



Florida Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers (FICCIT)
 Quarterly Meeting
 April 10, 2019
 West Palm Beach, 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		
Vacant	Member from the agency responsible for children's mental health			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		
Dr. Sara Evans	Parent of child with disability age 12 or younger	X		
Senator Anitere Flores	Member from the State Legislature			X
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	

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Member Name	Member Seat	Present (In Person)	Present (Via Phone)	Absent
Melissa Pyzik	Public/private provider of early intervention services	X		
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			X
Guests	Affiliation	Present (In Person)	Present (Via Phone)	
Kim Barger	Gulf Central Early Steps	X		
Melissa Barrera	Treasure Coast Early Steps	X		
Annaliese Campisi	Bay Area Early Steps	X		
Kathy Carroll	Gold Coast Early Steps	X		
Laurie Colon	Central Florida Early Steps		X	
Carol Fratti	Florida School for the Deaf and Blind	X		
Michelle Gaston	North Dade Early Steps	X		
Michelle Gross	Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County	X		
Marcy Hajdukiewicz	Florida Department of Health	X		

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Guests	Affiliation	Present (In Person)	Present (Via Phone)
Brenda Ham	Bay Area Early Steps	X	
Sharon Hennessey	North Central Early Steps	X	
Angie Heller	Southernmost Coast Early Steps	X	
Twila Jowers	Florida Department of Children and Families	X	
Jana Khoury	Southernmost Coast Early Steps	X	
April Leopold	Northeastern Early Steps	X	
Marie Mathis	Florida Department of Health		X
Cassandra Pasley	Florida Department of Health	X	
Kimberly Porter	Florida Department of Health	X	
Trina Puddefoot	Gulf Central/Southwest Early Steps	X	
Althea Puzio	Space Coast Early Steps	X	
Kathy Riley	Central Florida Early Steps		X
Ray Rodriguez	North Dade Early Steps	X	
Kelly Rogers	Florida Department of Health		X
Ellen Schrot	Gold Coast Early Steps	X	
Rhonda Throop	Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County	X	
Carole West	Florida Department of Education		X

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Call to Order – *Hannah Naitove, FICCIT Liaison*

The presence of a quorum was established with seventeen of the twenty members in attendance in person or via phone. Dr. Ilene Wilkins requested that the Council Liaison, Ms. Naitove, facilitate the Council meeting due to a scheduling conflict. A motion was made to allow Ms. Naitove to facilitate the meeting in lieu of the Chair.

Motion: Allow FICCIT liaison to facilitate the meeting
Motion Made By: Rob Porcaro
Seconded Motion: Lourdes Quintana
Discussion: None
Motion Passed

Ms. Naitove shared that there are two outstanding appointments to the Council and is waiting for an update from the Department of Health's (Department) liaison to the Governor's Executive Office. Ms. Elizabeth Cayson inquired serving on the Council if the seat's term is expired. Ms. Naitove confirmed that Council members may still serve in an expired capacity. Finally, Ms. Naitove presented the January 16, 2019, Meeting Minutes to the Council. The Council voted unanimously to approve the January 16, 2019, Meeting Minutes as presented with no abstentions, or negative votes.

Motion: Approval of the January 16, 2019, Meeting Minutes.
Motion Made By: Rob Porcaro
Seconded Motion: Dr. Sara Evans
Discussion: None
Motion Passed

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

Ms. Cassandra Pasley shared that the Division of Children's Medical Services (CMS) participates on a workgroup related to Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome as a part of the Department's State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). Further, Ms. Pasley stated that a measure on the SHIP tracks the percent of children CPT refers to LES programs, and percent of children referred from CPT are served by a LES program.

Ms. Pasley described that the Genetic and Newborn Screening Council recently voted to add Pompe Disease, Mucopolysaccharidosis Type I (MPS I), and Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) to Florida's newborn screening panel. Screening is expected to begin in May 2020. Early Steps will collaborate with Newborn Screening to consider adding Pompe Disease, MPS 1, and SMA to the Established Conditions List.

Next, Ms. Pasley stated that she attended the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Conference in March 2019 and learned that several states have begun to screen for Congenital Cytomegalovirus (cCMV) in children who have failed the hearing test, allowing these children to receive interventions upon diagnosis.

Ms. Pasley concluded the Lead Agency Update by sharing the budget proposals made by CMS, including funds to pay for the addition of the Pompe Disease, MPS 1, and SMA to the newborn screening panel, and funds for

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five percent projected growth in Early Steps, scale-up funds for SSIP, the Early Steps Data System, and increased funds for Medicaid Match.

Ms. Lourdes Quintana asked for clarity on the Medicaid Match process. Ms. Pasley stated that enough Medicaid Match funds were requested from the Legislature – to be distributed to either the Department or the Agency – so that there will not be a Medicaid Match shortfall. Ms. Quintana stated her concern that Medicaid Match funds only be used for children served in the Early Steps program, and not by other children who can now access early intervention services as a part of their enrollment in the MMA plans. Ms. Pasley stated that services will be code-driven so as to link services directly to Early Steps.

