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The department would like to thank all members of the Citizen Review Panel for Serious Injury and Near Fatality for their time and efforts to support a child welfare response that could lead to reduced child abuse and neglect. The department has reviewed the recommendations and has the following response.

Several recommendations pertain to broadening the criteria in which a mandatory collateral is required to be made by a Hotline Children and Family Services (CFS) Specialist. The department currently uses Structured Decision Making (SDM) Screening Tool to screen reports of abuse and neglect made to the Hotline. As a part of the Child and Family Services Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), the department plans to modify SDM Tools in order to ensure accurate decisions about safety and risk are made by CFS Staff. The department hopes to utilize the expertise of National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) and other Stakeholders to make these modifications. The suggested changes by this Citizen Review Panel (CRP) can be a part of the larger discussion in making modifications and the department would welcome any members of this CRP to be a part of modification process. The department will ensure that members of the CRP are invited to participate in the discussions on revising and updating the SDM tools, including the SDM Intake Tool.

Futhermore, the CRP recommended that steps be taken to increase public awareness about the impact on children when meth is used in the home. Over the next year, CFS will discuss this recommendation with the Nebraska Child Abuse Prevention Fund Board and divisional partners at DHHS including the Division of Behavioral Health, Division of Medicaid & Long-Term Care and the Division of Public Health. CFS will report back to the CRP regarding opportunities to collaborate to enhance public awareness around this issue.

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CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

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