

**JOINT LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE  
ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**



# **Implementation of the Federal Program Improvement Plan**

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# **Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)**

- **Program Improvement Plan (PIP) required based on outcome of 2015 federal performance review of child welfare services**
- **Rated on seven outcome measures and seven systemic factors**

# CFSR Outcome Measures

- **105 cases from 10 counties sampled out of 10,000 across the state**

## CFSR OUTCOME MEASURES

1. Children are protected from abuse and neglect.
2. Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate.
3. Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.
4. Continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.
5. Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
6. Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
7. Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

# CFSR Systemic Factors

- **Systemic factors were reviewed by using:**
  - **Case reviews**
  - **Interviews with partners**
  - **Focus groups with stakeholders**

## CFSR SYSTEMIC FACTORS

1. **Statewide Information System**
2. **Case Review System**
3. **Quality Assurance System**
4. **Staff and Provider Training**
5. **Service Array and Resource Development**
6. **Agency Responsiveness to the Community**
7. **Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention**

# Program Improvement Plan (PIP)

- Required because NC failed to meet each of the 14 CFSR areas
- Designed to improve statewide performance
- DSS stakeholders and federal partners involved in development
- Effective January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2018
- Contains 5 goals, 14 strategies, 75 activities
- 10 pilot counties participating:
  - Buncombe, Craven, Cumberland, Durham, Hoke, Mecklenburg, Pitt, Scotland, Wake, Wilson
- All strategies will be complete by December 2018

# **Goal 1: Improve outcomes for child safety, permanency and well-being**

## **Strategy 1: Strengthen and clarify child welfare policies and practices**

- Redesigned Child Welfare Policy Manual
  - Included revisions to policies in key areas of Child Protective Services (CPS) Intake, CPS Assessments, CPS In-Home Services, & Permanency Planning
  - Rolled out statewide by July 2018

## **Strategy 2: Enhance the training system to support application of revised child welfare policies and practices**

- Curricula for pre-service and ongoing training under revision to incorporate policy changes
- Training for all counties to be completed by May 2018

## **Strategy 3: Strengthen the capacity of county DSS's through supervisor academy**

- 3 new courses for supervisors designed – facilitated by UNC or Methodist College
- 2 of 4 training cohorts completed, 1 in progress, 1 beginning September

# **Goal 1: Improve outcomes for child safety, permanency and well-being**

## **Strategy 4: Implement a technical assistance model**

- Researched technical assistance models
- Worked with Capacity Building Center for States to develop 3-tier technical assistance approach from basic to intensive
- Engaging national consultant through the Child Protection and Accountability Act (HB630) legislation to finalize new technical assistance model

## **Strategy 5: County-level family engagement committees & state-level family advisory council**

- Established Family Advisory Council – State DSS
- Piloting Local Family Engagement Committees
  - Durham
  - Forsyth
  - Richmond

## **Goal 2: Improve the outcomes through statewide quality assurance system**

**Strategy 1: Operationalize state quality assurance system through use of federal On Site Review Instrument (OSRI)**

- Established process with federal Children’s Bureau for state level review of county cases using OSRI tool**
- 10 pilot counties actively using OSRI tool to review cases at county level for continuous quality improvement**
- Interactive on-demand course developed regarding OSRI and case review process**
- Working with Director’s Association to refine OSRI Quarterly Report that will provide a snapshot of state and county level performance and opportunities for additional support and improvement**



# **Goal 3: Improve the permanency outcomes through collaboration with the judicial system**

**Strategy 1: Plan with judicial system to address permanency issues through the identification of shared outcomes**

- Convened forum on February 23 for county DSS and court partners to build partnership and plan to address factors that increase the time children spend in foster care
- Developed permanency report card, “Permanency Performance Profile” for each court jurisdiction to measure timeliness to permanency

**Strategy 2: Provide targeted engagement with county DSS & courts to court jurisdictions that are not achieving expected outcomes.**

**Strategy 3: Implement Guardianship Assistance Program**

- Completed March 2017
- Education and Promotion Toolkit in development

# Goal 4: Strengthen cross-system service provision

## Strategy 1: Establish agreements between county DSS & LME/MCOs

- The NCIOM and DHHS convened regional leadership summits between September 2017 and October 2018 (referred to as Bridging Local Systems)
- 30 3-hour regional leadership summit meetings in 14 counties across North Carolina.
  - 337 unique participants attended from all 7 LME/MCOs and 88 of the 100 county DSS agencies in North Carolina
- Key themes centered on needs for:
  - Ongoing cross-system communication and collaboration
  - Alignment of North Carolina’s Behavioral Health and Social Services System
  - Addressing the service needs of child-welfare involved families
  - Strengthening the training and development of our workforce

# Goal 4: Strengthen cross-system service provision

## Strategy 2: Strengthen recruitment of foster & adoptive parents

- Provided counties with template recruitment and retention plan
- County plans submitted to NC DSS annually to address:
  - Recruit/maintain a pool of ethnically and racially diverse families
  - Capacity and ability to use data to inform and monitor efforts
  - Excellent customer service provided to prospective, current, and former foster, adoptive, and kinship families
- NC DSS to provide technical assistance, education, and resources specific to plans
  - Ensuring counties meeting plan goals
  - Compliance with Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA) requirements
  - Providing targeted support to counties based on plan progress

# Goal 4: Strengthen cross-system service provision

## Strategy 3: Strengthen stakeholder understanding of federal plans

- Develop training for stakeholders regarding the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) and Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) to increase stakeholder participation when plan updates are needed
  - CFSP is a five-year plan designed to integrate all of the programs that service children and families into a continuum of services from prevention to protection to permanency
  - The APSR is submitted each year as an interim review for the CFSP
  - Stakeholder understanding of these key plans help ensure NC DSS engages in ongoing consultation regarding major concerns of child welfare programming as outlined in the CFSP systemic factor *Agency Responsiveness to the Community*

# **Goal 5: Enhance the statewide data quality, collection and dissemination of information**

## **Strategy 1: Strengthen statewide information system – NC FAST Child Welfare System**

- Pilot with five counties**
- Refining system to ensure it provides a framework for policy compliance and expected practice**
- Currently updating system to include modified Program Improvement Plan policies – to be completed June 2018**
- Working to ensure data quality, build reports, and ultimately create data dashboard**

# Key Accomplishments

- **PIP activities progressing within agreed upon timeframes**
  - Working closely with Children’s Bureau to align expectations with requirements
  - Revised leadership council to include county as well as state initiative
  - Added an additional Supervisor Academy
- **Implemented improved Corrective Action Plan process**
  - Defined support and monitoring
  - Clear accountability
- **Designed report to track performance in all PIP areas**
  - Will be used to identify needed supports to improve county performance
  - Identified areas for training and technical assistance to-date:
    - Improved documentation
    - Frequency of Social Worker contacts
- **Strengthened Child Fatality review process**
  - New protocol to conduct preliminary review of fatalities involving foster children and child in active in-home services cases within 7 days of a fatality

# Next Steps

- **Monitoring PIP Progress**
  - Children's Bureau evaluating on a rolling 6 month basis
  - Baseline performance goals established by the Children's Bureau
- **Align PIP work with activities from HB630**