



Florida Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers (FICCIT)
 Quarterly Meeting
 July 17, 2019
 Tampa, FL

Meeting Minutes

Member Name	Member Seat	Present (In Person)	Present (Via Phone)	Absent
Matt Bracket	Member from the agency responsible for the State Medicaid and CHIP program	X		
Kim Carr	Public/private provider of early intervention services		X	
Elizabeth Cayson	At large member	X		
James Dunn	Member from the agency responsible for the State regulation of private health insurance	X		
Senator Anitere Flores	Member from the State Legislature			X
John "Skip" Forsyth	Office of Coordination of Education of Homeless Children & Youth			X
Nacole Guyton	Member from a Head Start Program			X
Erin Hough	Member from the state child welfare agency responsible for foster care			X
Renee Jenkins	Member from the state agency involved in the provision of, or payment for, early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families	X		
Dr. Judith Levin	Member from personnel preparation program		X	
Cheryl Miller	Parent of child with disability age 6 or younger	X		
Rob Porcaro	Public/private provider of early intervention services	X		
Misty Porter	Parent of child with disability age 12 or younger			X
Melissa Pyzik	Public/private provider of early intervention services	X		

Florida Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers (FICCIT)
 Quarterly Meeting
 July 17, 2019
 Tampa, FL

Meeting Minutes

Member Name	Member Seat	Present (In Person)	Present (Via Phone)	Absent
Lourdes Quintana	Public/private provider of early intervention services	X		
Kathleen Vergara	Public/private provider of early intervention services		X	
Dr. Monica Verra-Tirado	Member of the state education agency responsible for preschool services to children with disabilities			X
Samantha Wass de Czege	Member from the state agency responsible for child care	X		
Dr. Ilene Wilkins	Public/private provider of early intervention services	X		
Vacant	Parent of child with disability age 12 or younger	--	--	--
Vacant	Parent of child with disability age 12 or younger	--	--	--
Vacant	Member from the agency responsible for children's mental health	--	--	--
Guests	Affiliation	Present (In Person)	Present (Via Phone)	
Kim Barger	Gulf Central Early Steps	X		
Dr. Charles Bauer	North Dade Early Steps	X		
Shelli Buckley	Space Coast Early Steps	X		
Annalise Campisi	Bay Area Early Steps	X		
Gaynell Clark	Big Bend Early Steps	X		
Shauntavia Clinton	Big Bend Early Steps	X		
Lisa K. Gemmill	Space Coast Early Steps	X		



Florida Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers (FICCIT)
 Quarterly Meeting
 July 17, 2019
 Tampa, FL

Meeting Minutes

Guests	Affiliation	Present (In Person)	Present (Via Phone)
Pat Grosz	Positive Family Partners	X	
Carrie Guise	Independent Living	X	
Shevaun Harris	Agency for Health Care Administration	X	
Marcy Hajdukiewicz	Florida Department of Health	X	
Twila Jowers	Florida Department of Children & Families		X
Diane Koch	Positive Family Partners	X	
John Lee	Northeastern Early Steps	X	
April Leopold	Northeastern Early Steps	X	
Susan McCain	Space Coast Early Steps	X	
Juliana Melara	Big Bend Early Steps	X	
Hannah Naitove	Florida Department of Health		
Cassandra Pasley	Florida Department of Health	X	
Althea Puzio	Space Coast Early Steps	X	
Kelly Rogers	Early Steps	X	
Dr. Patricia Snyder	University of Florida, Anita Zucker Center	X	
Lenita Winkler	Florida Department of Education		X

Florida Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers (FICCIT)
Quarterly Meeting
July 17, 2019
Tampa, FL

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order – *Dr. Ilene Wilkins, Chair*

Dr. Ilene Wilkins called the meeting to order and completed Council member roll call. The presence of a quorum was established with thirteen of the twenty members in attendance in person or via phone. The Council voted unanimously to approve the April 10, 2019, Meeting Minutes (pending one minor revision) with no abstentions, or negative votes.

Motion: Approval of the April 10, 2019, Meeting Minutes.
Motion Made By: Rob Porcaro
Seconded Motion: Samantha Wass de Czege
Discussion: Mr. Rob Porcaro noted that Marissa Barrera's affiliation is not the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County, but rather Treasure Coast Early Steps.
Motion Passed

Ms. Hannah Naitove, Council Liaison, shared that there are three outstanding appointments to the Council. Ms. Naitove also explained the revised travel reimbursement process.

