



QIC PCW BEST PRACTICES

SHARED VISION

Through a shared vision of improved outcomes for the children and families of our Circuit, both the lead agency and the case management agencies can work together to implement positive change in the planning, contracting and evaluation of service provision.

PLANNING AND CONTRACT NEGOTIATION

Development of the shared vision is accomplished by creating contractual performance-based measures through an inclusive planning and consensus-building process.

CONTRACT MONITORING

Through fiscal incentives and disincentives and thorough contract monitoring, adherence to established performance-based measures can be encouraged.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Evaluation of the project measures the impact of the collaborative contractual planning process, the influence of incentives on the ability of contracting organizations to meet these measures and the effectiveness of modifications to the quality assurance processes that monitor these contracts.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT CENTER PRIVATIZATION OF CHILD WELFARE SYSTEMS (QIC PCW) FLORIDA DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

The Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF), in collaboration with Kids Central, Inc. has established and implemented a demonstration project to identify the impact of several promising privatization practices on child welfare related outcomes.

Kids Central is the Community Based Care (CBC) Lead Agency responsible for organizing the network of care in Florida Judicial Circuit 5, which includes Citrus, Hernando, Lake, Marion and Sumter Counties. As the Lead Agency in Judicial Circuit 5, Kids Central is responsible for creating a system of care through contracts and informal agreements with community-based organizations, called Case Management Agencies (CMAs). The performance-based contracts and quality assurance processes between Kids Central and CMAs are the focus of this demonstration project.

The practices focused on in this project include:

- Articulation of a shared vision driving practice and outcomes
- Implementation of an inclusive planning and contract negotiation process involving private and public providers, administrative and practice staff
- Implementation of a comprehensive contract monitoring process; and
- Development of a quality assurance framework that ensures that the new outcome measures are appropriately evaluated and incorporate feedback-reporting procedures.

The target population for this project are children placed in out-of-home care. This includes all children residing in foster homes, residential treatment facilities, emergency shelters and group homes.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT CENTER ON PRIVATIZATION OF CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FLORIDA DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

HISTORY OF PRIVATIZATION IN FLORIDA

In Florida, the term “privatization” refers to strategies that involve the provision of publicly funded services and activities by non-governmental entities. In 1996, the Florida Legislature mandated the outsourcing of child welfare services through the use of a Lead Agency design. Under this type of arrangement, the public agency contracts with one or more agencies within a designated region to provide or purchase services for the target population from the time of referral until the obligation ends, often at case closure. The intent of the original legislation was to strengthen the support and commitment of local communities to the reunification and care of children and their families, and increase the quality, efficiency and accountability of services.

Between 1999 and 2005, DCF systematically and effectively transitioned the management and day-to-day operations of the Child Welfare system to 22 Lead Agencies; including Kids Central, the experimental group in this demonstration project, and Partnership for Strong Families, the control group in this demonstration project.

Child abuse reports of neglect and abandonment (Hotline Reports) and CPS investigations remain in the public sector and are managed by DCF or by the local Sheriff’s Department.

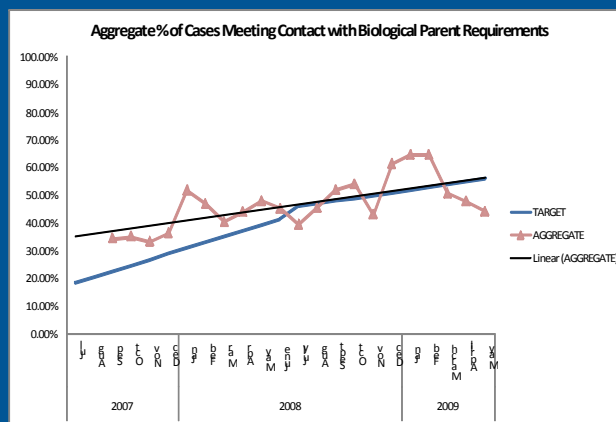
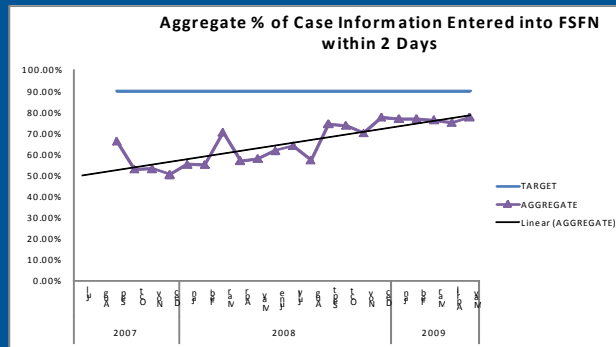
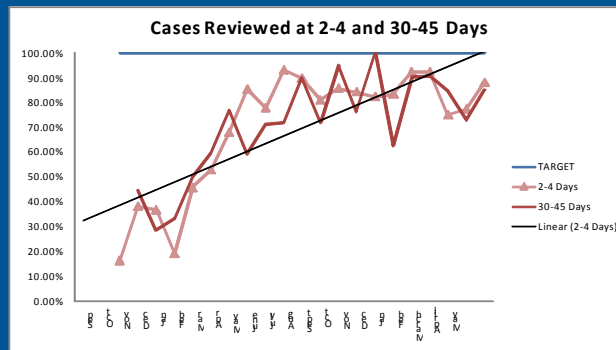
As the Lead Agencies in each of their respective districts, Kids Central and the Partnership for Strong Families are responsible for developing, coordinating and implementing a system of care through contracts and formal agreements with community-based organizations. In both the experimental and control groups, case management services are provided through multiple contract agencies referred to as Case Management Agencies (CMAs).

IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE

Through our rigorous evaluation process, we have identified three primary indicators of success of this program, including:

- Face-to-Face Supervision—These supervisions should occur within 4 days of receipt of the case and then again between 30-45 days after receipt of the case.
- Entry of Case Information—Case information should be entered into the SACWIS system within two days of receipt of case.
- Contact with Biological Parents—Federal law mandates that every effort be made to have contact with biological parents regarding the disposition of any case.

Below, we have provided information regarding the progress that has been made thus far on these indicators and the current status of each.



- A “Supervisory Review Tool” has been designed to guide and focus supervisory sessions with front-line staff
- Kids Central QA has assessed the quality and outcomes of face-to-face supervision
- The Tool has been modified by DCF and made available State-wide
- Extensive discussion centered on the intent of the measure and how it is to be measured.
- Continued difficulty in meeting target
- Strategies to promote compliance with measure proved successful on a short-term basis
- Compliance with required contact with biological parents was extremely low across the entire State
- Consensus regarding giving “credit” for attempted contacts or alternative methods of contact was reached
- Project partners have discussed engagement with parents extensively