



IOWA'S PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PIP) QUARTER 3 (APRIL 1, 2012 – JUNE 30, 2012)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction:

The DHS' vision is that all children grow up safe from abuse and with permanent family connections. To achieve this vision, the DHS aligns child welfare resources, through utilizing a customer focus and a dedication to excellence, accountability, and teamwork.

Iowa's child welfare system focuses on the three CFSR domains of safety, permanency, and well-being:

- **Safety**
 - Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.
 - Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.
- **Permanency**
 - Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.
 - The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.
- **Child and family well-being**
 - Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
 - Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
 - Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

Quarter Three PIP Activities:

Outcome/Systemic Factor:	Quarter 3 Targeted Strategies/Activities:
Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision • Results Oriented Management (ROM)
Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.	
Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Team Decision-Making meetings (FTDM) • Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) • Joint Substance Abuse Protocol
Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Interaction
Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caseworker Visits • Expand Responsible Fatherhood and Non-Custodial Parent (NCP) initiative

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand Parent Partners
Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not Addressed in the third quarter
Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caseworker Visits
Systemic Factor: Service Array and Resource Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not addressed in the third quarter
Systemic Factor: Quality Assurance (QA) System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Assurance and Improvement (QA&I) system • Supervision • Results Oriented Management (ROM)

Quarter Three PIP Accomplishments:

Supervision: Iowa recognizes supervision as a key strategy to ensuring quality social work practice, recruiting and retaining quality social workers, and supporting those social workers.

The group continues to complete tasks identified by the CFSR PIP, with third quarter completed tasks below.

- Consulted with Rob Sawyer from the National Resource Center for In-Home Services (NCR-IHS) on group supervision;
- Developed framework and tools for the evaluation of the implementation of the supervisor Model of Practice (MOP);
- Conducted a survey of supervisors and workers in order to establish a baseline for current supervisor practice and to fully understand the training needs of supervisors;
- Began development of training curriculum, including collecting training resources;
- Began development of a supervisor’s guide; and
- Discussed and decided to implement a standing supervisor advisory committee comprising a supervisor from each service area, which would meet regularly to identify best practices, identify barriers to practices and outcomes, and develop strategies to address identified barriers.

Results Oriented Management (ROM): ROM is a web-based system, which will generate reports for supervisors and managers regarding performance on selected indicators. Supervisors and managers will utilize the reports to drive practice discussions and improvements with staff.

While there were no official PIP benchmarks completed in quarter three, the following tasks were completed:

- Created two workgroups, one internal and one external, to review information and reports currently available in ROM and to recommend additional information and reports for ROM based upon stakeholders’ needs;
- Conducted internal and external ROM workgroup events;
- Prioritized recommendations from the two ROM events in a single document for the Service Business Team (SBT);

- SBT directed a small technical group to develop a projected timeline for the prioritized recommendations from the internal and external workgroups; and
- Small group completed their work and forwarded their recommendations to SBT.

Family Team Decision-Making meetings (FTDM): The FTDM process, a strength-based process, encourages families to draw upon formal and informal supports, promotes team decision-making, and provides a healthy environment for resolving conflict and solving problems. Results of the 2010 CFSR identified differences in FTDM practices as a concern.

The workgroup accomplished the following tasks in quarter three:

- Reviewed materials within the state, national standards, and re-approval criteria.
- Reviewed the current approval standards, identified strengths and barriers to effectiveness, and provided recommendations to SBT.
- Recommended that the current approval process be continued with some modifications and recommended a re-approval process be implemented.

Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) for Placement Stability: Iowa Department of Human Services (IDHS) staff chose to focus PDSA efforts on one sub-measure of placement stability, which is children in out of home placement between 12 and 24 months will have 2 or fewer placements.

The following task was completed in quarter three:

- Implemented the PDSA in Black Hawk County on April 1, 2012.
- Case criteria were non-court ordered out-of-home placements with relatives and suitable persons, either during the child abuse assessment or on an ongoing case.
- Process included the following steps completed by the social worker:
 - Enhance engagement with parents and informal support system regarding placement and placement option;
 - Refer family for FTDM to be held within five days; and
 - Refer family to Iowa KidsNet within 5 days of FTDM for home study.
- Five cases met the criteria during the PDSA implementation period of April 1, 2012 through June 30, 2012. PDSA will continue into quarter 4.