Ms. Elizabeth Cayson resigned from the Council, effective July 31, 2019. Ms. Cayson requested of the Council that members continue to work to ensure that families can easily access early intervention services and that specialty providers are paid timely.

Lead Agency Update – *Cassandra G. Pasley, Director, Division of Children's Medical Services*

Ms. Cassandra G. Pasley provided an update on the Early Steps budget, specifically that from the General Appropriations Act for fiscal year (FY) 2019-2020. Early Steps was allocated approximately \$72.9 million, of which \$3,753,143 is budgeted for state Medicaid Match.

Ms. Pasley shared that Dr. Scott A. Rivkees began his duties as the State Surgeon General, and the head of the Department of Health, on June 20, 2019.

Ms. Pasley gave an update on the Local Early Steps (LES) program contracts for FY 2019-2020, the contract for the new Early Steps Administration System, the contract with Easterseals Florida to provide billing and claims assistance to LES programs, and the professional development/State Systemic Improvement Plan contract with the University of Florida.

Ms. Cheryl Miller inquired about the difference between the FY 2018-2019 and FY 2019-2020 budget, and Dr. Wilkins noted that the FY 2019-2020 budget remained comparable to the FY 2018-2019 budget despite LES programs receiving more referrals. Dr. Wilkins asked Ms. Pasley if the Council would be able to advocate for additional funding. Ms. Pasley clarified that the role of the Council is to educate, not advocate. Ms. Lourdes Quintana inquired about when the new allocation methodology would be implemented; Ms. Pasley responded the allocation methodology would be in place by FY 2020-2021.

Early Steps State Office Program Update – *Renee Jenkins, Part C Coordinator*

Ms. Renee Jenkins shared that the Early Steps State Office (ESSO) is continuing their review of the proposed Early Steps policies, with the intent that the final policies will be disseminated and implemented by January 1, 2020.



Florida Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers (FICCIT)
Quarterly Meeting
July 17, 2019
Tampa, FL

Meeting Minutes

Ms. Jenkins provided an update on the Medicaid Managed Medical Assistance Transition, namely that ESSO will utilize a multi-tiered system of supports as a framework for supporting the LES programs and allocating ESSO resources.

Ms. Jenkins reported on the results of the 2019 Family Survey, which measures family outcomes resulting from families' participation in early intervention. Specifically, the statewide percentages all exceed the state target, listed in the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Part C Annual Performance Report, and show a small increase from 2018. However, the 2019 response rate (53.3 percent) decreased from last year's response rate of 60 percent.

Ms. Jenkins informed the Council of ongoing activities related to the work of the former Early Childhood Personnel Center (ECPC) team. The Office of Early Learning (OEL) has utilized funds from the Preschool Development Grant to develop an online professional development resource catalog that mirrors the inventory put together by the ECPC team. The catalog will provide ongoing training opportunities for Service Coordinators, Infant Toddler Developmental Specialists, early intervention providers, and Early Steps families.

Ms. Jenkins described the OSEP Determination given to Early Steps. OSEP notified Early Steps that Florida is again in the "Needs Assistance" category. To address the "Needs Assistance" status, the determinations criteria used for Florida's Local Early Steps programs was changed in FY 2018 to mirror the criteria OSEP uses for state level determinations. Other strategies include providing focused technical assistance, increasing opportunities to share exemplary practices, enhancing professional development opportunities, and implementing an enhanced monitoring process. Moreover, ESSO is working with a stakeholder workgroup to look at reasons for high rates of missing data for child outcomes and reasons for Florida's low performance on child outcomes relative to other states. OSEP is also considering broadening the factors used in making state determinations in June 2020 to include SSIP and family outcomes.

Ms. Jenkins discussed the new Early Steps Administration System project. Early Steps hired a Project Manager to oversee the project and interface with stakeholders, including LES programs. The anticipated timeframe for development is 13-18 months.

