

Interagency Coordinating Council

April 11, 2005
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Infoline – 4th floor
1344 Silas Deane Highway
Rocky Hill, CT

approved 6-13-05

Minutes

Laurel Ross, ICC Acting Chair
ARC, Greenwich

Timothy Bowles, acting
Dept. of Social Services

Carmina Cirioli
Parent

Mary Ann Dayton-Fitzgerald
Dept. of Children and Families

Elizabeth Daly
Office of Protection and Advocacy

Mary Eberle, alternate
A.J. Pappanikou Center for Excellence

Maria Engborg, alternate
Parent

Rita Esposito, acting
REACHOUT, Inc.

Ann Gionet
Parent

Linda Goodman
Department of Mental Retardation

Mark A. Greenstein, M.D.
Pediatrician

Clara Gutierrez, acting
Parent

Jeannette Haines, acting
BESB

Moirra Herbert, acting
Dept. of Insurance

Melvette Hill, acting
Parent

Cynthia Jackson
Children's Therapy Services

Robert LaCamera, M.D.
American Academy of Pediatrics

Joe McLaughlin
McLaughlin and Associates

Lisa Penick, acting
Stamford Early Head Start

Maria Synodi, alternate
State Dept. of Education

Robin Tousey-Ayers, acting
Dept. of Public Health

Myra Watnick
Rehabilitation Associates, Inc.

Diane Wixted
Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired

ICC Members Present: Tim Bowles, Mary Eberle, Maria Engborg, Rita Esposito, Linda Goodman, Dr. Mark Greenstein, Clara Gutierrez, Jeanette Haines, Moira Herbert, Cindy Jackson, Dr. Robert LaCamera, Joe McLaughlin, Jeannie Mazzaferro, Elise Minor, Lolli Ross, Maria Synodi, Myra Watnick, Diane Wixted

ICC Members Absent: Carmina Cirioli, Elizabeth Daly, Mary Ann Dayton-Fitzgerald, Ann Gionet, Melvette Hill, Lisa Penick, Robin Tousey-Ayers

The meeting began at 9:20 AM.

Introductions: Lolli Ross, Acting ICC Chair, welcomed everyone to the State ICC meeting. Council members and 32 members of the public introduced themselves.

Approval of December Minutes

Myra made a Motion to approve the minutes as written. Cindy seconded. The Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

1. Joyce Lewis from Key Services testified at the August ICC meeting re. her agency's dire fiscal situation at that time. Since then a one-time payment opportunity was offered to programs, however the Office of Policy and Management withdrew the funds that had been available. Joyce asked the ICC to write a letter to OPM seeking restoration of those funds to the Birth to Three account. She further asked the ICC to advocate for contract changes to ease providers' financial burdens.

Lolli shared a copy of the ICC's letter to Secretary Genuario (*att. 1*). Representatives from the ICC had asked Commissioner O'Meara to put in a Budget Option request, which he did, but which was not included in the Governor's proposed budget. Discussion ensued

regarding what exactly the ICC might want to request, considering the need to balance easing provider fiscal challenges while opening supports to more children in need of early intervention.

2. Aggie Pont from Connecticut Children's Medical Center provided comment on the same issue, reporting that her phone calls to Secretary Genuario had gone unacknowledged. Her agency has increased salaries resulting in a greater deficit since their contract will be flat-funded. Discussion ensued regarding families' enrollment decisions, eligibility, increased mileage costs and medical malpractice fees. It was suggested that a rate study would objectively and comprehensively document these cost factors across programs which could then be used to support requests for increased funding.
3. Trisha Lake from Lawrence and Memorial Hospital and the Chair of the CT Newborn Hearing Screening Task Force, along with Elizabeth Cole from CREC Soundbridge and Lisa Dembeck from CCMC Speech and Audiology department distributed a fact sheet about mild and unilateral hearing losses (*att. 2*). Current Birth to Three eligibility is 40 dB loss bilaterally, whereas normal hearing for very young children is 0-15dB. Children with severe losses miss up to 40% of language and 27% are reported to suffer speech and language delays by two years of age. Ear plugs were distributed for the Council and members of the public to simulate a 30dB loss during an oral dictation exercise, which many found to be enlightening. 97% of newborns are screened before leaving the hospital, yet 50% of those diagnosed with hearing loss are not currently eligible for early intervention. The three audiologists asked the ICC to recommend that the Birth to Three System include infants with mild or unilateral sensorineural hearing losses as automatically eligible for early intervention. Eligibility decisions lie with the Commissioner with the advice of the Medical Advisory Committee. The Council thanked the audiologists for their information and agreed to approach the Medical Advisory Committee at their next meeting.

Lead Agency Update

Linda distributed information detailing the Birth to Three budget and expenses, and parent fees collected (*att. 3*). The FY05 surplus has been shifted by OPM out of the Birth to Three line item to cover other Department of Mental Retardation expenses. March referrals reached an all-time high of 808 children resulting in longer than usual times needed to match newly referred families with a program to conduct the eligibility evaluations in the North and West regions.

