

Quarterly Mini CFSR Review Report

Central Service Area 11th Quarter Review Results

This document presents the findings from the 2012 11th Quarter Mini Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the Central Service Area. The Nebraska CQI (Continuous Quality Improvement) team has identified the Mini CFSR Review as an important activity for assessing the performance of each Service Area and the State as a whole with regard to achieving positive outcomes for children and their families. Mini CFSR Reviews are scheduled to take place in each Service Area once every quarter in year 2010, 2011 and 2012.

The Central Service Area 11th Quarter Mini CFSR Review was conducted on July 16th through July 18th, 2012. The period under review for the onsite case review was July 1st, 2011 through July 1st, 2012. The findings were derived from file reviews of 14 cases (8 foster care and 6 in home services), which were randomly selected from all open child welfare cases at some point in time during the period under review. The reviews also included interviews with parents, children, Foster Parents, and Children and Family Services Specialists (CFSS) to assess items 17-20 within the review tool.

In the Central Service Area, 8 of the 14 cases were brought to the attention of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) because of abuse/neglect issues. Six cases were juvenile justice cases. The review was completed by 5 teams of two reviewers made up of both staff from DHHS and Contracted Providers. 100% of the cases were reviewed by the following second level reviewer: Kayl Dahlke from DHHS.

Background Information

The Mini CFSR is modeled after the Federal CFSR reviews and assesses the Service Area's performance on 23 items relevant to seven outcomes.

With regards to outcomes, an overall rating of Strength or Area Needing Improvement (ANI) is assigned to each of the 23 items incorporated in the seven outcomes depending on the percentage of cases that receive a Strength rating in the onsite case review. An item is assigned an overall rating of Strength if 90 percent of the applicable cases reviewed are rated as Strength. Performance ratings for each of the seven outcomes are based on item ratings for each case. A service area may be rated as having "substantially achieved," "partially achieved," or "not achieved" the outcome. The determination of whether a service area is in substantial conformity with a particular outcome is based on the percentage of cases that were determined to have substantially achieved that outcome. In order for a service area to be in substantial conformity with a particular outcome, 95 percent of the cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome. The standard for substantial conformity is based on the standard set for Federal CFSR. The standards are based on the belief that because child welfare agencies work with our country's most vulnerable children and families, only the highest standards of performance should be acceptable. The focus of the CFSR process is on continuous quality improvement; standards are set high to ensure ongoing attention to the goals of achieving positive outcomes for children and families with regard to safety, permanency, and well-being.

A Service Area that is not in substantial conformity with a particular outcome must work with their local CQI Team to develop and implement a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to address the areas of concern associated with that outcome.

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Key CFSR Findings Regarding Outcomes

The 11th Quarter Mini CFSR identified several areas of high performance in the Central Service Area with regard to achieving desired outcomes for children. Although the Service Area did not achieve substantial conformity in any of the seven outcomes, all scores were over 70 percent. The Service Area achieved overall ratings of Strength (100%) for the individual indicators pertaining to Item 2 (repeat maltreatment), Item 3 (services to the family), Item 5 (foster care re-entries), Item 8 (reunification or guardianship), Item 9 (adoption), Item 11 (proximity of foster care placement), and Item 12 (placement with siblings). Item 19 (caseworker visits with child) was also rated as a strength at 93 percent, as was item 23 (mental/behavioral health of the child) at 92 percent.

The lowest scoring outcomes in the Service Area were Well-Being 1 (Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs) and Well-Being 3 (Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs) which were both substantially achieved in 71 percent of the cases. Within Well-Being 1, the lowest rated items were item 17 (needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents) and item 20 (caseworker visits with parents) which were both rated as strengths in 71 percent of the cases. Within Well-Being 3, the lowest rated item was item 22 (physical health of child), which was rated as a strength in 67 percent of the cases.

Other outcome ratings for the Service Area were as follows: Outcome 1 (Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect) substantially achieved in 80 percent of the cases; Outcome 2 (Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate) substantially achieved in 79 percent of the cases; Permanency 1 (Children have permanency and stability in their living situations) substantially achieved in 75 percent of the cases; Permanency 2 (The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children) substantially achieved in 88 percent of the cases; and Well-Being 2 (Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs) substantially achieved in 83 percent of the cases.

The report will only contain case details and charts for items 4 and 7, as they are the remaining priority items that Nebraska needs to address in order to pass the Federal Program Improvement Plan. Case details for the other items will be made available upon request.

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CFSR Item & Outcome Quarterly Results

Central Service Area

- The standard federal goal for each item is 90% and each outcome is 95%
- Items 4 & 7 are highlighted in the table below because they are the only 2 CFSR items that must be addressed in 2012-2013 in order to pass the Federal Program Improvement Plan (PIP). **The State must meet the following goals in order to pass the PIP: Item 4 = 73.5% and Item 7 = 50.5%**