Joint Substance Abuse Protocol: In 2008, the Iowa General Assembly passed House File 2310 (HF2310). The purpose of HF2310 was to identify effective means of reducing the incidence and impact of child abuse, including denial of critical care and interventions with families by the child welfare system caused, partially or wholly, by substance misuse, abuse, or dependency by a child's parent, guardian, custodian, or other person responsible for the child's care. The DHS, Iowa Children's Justice (ICJ), and the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) worked together to develop a protocol for working with these families in the child welfare system. DHS, ICJ, and IDPH will expand the Joint Substance Abuse Protocol by rolling it out in two additional counties. Counties having higher rates of abuse per 1,000 will be targeted and recruited.

In quarter three, Iowa began to market the protocol to Adams and Union counties.

Family Interaction: The Family Interaction (FI) Planning model promoted throughout Iowa and based on the work of Norma Ginther seeks to achieve timely and safe reunification through systematic and frequent visitation between children and their parents after removal.

The PIP workgroup assigned to Family Interaction is the same PIP workgroup assigned to FTDM. The workgroup completed the following tasks in quarter three:

- Reviewed a variety of resources, tools, and supporting documents specific to family interactions and locating relatives and supports.
- Based on the review, recommendations were to:
 - Develop a Family Interactions Standards Handbook
 - Update and revise current resources and tools
 - Recommend and/or develop one observation tool

Caseworker Visits: DHS staff formed a group consisting of DHS and Juvenile Court Services (JCS) staff to complete tasks in the PIP regarding the quality, frequency, and documentation of caseworker visits.

While there were no official PIP benchmarks completed in quarter three, the following tasks were completed:

- Developed training on how to conduct quality visits
- Developed implementation plan

Expand Responsible Fatherhood and Non-Custodial Parent (NCP) initiative: DHS staff formed a committee, including staff representing field, policy, administration, and staff from the Child Support Recovery Unit (CSRU), Parent Partners, Iowa Department of Corrections (DOC), and a domestic violence to complete tasks identified by the CFSR PIP.

The workgroup completed the following tasks in quarter three:

- Utilized the Quality Improvement Center for Non-Resident Father Involvement in Child Welfare (QIC-NRF) caseworker curriculum to develop SP 547: Engaging Fathers training
- Continued collaboration with the Iowa Department of Corrections to facilitate DHS social worker engagement with incarcerated parents
- Conducted a pilot utilizing a revised protocol for accessing the Federal Parent Locator Service (FPLS) to locate non-custodial parents

Expand Parent Partners:

Parent Partners (PP) are individuals who previously had their children removed from their care and were successfully reunited with their children for a year or more. PP provides support to parents that are involved with the DHS and are working towards reunification. PP mentor one-on-one, celebrate families' successes and strengths, exemplify advocacy, facilitate training and presentations, and collaborate with the DHS and child welfare. Their efforts support placement stability for children in care, support timely reunification, and support successful reunification to prevent re-entry.

In quarter three, the state Parent Partner Coordinator provided orientation materials to new Parent Partner sites.

Quality Assurance (QA): Because of Iowa's 2003 CF SR, Iowa implemented and continuously operates an identifiable Quality Assurance and Improvement (QA&I) system. The QA&I system serves all of Iowa's 99 counties. The QA&I system evaluates the quality of services, identifies strengths and addresses prioritized need areas of the service delivery system, and provides relevant analysis and reporting of the performance of Iowa's child welfare system. The 2010 CF SR identified areas needing improvement in Iowa's QA system.

The following tasks were completed in quarter three:

- Developed plan to evaluate effectiveness of father engagement training on practice
- Continued case reviews to determine PIP baseline related to select CF SR items

Results of the first three quarters of case reviews support the findings of the federal on-site review held in August 2010; due to this consistency, the identified areas of need are already addressed through improvement efforts captured in Iowa's PIP.

Across the items reviewed, Iowa's primary issues revolve around two areas:

- efforts to identify, locate, and engage non-custodial parents and
- thorough documentation of case work practice

Bureau of Quality Improvement will continue establishing baseline performance through PIP quarter 4 (end of September 2012). Within the PIP, timelines are established to address development, training and implementation of initiatives. As training is completed, focused reviews will be added in order to measure the impact of the initiatives on Iowa's performance.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, Iowa's child welfare system completed the identified PIP benchmarks for quarter three. The benchmarks continue to build upon tasks completed in quarters one and two. The child welfare system will continue its promising practices throughout the PIP implementation period to improve Iowa's child welfare system.

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