Linda also shared the federal data table (*att. 4*) detailing demographics for children served by Birth to Three, the types of services delivered, the locations of service delivery, and types of professionals who provided early intervention services. The data are consistent with Connecticut demographics with the exception of slight under-representation of families who are African-American relative to the State Department of Education data for children receiving special education.

Linda shared the draft federal application (*att. 5*) which is due May 2. This year's application needs to include assurances of compliance with the reauthorized IDEA by July 1, 2005. A new seat on the ICC has been designated for the Coordinator of Education for Homeless Children, and will be filled by Louis Tallarita from the State Department of Children and Families must have a procedure for referring children under age three who are substantiated victims of abuse or neglect to Birth to Three for an eligibility evaluation. Connecticut DCF estimates that 3,000 children meet this definition each year. Referrals from DCF have increased, but if no developmental concern is identified by the referral source, a letter is sent declining the referral

along with a copy of the parent's rights under IDEA and a developmental questionnaire that the DCF caseworker may use to identify whether or not the child may have any areas of developmental delay. So far, about 200 referrals have been declined due to "no developmental concern expressed".

Linda and the ICC Family Involvement subcommittee asked for input from the Council re. using Birth to Three funds to support six DMR Family Support Councils to strengthen their current structure and broaden their focus to include infants and toddlers. Discussion ensued, and favorable opinions were expressed all around. Discussion then moved to fiscal support for community playgroups, with Cindy making a Motion and Mark seconding, that the ICC recommend support for 10 community agencies for playgroups to provide natural learning opportunities. The Motion passed unanimously. Linda will issue a Request for Proposals and convene a review committee to select the agencies to be funded for FY06.

Linda announced that the Birth to Three System will postpone the usual fiscal year update of Procedures until January, 2006. The OSEP Summer Institute is scheduled for August 11 and 12 in Washington, D.C. The focus will be on developing statewide performance plans that will be in effect for six years. The ICC was asked to send a representative to this important planning event, and Lolli agreed to participate.

Dispute Resolution activities included two new hearing requests, both involving "stay put" requests plus compensatory services, from a family in the West Region and one in the North Region.

Proposed changes to the LICC statutory language re. membership requirements and focus areas (*att. 6*) has been submitted as Bill 1093, Section 2. It moved through the Appropriations Committee without opposition and needs to be approved by the Senate and House of Representatives.

The reauthorized IDEA makes a provision for transition to begin up to nine months before the child reaches age three. This expansion of the expected time frame for developing and implementing a transition plan will take effect on July 1, 2005.

Focused Monitoring (FM) Update

Alice Ridgway distributed The first two on-site visits have been completed. A new Child Find indicator will be discussed in more detail at the June meeting, but is now defined as the period from referral through the initial IFSP. The Service Delivery indicator has posed several challenges, and discussion ensued re. the quality of the process and how to effectively reflect service delivery in the reported FM data, particularly those posted on the Birth to Three website. Program results will be reviewed at the June 13th meeting along with a review of protocols and the program selection process. October 17th will be the next full-day Focused Monitoring meeting when new priority areas will be chosen for FY07. Myra made a Motion which Cindy seconded to separate Child Find from Service Delivery within the context of Focused Monitoring. The Motion passed.

SICC Retreat

Lolli presented the idea of convening a State ICC Retreat in the Fall. The Executive Committee will generate a list of possible facilitators and bring to the June ICC meeting for further discussion.

Meeting Space Alternatives

Infoline will be available for use for the State ICC's June 13th meeting, but not thereafter. Possible future meeting locations will be explored for use in August and beyond.

Reports and Announcements

Family Involvement met this morning and plans to develop a resource manual for parent members of the State ICC that can be included within an updated ICC member manual.

No other committee reports.

Services to Children on the Autism Spectrum

Rita Esposito, director of REACHOUT, Inc. which serves families in the South region began the discussion with distribution of some ideas she has on this topic, including factors that are problematic and some successful approaches. Three focus areas included staffing needs, diagnoses, and parent training. Her presentation led to lengthy discussion of multiple issues and a consensus that a priority focus should be on meaningful engagement with parents. A Motion was made by Maria and seconded by Cindy that researchers, advocate groups, service providers, families and medical and diagnostic groups convene at a forum for discussion of services for children with a diagnosis on the Autism Spectrum and their families. The Motion passed.

Lolli then called for a **Motion** to adjourn. Myra made the Motion to adjourn; Rita seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The meeting ended at 2:15 PM

NEXT SICC MEETING

Monday, June 13th at Infoline in Rocky Hill, 1344 Silas Deane Highway, fourth floor conference room, immediately following the Focused Monitoring Stakeholders' meeting, which begins at 9 AM sharp.

Please RSVP to Kathy Granata at 860-418-6146 or via e-mail to Eileen at eileen.mcmurrer@po.state.ct.us.

Respectfully submitted by Diane Wixted, Recording Secretary

With the assistance of Eileen McMurrer, lead agency staff support to the State ICC