Report Quarter	8th Qtr 2011	9th Qtr 2012	10 th Qtr 2012	11 th Qtr 2012
Period Under Review	Oct 2010 to Oct 2011	Jan 2011 to Jan 2012	Apr 2011 to Apr 2012	July 2011 to July 2012
Number of Cases	14	14	14	14
Item 1: Timeliness of Initiating Investigations	75%	100%	60%	75%
Item 2: Repeat Maltreatment	100%	100%	0%	100%
Outcome: Safety 1 (Items 1 and 2)	83%	100%	40%	80%
Item 3: Services to the family to maintain in home	100%	100%	100%	100%
Item 4: Risk and safety management	71%	100%	93%	79%
Outcome: Safety 2 (Items 3 and 4)	71%	100%	93%	79%
Item 5: Foster care re-entries	100%	100%	100%	100%
Item 6: Stability of foster care placement	100%	88%	100%	88%
Item 7: Permanency goal for the child	75%	38%	88%	88%
Item 8: Achievement of goals (Reunification/Guardianship)	100%	80%	100%	100%
Item 9: Achievement of goal (Adoption)	67%	80%	100%	100%
Item 10: Achievement of goal (Independent Living)	100%	100%	100%	NA
Outcome: Permanency 1 (Items 5-10)	63%	50%	88%	75%
Item 11: Proximity of foster care placement	100%	100%	100%	100%
Item 12: Placement with siblings	100%	100%	100%	100%
Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings	83%	29%	100%	75%
Item 14: Preserving connections	63%	100%	88%	88%
Item 15: Relative placement	100%	71%	71%	60%
Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents	83%	43%	71%	88%
Outcome: Permanency 2 (Items 11-16)	88%	38%	88%	88%
Item 17: Needs and Services	50%	50%	79%	71%
Item 18: Child and Family involvement in case planning	50%	50%	71%	86%
Item 19: Caseworker visit with child	86%	93%	100%	93%
Item 20: Caseworker visit with mother/father	50%	46%	69%	71%
Outcome: Well-Being 1 (Items 17-20)	50%	50%	71%	71%
Item 21: Educational needs of the child	92%	100%	100%	83%
Outcome: Well-Being 2 (Item 21)	92%	100%	100%	83%
Item 22: Physical health needs of the child	80%	91%	100%	67%
Item 23: Mental/Behavioral Health Needs of the child	78%	100%	91%	92%
Outcome: Well-Being 3 (Items 22 and 23)	75%	93%	85%	71%

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Case Details for Items 4 & 7

Item 4. Risk of harm to child

The assessment of Item 4 required reviewers to determine whether DHHS had made, or was making, diligent efforts to reduce the risk of harm to the children involved in each case. Reviewers rated this item as a Strength if the Agency terminated the child's parent's rights as a means of decreasing risk of harm for the child (for example, a termination of parental rights would prevent a child from being returned to a home in which the child would be at risk) and has taken action to minimize other risks to the child (for example, preventing contact with individuals who pose a risk to the child's safety). If a case is/was open for services for a reason other than a court substantiated, inconclusive, petition to be filed or unfounded report of abuse or neglect, or apparent risk of harm to the child (ren) (for example, a juvenile justice case), reviewers were to document this information and rate the item as not applicable. Note, however, that for a child (ren) noted as a "child in need of supervision" or "delinquent", reviewers were to explore and determine whether there was a risk of harm to the child, in addition to the other reasons the case may have been opened, prior to rating it as not applicable. Cases were not applicable for assessment of this item if there was no current or prior risk of harm to the children in the family.

Review Findings:

- All of the fourteen cases were applicable to the Item.

- Eleven (78.57%) of the 14 cases were rated as a Strength. Six were out-of-home cases and 5 were in-home cases.

- Three (21.43%) of the 14 cases were rated as an Area Needing Improvement. Two were out-of-home cases and one was an in-home case.

Strength:

In the eleven cases rated as strengths, there were either no safety concerns found on the target child or services were implemented to address safety concerns found through initial/ongoing assessments. In these cases, informal assessments were occurring on an ongoing basis through family team meetings and monthly face to face contacts between worker, child, parents and providers. Safety plans, using the safety model, were updated and found in the case file.

Area Needing Improvement:

In the three cases rated as needing improvement, there were no formal or informal ongoing safety assessments completed after the initial assessment during the period under review. This included one case in which a youth returned home from a placement and reviewers determined there should have been an updated safety plan.

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Item 7. Permanency goal for child

In assessing this Item, reviewers were to determine whether DHHS had established an appropriate permanency goal for the child in a timely manner, including filing for termination of parental rights when relevant. Reviewers examined the appropriateness of a goal that ultimately rules out adoption, guardianship, or return to family. Reviewers assessed whether the child's best interests were thoroughly considered by DHHS in setting a goal of other planned living arrangement, and that such a decision is /was continually reviewed for ongoing appropriateness. Cases were assigned a rating of Strength for this item when reviewers determined that DHHS had established an appropriate permanency goal in a timely manner. Cases were assigned a rating of Area Needing Improvement when permanency goals were not changed in a timely manner to reflect current case circumstances, when it was apparent that reunification was unlikely to happen, termination of parental rights was not filed when the child had been in foster care for 15 of the past 22 months and no compelling reasons were noted in the file, or the goal established for the child was not appropriate. Cases were identified as Not Applicable if the child was not in foster care.

Review Findings:

- All eight out of home cases reviewed were applicable to the Item.
- Seven (87.50%) of the eight cases were rated as a Strength.
- One (12.50%) of the eight cases was rated as an Area Needing Improvement.

Strength:

There was timely implementation of primary permanency goals as well as timely permanency goal changes made to meet the child's needs. In all seven cases rated as strengths for this item, the permanency goals were established within the 60 day timeframe. Concurrent goals being established in a timely manner was also noted by reviewers in these cases.

Area Needing Improvement:

In the case rated as needing improvement, it was noted that the permanency goal was not established until almost six months after the child had been placed out of the home. Reviewers noted a delay in the disposition hearing as a possible cause for this.

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Charts with Goals for Items 4 & 7