Finally, Ms. Quintana inquired if there is a plan in place to assist LES programs who may face a budget shortfall due to lack of payments from MMA plans. Ms. Pasley stated that the Department will work with the Agency to ensure that the MMA plans pay claims submitted by LES programs.

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

Ms. Renee Jenkins described the Part C application process and public comment period. ESSO will review all public comment and revise the application and policies where appropriate prior to submission to the Office of Special Education Programs.

Ms. Jenkins updated the Council on the Family Café Conference, which will occur on June 7-9, 2019, in Orlando. Ms. Jenkins stated that ESSO will again host the Early Wishes event, a playgroup for families served by Early Steps. Early Wishes is also an opportunity for families to network with Family Resource Specialists.

Ms. Jenkins stated the outcomes of the allocation methodology meeting, held on April 9, 2019, including the proposed allocation methodologies of Early Steps funding and timeline for rollout.

Ms. Jenkins discussed contract and quality assurance monitoring, noting that this has been completed for fiscal year 2018-19. Local Early Steps program found out of compliance and had to submit a corrective action plan and/or a Performance Improvement Plan.

Ms. Jenkins provided a brief update on the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), sharing that a Cross-Site meeting was held on February 27, 2019, and scale-up was discussed. Ms. Jenkins stated that the SSIP report was submitted to OSEP on April 1, 2019.

Ms. Jenkins reviewed the current activities of the five stakeholder workgroups.

Finally, Ms. Jenkins provided an update on the Family Survey, noting that as of April 3, 2019, 897 surveys have been received, and that survey results will be released this summer.

Managed Medical Assistance and Early Intervention Carve-In – *Shevaun Harris, Assistant Deputy Secretary for Medicaid Policy and Quality, Agency for Health Care Administration, Cassandra G. Pasley, Director, Division of Children's Medical Services, Rob Porcaro, Director, Treasure Coast Early Steps, and Lourdes Quintana, Central Florida Early Steps*

Ms. Shevaun Harris provided a high-level overview of the intended changes that the Agency for Health Care Administration (Agency) will make related to the transition of early intervention services into the Statewide Medicaid Managed Care (SMMC) program.

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Ms. Harris stated that the Agency will move forward with requiring the MMA plans to include Early Steps providers in the plans' network. Ms. Harris noted that the providers may not be added immediately into MMA plans' networks, as the Agency wants to include LES feedback in the implementation of this change.

Second, Ms. Harris stated that the MMA plans will no longer be required to participate in multidisciplinary team meetings unless the MMA plan requests to attend to share pertinent information about the child.

Third, Ms. Harris recognized that issues with billing and claims payment remain a problem. Ms. Harris explained that the Agency will work with Gold Coast and Southernmost Coast Early Steps to resolve billing and claims issues with specific MMA plans; solutions can then be applied across LES programs and MMA plans.

Mr. Rob Porcaro acknowledged the efforts made by the Agency and the Department to address problems related to the transition of early intervention services into the SMMC program. Mr. Porcaro then shared the impact of the transition on the Treasure Coast Early Steps program, including on continuity of care for children and services for children, the administrative burden on the program and providers related to billing and claims processing, and potential increased reliance on Part C funds. Mr. Porcaro reiterated the need for solutions to effectively serve children and their families.

Next, Ms. Lourdes Quintana described the impact of the transition on the Central Florida Early Steps program, specifically noting the administrative burden on the program and providers related to billing and claims processing. Ms. Quintana emphasized that LES programs would be unable to fiscally sustain their programs in the current environment, without changes or solutions.

Ms. Renee Jenkins shared Early Steps State Office efforts, including dissemination of bi-weekly surveys to the LES programs on the MMA transition, facilitation of bi-weekly calls with LES programs, reviews of Change Health Care clearinghouse data to understand trends on claim denials and rejections, and exploring methods of administrative support for LES programs.

Ms. Harris requested that there be further future discussion on how to engage external providers, as these providers may experience additional problems not faced by LES programs.

A motion was made to open the public comment period early in order for members of the public to ask Ms. Harris questions related to the MMA transition project prior to her departure.

Motion: Open the public comment period earlier than noticed Motion Made By: Rob Porcaro Seconded Motion: Dr. Judith Levin Discussion: None Motion Passed
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Ms. Ellen Schrot noted the issue of sustainability of local programs in light of the administrative time spent on billing and a concern related to administrative overlay. Ms. Schrot recommended to rescind the early intervention carve-in to the SMMC program.

Dr. Levin asked about the reason for the carve-in and when the Department and local programs were made aware of the carve-in. Ms. Harris responded that in order to realize the goal of integrated and holistic health care at the Agency, all services were brought under the plans. In regard to the timing, Ms. Harris stated that the ITN occurred in 2017 and outreach in mid-2018. Mr. Porcaro shared that the Local Early Steps programs learned

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about the carve-in in late September 2018, which gave the programs little time to operationalize the carve-in. Finally, Ms. Pasley stated that the Florida Legislature approved the carve-in of multiple services, including early intervention services, into the SMMC program in 2011.

Ms. Elizabeth Cayson shared her appreciation for Ms. Harris providing updates and for facilitating an open dialogue related to the carve-in. Ms. Cayson also stated that early intervention providers are qualified to work with children with unique challenges and we cannot risk losing these providers.

