

Quarterly Mini CFSR Review Report

Northern Service Area 12th Quarter Review Results

This document presents the findings from the 2012 12th Quarter Mini Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the Northern 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 Northern Service area 12th Quarter Mini CFSR Review was conducted on October 15th through October 17th, 2012. The period under review for the onsite case review was October 1st, 2011 through October 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 Northern Service Area, 10 of the 14 cases were brought to the attention of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) because of abuse/neglect issues. Four cases were juvenile offender cases. The review was completed by 6 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 reviewers: Leslie Schlecht and Jeff Watson 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 goal 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 12th Quarter Mini CFSR identified several areas of high performance in the Northern Service Area with regard to achieving desired outcomes for children. The Service Area did achieve substantial conformity in one of the seven CFSR outcomes. That outcome was: Safety Outcome 1 (Children are first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect). The Service Area achieved overall ratings of Strength (100%) for the individual indicators pertaining to Item 1 (timeliness of initiating investigations of child maltreatment), Item 2 (repeat maltreatment), Item 5 (foster care re-entries), Item 8 (reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives), Item 9 (adoption), Item 10 (other planned living arrangement), Item 11 (proximity of foster care placement), Item 12 (placement with siblings), Item 14 (preserving connections), and Item 17c (needs and services to foster parents). This round Item 17a (needs and services to children) was rated as a strength in 93% of the cases. Item 6 (stability of foster care placement), Item 13 (visiting with parents/siblings in foster care), and Item 15 (relative placement) were all above 80%.

The mini CFSR review also identified key areas of concern with regard to achieving outcomes for children and families. Concerns were identified with regard to Permanency Outcome 1, (Children have permanency and stability in their living situations), which was substantially achieved in 63% of the reviewed cases. The lowest rating within this outcome was Item 7, Permanency Goal for Child, which was rated as Strength in 71% of the 8 applicable cases.

Concerns were also identified with regard to Well-Being Outcome 1 (Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children's needs), which was substantially achieved in 50% of the cases reviewed. The lowest ratings were for Item 20 (Caseworker visits with parent (s)) which was rated as strength in 38% of the cases; Item 17 (needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents) was rated as a strength in 64% of the cases; Item 17b (needs assessment and services to parents) was rated as a strength in 67% of the cases; and Item 18 (Child and family involvement in case planning) was rated as a strength in 69% of the cases. Well-Being Outcome 3 (children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs) was rated as a strength in only 55% of the cases reviewed.

A table with results is attached for your review.

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

Northern 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	9th Qtr 2012	10 th Qtr 2012	11 th Qtr 2012	12 th Qtr 2012
Period Under Review	Jan 2011 to Jan 2012	Apr 2011 to Apr 2012	July 2011 to July 2012	Oct 2011 to Oct 2012
Number of Cases	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>
Item 1: Timeliness of Initiating Investigations	80%	100%	83%	100%
Item 2: Repeat Maltreatment	50%	100%	100%	100%
Outcome: Safety 1 (Items 1 and 2)	60%	100%	83%	100%
Item 3: Services to the family to maintain in home	100%	100%	100%	50%
Item 4: Risk and safety management	93%	100%	100%	79%
Outcome: Safety 2 (Items 3 and 4)	93%	100%	100%	79%
Item 5: Foster care re-entries	100%	80%	100%	100%
Item 6: Stability of foster care placement	75%	75%	75%	86%
Item 7: Permanency goal for the child	63%	50%	38%	71%
Item 8: Achievement of goals (Reunification/Guardianship)	100%	100%	83%	100%
Item 9: Achievement of goal (Adoption)	100%	100%	80%	100%
Item 10: Achievement of goal (Independent Living)	0%	100%	N/A	100%
Outcome: Permanency 1 (Items 5-10)	38%	25%	25%	63%
Item 11: Proximity of foster care placement	100%	100%	83%	100%
Item 12: Placement with siblings	100%	100%	100%	100%
Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings	33%	63%	60%	86%
Item 14: Preserving connections	88%	63%	86%	100%
Item 15: Relative placement	60%	67%	50%	86%
Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents	57%	50%	50%	75%
Outcome: Permanency 2 (Items 11-16)	75%	38%	50%	88%
Item 17: Needs and Services	14%	64%	64%	64%
Item 18: Child and Family involvement in case planning	21%	64%	62%	69%
Item 19: Caseworker visit with child	86%	93%	93%	79%
Item 20: Caseworker visit with mother/father	8%	43%	50%	38%
Outcome: Well-Being 1 (Items 17-20)	14%	57%	64%	50%
Item 21: Educational needs of the child	85%	80%	100%	73%
Outcome: Well-Being 2 (Item 21)	85%	80%	100%	73%
Item 22: Physical health needs of the child	62%	83%	75%	50%
Item 23: Mental/Behavioral Health Needs of the child	100%	85%	90%	80%
Outcome: Well-Being 3 (Items 22 and 23)	64%	79%	77%	55%

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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.
 - Eight of the fourteen cases were foster care cases and three were in home cases.
 - Two out of the three in home cases that were rated as a strength involved an Office of Juvenile Services (OJS) youth. The other case was an abuse/neglect case.
 - Seven out of the eight foster care cases were abuse/neglect related. The other case was an Office of Juvenile Services (OJS) case.
- Three (21.43%) of the 14 cases were rated as an Area Needing Improvement.
 - All three of the cases rated as area needing improvement were in home cases.
 - Two of the three cases rated as area needing improvement on this item were abuse/neglect related. The other case was an Office of Juvenile Services (OJS) case.

Strength:

In the eleven cases substantially achieved, 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 two cases there was no evidence found that ongoing assessments (formal or informal) of risk and safety were completed. In the other case, the reviewer had concerns that issues surrounding domestic violence between the parents was never formally/informally addressed and could pose a risk or safety concern for the child (ren) in the home.

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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:

- Seven of the eight out of home cases reviewed were applicable to the item.
- Five (71.43%) of the eight cases were rated as a Strength.
 - Four of the five cases rated as a strength were abuse/neglect cases. The other case involved an Office of Juvenile Services (OJS) case.
- Two (28.57%) of the eight cases were rated as an Area Needing Improvement.
 - Both cases that were rated as an Area Needing Improvement were abuse/neglect cases.

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 five cases reviewed that were rated as strengths for this item, the permanency goals were established within the 60 day timeframe. Youth Level of Services (YLS) was completed in Juvenile Justice Cases.

Area Needing Improvement:

In one case needing improvement on this item, it was noted that while the permanency goal established was appropriate, it was not established within the 60 day timeframe. It was established in 72 days. In the other case rated as needing improvement on this item, this was due to the child being out of the home 15 of the last 22 months. This case was an Office of Juvenile Service (OJS) case and it is not required that a termination of parent rights (TPR) be filed, however the child still had not established permanency within that time frame.

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Charts with Goals for Items 4 & 7

