

Nebraska Children's Commission – Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee

First Meeting
October 18, 2013
9:00AM-12:00PM
Airport Country Inn and Suites, Platte Room
1301 West Bond Circle, Lincoln, NE 68521

Call to Order

Peg Harriott called the meeting to order at 9:01am and noted that the Open Meetings Act information was posted in the room as required by state law.

Roll Call

Since this was the first meeting of this subcommittee, members were asked to introduce themselves and provide information about themselves and the entities they will represent on the committee.

Subcommittee Members present: Peg Harriott, Jena Davenport, Corrie Edwards, Shannon-Jo-Hamilton, Susan Henrie, Bobby Loud, Jackie Meyer, Sherry Moore, Barb Nissen, Alana Pearson, Katie McLeese Stephenson, Bev Stutzman, and Lana Temple-Plotz.

Ex-Officio Members present: Lindy Bryceson, Sara Goscha, Richard Pope, and Thomas Pristow.

Subcommittee Member(s) absent: Leigh Esau, David Newell, and Ryan Suhr.

Ex-Officio Members absent: Michele Anderson, Karen Knapp, and Debbie Silverman.

Also attending: Leesa Sorensen, Nebraska Children's Commission.

A draft contact directory for the committee was also circulated for members to update as necessary.

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Katie McLeese Stephenson to approve the agenda as written, seconded by Lana Temple-Plotz. Voting yes: Peg Harriott, Jena Davenport, Corrie Edwards, Shannon-Jo-Hamilton, Susan Henrie, Bobby Loud, Jackie Meyer, Sherry Moore, Barb Nissen, Alana Pearson, Katie McLeese Stephenson, Bev Stutzman, and Lana Temple-Plotz. Voting no: none. Leigh Esau, David Newell, and Ryan Suhr were absent. Motion carried.

Chair's Report

Peg Harriott welcomed committee members to the new Foster Care Reimbursement Rate committee that was created by LB530 and thanked everyone for their willingness to serve. Peg provided a brief overview of the topics to be covered during the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting needed to be used as a place for outside information to be considered related to the work of the committee. Peg noted that the main focus of the first meeting would be reviewing the committee's legislatively assigned responsibilities and time line for work delivery as well as beginning to develop a plan of action.

Public Comment

There were no public attendees that wished to make comments.

Review of Open Meeting Rules

A handout entitled General Guidance for Open Meetings and General Guidance for Public Records was reviewed. Committee members were reminded that all meetings of the Foster Care Reimbursement Rate committee would be conducted according to Open Meeting rules.

Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee Review

Thomas Pristow and Lana Temple-Plotz provided the group with information on the work that was done by the previous Foster Care Reimbursement Rate committee that was created under LB820. The committee was provided with copies of the Level of Care Assessment Subcommittees Final Report and the LB820 Final Legislative Report regarding Foster Care Reimbursement Rates and Level of Care Assessment Tools that were each submitted to the Legislature in 2012. Current committee members who served on the LB820 committees also provided input on the process that led to the final LB820 reports. This work was reviewed because it was used by Senator Dubas and other legislators to create LB530.

Anna Eickholt from Senator Dubas's office provided a brief history of LB530 and copies of the legislation were provided to committee members. Anna noted that LB530 was a way to implement all of the work that had been done by the previous committee on the rates and level of care assessments. She noted that the legislature would be looking to this committee to provide additional information as noted in the legislative reporting requirements.

Peg Harriott then reviewed the responsibilities of the committee from the legislation. The committee responsibilities are to review and make recommendations in the following areas:

- Foster care reimbursement rates,
- the statewide standardized level of care assessment, and
- adoption assistance payments as required by section 43-117.
- In making recommendations to the Legislature, the committee shall use the then-current foster care reimbursement rates as the beginning standard for setting reimbursement rates.

- The committee shall adjust the standard to reflect the reasonable cost of achieving measurable outcomes for all children in foster care in Nebraska.
- The committee shall (a) analyze then-current consumer expenditure data reflecting the costs of caring for a child in Nebraska, (b) identify and account for additional costs specific to children in foster care, and (c) apply a geographic cost-of-living adjustment for Nebraska.
- The reimbursement rate structure shall comply with funding requirements related to Title IV-E of the federal Social Security Act, as amended, and other federal programs as appropriate to maximize the utilization of federal funds to support foster care.
- The committee shall review the role and effectiveness of and make recommendations on the statewide standardized level of care assessment containing standardized criteria to determine a foster child's placement needs and to identify the appropriate foster care reimbursement rate.
- The committee shall review other states' assessment models and foster care reimbursement rate structures in completing the statewide standardized level of care assessment review and the standard statewide foster care reimbursement rate structure.
- The committee shall ensure the statewide standardized level of care assessment and the standard statewide foster care reimbursement rate structure provide incentives to tie performance in achieving the goals of safety, maintaining family connection, permanency, stability, and well-being to reimbursements received.
- The committee shall review and make recommendations on assistance payments to adoptive parents as required by section 43-117.
- The committee shall make recommendations to ensure that changes in foster care reimbursement rates do not become a disincentive to permanency.
- Provide a progress report on the level of care assessment pilot project by October 1, 2013, to the department and electronically to the Health and Human Services Committee of the Legislature;
- Provide to the department and electronically to the committee by December 1, 2013, a report including recommendations and any legislation necessary, including appropriations, to adopt the recommendations, regarding the adaptation or continuation of the implementation of a statewide standardized level of care assessment; and shall provide to the department and electronically to the committee by February 1, 2014, a final report and final recommendations of the commission
- The Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee shall provide electronic reports with its recommendation to the Health and Human Services Committee of the Legislature on July 1, 2016, and every four years thereafter.

Federal IV-E Claiming Process

Thomas Pristow provided a brief overview of the IV-E waiver and how reasonable administration rates and maintenance costs relate to the waiver. Thomas provided a handout with information on the rates and the background related to this issue. DHHS is proposing to utilize the Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Subcommittee to:

- Define Agency Supported Foster Care and its components;
- Determine what it costs for recruitment, retention, and placement stability; and
- Determine which costs are Title IV-E allowable.

Lana Temple-Plotz indicated that the Foster Family-based Treatment Association (FFTA) had a briefing report on allowable and non-allowable costs that she could provide to the committee for review and discussion at the next meeting.

Standardized Level of Care Assessment – Pilot Project

A copy of the LB 530 Pilot – Level of Care Assessments report that was required to be provided to the Legislature by October 1, 2013, was provided to the committee. Thomas Pristow and Sara Goscha provided an overview of the report. The committee was informed that both the urban and rural pilot areas had been chosen; the CFS staff had received training in July and August; and assessment tools began being collected starting in September of 2013. Sara indicated that a review of 100 assessments will be completed by November 10th and that DHHS should be able to provide that information at that next meeting.

Review of Assignments/Action Plan

The committee was asked to review the handouts from the meeting in preparation for a review of assignments and creating of a detailed action plan at the next meeting.

New Business

None.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is scheduled for November 15, 2013 from 1:00p.m. to 4:00p.m.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Katie McLeese Stephenson to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Lana Temple-Plotz. The meeting adjourned at 11:25a.m.