Dr. Levin requested a timeline to ensure the problems associated with the carve-in are rectified, noting that the timeline should address more than the payment problems. Ms. Pasley responded that a meeting is scheduled for April 18 with the LES programs and could be used to discuss the timeline. Moreover, Ms. Harris assured the Council that the Agency will communicate broadly and will collaborate with the Department on the communication plan.

Ms. Kathy Riley, from Central Florida Early Steps, asked if the systems used by the MMA plans can adapt to requested and future changes. Ms. Marie Mathis suggested that the Agency work with one LES program that uses the Early Steps Data System (ESDS) and one LES program that uses a non-ESDS system.

FICCIT Stakeholder Presentations – *Dr. Michelle Gross, Rhonda Throop, Marissa Barrera, Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County, and Carol Fratti, Florida School for the Deaf and Blind*

Dr. Michelle Gross, Ms. Rhonda Throop, and Ms. Marissa Barrera gave an overview of the Healthy Beginnings Program at the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County (CSC-PBC). Ms. Marissa Barrera described the partnership between Treasure Coast Early Steps and the CSC-PBC, namely the Easter Seals Early Intervention Assessment Team (EIAT). Notably, the EIAT improves the timeliness and convenience of child evaluations for families and caregivers.

Next, Ms. Carol Fratti presented on the Parent-Infant Program at the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind (FSDB). Ms. Fratti explained the FSDB eligibility criteria for FSDB and the role of parent advisors. Ms. Kim Carr highlighted the partnership between FSDB, the Parent-Infant Program, and Early Steps.

Ms. Lourdes Quintana commented that it is difficult for Central Florida Early Steps to find providers who are knowledgeable on cued learning and American Sign Language. Ms. Pasley responded that Ms. Quintana should contact Jessica Meyer, the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program Coordinator at the Department.

Ms. Pasley asked Dr. Gross and Ms. Throop how CSC-PBC screens for post-partum depression. Dr. Gross responded that the Child First Program serves children who have experienced trauma. Ms. Pasley also asked what the CSC-PBC strategy was for identifying babies who may be at-risk eligible, especially those children who may have Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome, and for identifying Zika-exposed children. Dr. Gross replied that CSC-PBC rely on hospital liaisons, nurse home visitors, and Florida Department of Children and Families partners for identification of at-risk children, and local County Health Departments for identification of Zika-exposed children.

Public Comment

Ms. Ellen Schrot commented on the budget proposals made by the Early Steps State Office to the Legislature noting that the Consortium supports the House budget. Ms. Schrot also commented that the Governor's budget proposes a 12 percent administrative cap and would like to ensure that the cap be amended to 15 percent.

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State Systemic Improvement Plan Update – *Kimberly Porter, Early Steps State Office*

Ms. Kimberly Porter provided a status update on activities related to the four infrastructure improvement areas—accountability and quality improvement, data system and child outcomes data quality, finance, and personnel/workforce—of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). Ms. Porter also shared next steps for each of the four areas, including how the Child and Family Outcomes (CFO) stakeholder workgroup will evaluate the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process.

Questions were raised by Dr. Levin and Dr. Sara Evans on Lead Implementation Coach qualifications and how social-emotional progress will be measured in the future, respectively. Ms. Porter stated the LIC's qualifications and affirmed that the BDI-2 would be used in order to compare child outcomes from children served by EPIC and non-EPIC trained providers. Ms. Pasley further noted that the preliminary data best represents reports from providers and parents about their children.

Journeying through Early Steps: The Parent Perspective – *Cheryl Miller, FICCIT Council Member*

Ms. Cheryl Miller shared her experience with Early Steps as a parent of a child with Down Syndrome. Ms. Miller detailed her experience with feeding therapy and highlighted the importance of feeding therapy on her son's development, on child development more broadly, and on social-emotional outcomes. Ms. Miller ended her presentation by offering recommendations for Early Steps providers on how to collaborate and communicate with parents, as well as providing information on the Beckman Oral Motor Protocol.

Dr. Sara Evans further acknowledged the importance of feeding therapy.

Council Member Successes – *Hannah Naitove, FICCIT Liaison*

Ms. Naitove opened the floor for Council members to share successes at their respective agencies. Ms. Nacole Guyton stated that Head Start received block grant funding and Head Start local affiliates will receive funds to increase services for infants and toddlers in the state.

Action Items – *Hannah Naitove, FICCIT Liaison*

Ms. Naitove presented the mock-up to the new Council website; the Council approved the branding and design changes. Ms. Lourdes Quintana asked if the current website features a form for public comment. Ms. Naitove stated that adding a public comment form will be explored.

Ms. Naitove proposed that the 2019 fourth quarter meeting be held in either Orlando, Pensacola, or Tallahassee. Ms. Naitove will request feedback from the Council members via email.

Motion: Adjourn the meeting. Motion Made By: Rob Porcaro Seconded Motion: Elizabeth Cayson Discussion: None Motion Passed

Meeting Adjourned – *Hannah Naitove, FICCIT Liaison*