Medicaid Managed Medical Assistance Transition– *Shevaun Harris, Assistant Deputy Secretary for Medicaid Policy and Quality and Cassandra G. Pasley, Director, Division of Children's Medical Services*

Ms. Shevaun Harris shared that substantial improvements pertaining to the transition of early intervention services to Medicaid Managed Medical Assistance (MMA) plans have occurred since April 2019. The Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) is in the process of amending the MMA Plan contracts to align with the IDEA, Part C regulations as well as to ensure that the MMA Plans adhere to the fidelity of the Part C, early intervention model (including the recognition that therapy is a Part C service). Ms. Harris stated that the next steps are to draft a timeline with LES programs for implementing the MMA Plan contract amendments.

Ms. Pasley noted that the MMA transition allowed ESSO to examine their policies and practices at a global level.

Mr. Rob Porcaro asked how much time will be allotted for integrating updates to the MMA Plans' system. Ms. Harris acknowledged the need to utilize a small group of LES programs and MMA Plans to determine a timeline for the rollout of system changes.

Ms. Quintana stated that changes, stemming from AHCA, were interpreted differently by each MMA Plan.



Florida Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers (FICCIT)
 Quarterly Meeting
 July 17, 2019
 Tampa, FL

Meeting Minutes

Two public comments were made in regard to the MMA transition; in sum, providers emphasized the difficulties related to billing the MMA Plans and the financial and administrative burden linked to communicating with MMA Plans to resolve denials.

Early Steps State Plan Update – *Kelly Rogers, State Parent Consultant*

Ms. Kelly Rogers reviewed the statutory requirements for ESSO to develop an annual State Plan, of which stakeholder involvement is key. Ms. Rogers explained that five stakeholder workgroups were identified for each goal in the State Plan, including Child Find, compliance, child and family outcomes, data, and the State Systemic Improvement Plan. Ms. Rogers further outlined the extent of need, barriers, and action steps guiding each stakeholder workgroup. Council members whom serve on the stakeholder workgroups provided additional updates and clarifications on the work.

Dr. Wilkins asked how ESSO receives feedback on the State Plan; Ms. Rogers stated that comments are provided by the workgroups themselves and FICCIT. Dr. Judith Levin affirmed the efficacy of the structure of the workgroups. A member of the public inquired as to how infant mental health and trauma will be integrated into the State Plan.

State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Update – *Dr. Patricia Snyder, University of Florida*

Dr. Patricia Snyder provided an update on the SSIP Early Steps Professional Development project. Dr. Snyder first gave an overview of the project, including the purpose of the project and the EPIC technique, or family capacity-building and embedded intervention practices. Dr. Snyder shared the findings of the project since January 2018, that is, a summary of implementation of EPIC at the demonstration sites and child and provider outcomes due to implementation. Provider, child, and family demographics were also discussed.

Ms. Quintana asked if services that were a part of the project were only those services listed on the Individualized Family Support Plan (IFSP). Dr. Wilkins inquired about whether the SSIP project would expand; Ms. Jenkins stated that two new implementation sites were selected for FY 2019-2020.

Public Comment

Several public comments were made pertaining to the transition of early intervention services to the MMA Plans. Ms. Pat Grosz, the head of a provider agency in the Bay Area and West Central service areas, explained that the agency has lost six providers due to the transition, specifically because payments for services were not received, and that the agency faces far higher administrative costs. Ms. Grosz recommended that all providers be able to access a data/billing system for all MMA Plans, or that providers return to billing through the Medicaid portal.

Ms. Carrie Guise, from a large agency that serves the Bay Area service area, shared concerns and challenges linked to billing through third-party administrators (when it is not allowable per AHCA policy), children continually changing MMA Plans, and underpayments from WellCare.

Mr. Matt Brackett stated, on behalf of AHCA, his appreciation of these comments from providers.

Mr. Porcaro gave an update on provider credentialing, in that ESSO will post a Master List of all Early Steps providers to the CMS website to ameliorate billing and claims issues.



Florida Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers (FICCIT)
Quarterly Meeting
July 17, 2019
Tampa, FL

Meeting Minutes

Council Member Successes

Ms. Samantha Wass de Czege shared that the Florida Department of Children and Families has made a trauma-informed care course available to the public.

Action Items

No action items were presented. Dr. Wilkins made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Adjourn the meeting.
Motion Made By: Rob Porcaro
Seconded Motion: Cheryl Miller
Discussion: None
Motion Passed

Meeting Adjourned – *Dr. Ilene Wilkins, Chair*