrals across DCF.

Richard spoke to the Committee about other possible topics for the Committee to discuss in the future. Nydia stated that one of the things that NJCA has done is to create a guide on how to identify and report child abuse through virtual interactions. Nydia asked if perhaps the Committee might want to discuss how to expand this idea. For example, how teachers and health providers who are having virtual interactions with children who aren't being seen by those who are often protective of them (teachers, after school programs, sports, etc.) NJCA has guide in English and Spanish but Nydia felt that it could probably be bigger and be rolled out to more professionals. Liza suggested that Nydia share the guide and the members of the Committee can discuss further.

Meeting adjourned – Next Meeting December 16, 2020.