



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

MISSISSIPPI FIRST STEPS EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM

State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) Meeting

January 26, 2018

9:00 am-4:00 pm

Table with 4 columns: Present, SICC Members, Affiliation, Role. Lists attendees including Shirley Miller, Linda Shivers, Natasha Bennett, etc.

Gwen Woodard, Division of Medicaid [substitute for Dorthy Young]

Additional Attendees:

- Darlene Ross, MSDH Service Coordinator
Debra Koonce, MSDH, Early Intervention Quality Technical Assistant Southern Region
Kim Chancellor, MSDH, Local Early Intervention Program Coordinator
Lynnette Harper, MSDH, Early Intervention Training Facilitator
Marty Chunn, MSDH, EDHI Learning Community Facilitator
Miranda Richardson, MSDH, Early Intervention Data Manager
Pamela Kendrick, MSDH, Early Intervention Monitoring Coordinator
Stacy Callender, MSDH, Part C Coordinator
Valecia Davis, MSDH, Early Intervention Division Director

## MINUTES

### **Welcome/Introductions (K. Smith)**

K. Smith opened the meeting at 9:06 am. She welcomed all SICCC members, appointees, and attendees and asked for brief introductions of each person including their role on the SICCC.

### **Review and Approval of Minutes (K. Smith)**

Minutes from the October 13, 2017 meeting and an addendum to the August 3, 2017 meeting were reviewed. C. Allgood made a motion, seconded by L. Shivers, to approve the amended August minutes as written. J. Slaughter made a motion, seconded by B. Henington, to approve the October minutes with corrections to committee appointments.

### **Program Update (M. Richardson, Part C Data Manager)**

M. Richardson presented the Annual Performance Report (APR) results for FFY2016, or July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017 on the federally-required Indicators for the year as well as trends from FFY2012 through FFY2016 (*see presentation and APR summary sheet handout*). M. Richardson explained the decreased performance on Indicator 1 (Timely Services) and Indicator 2 (Natural Environments) due to difficulties in recruiting and retaining providers willing to serve children and families in their natural environments. Richardson also explained the decreased performance on Indicators 3A1-3C2 (Child Outcomes), which was expected, due to more accurate assessment practices. M. Richardson noted improvements on Indicators 4A, 4B, 4C (Family Outcomes), 5 and 6 (Child Find), 7 (Timely Referral to IFSP-45 days), and 8A, 8B, 8C (Timely Transition) due to multiple training, monitoring, and outreach efforts over the year.

N. Thompson inquired about the transition process, including why the target was set for 100%. S. Callender explained the federally required process of notification at 27 months of age and holding a conference and finalizing a plan by 33 months of age. N. Thompson expressed concerns about notifications sent to the Local School Districts of all children potentially eligible for Part B (special education) services for families not interested in Part B services. S. Callender explained that most states do not allow families to opt out of this notification, though disclosure of additional information requires consent, and that families were made aware of this notification requirement before enrollment in Part C (early intervention) services. K. Driver requested the national averages for the Indicators for comparison. M. Richardson noted the national data would be available in the fall and would be provided to the Council at the October meeting.

### **SICCC Priorities & Goals (K. Smith)**

The Council continued the discussion from the October meeting on setting priorities and goals.

- The Council discussed priorities for the Transition Committee. E. Pell recommended a booklet and/or talking points for EI service providers to use to explain the transition process to families. N. Thompson also recommended information for families to assist them in advocating for their children during the transition process.
- In October, the Public Awareness Committee set a priority to prepare a public report to the Governor and reaffirmed this priority. Additional potential priorities related to public awareness were discussed. C. Allgood recommended collaboration with Childcare Licensure to offer training to families and early care providers about early intervention. B. Herrington recommending including information in all training for early care providers serving infants and toddlers and inquired about all such training currently offered in the state. C. Allgood

stated he could provide a list of the training offered by Childcare Licensure and further recommended a review of training provided through the Early Childhood Academies. V. Davis noted a training calendar was being consolidated to share with the local EI Programs and their EI Providers. L. Rolison also recommended improving outreach through childcare facilities to inform them of EI services and to encourage family and provider participation in the SICC and other meetings. She asked about the potential impact on funding and service availability if enrollment increased as a result of outreach efforts. S. Callender stated the program was federally-required to identify all infants and toddlers who are eligible and, if the demand increased, additional funding would be sought to address the need.

- S. Callender described concerns related to obtaining EI service providers. She noted some reported an unwillingness to serve in the natural environment for the current reimbursement rates. She also noted providers expressed frustration over the time consuming process of being recognized as a provider with the Medicaid Managed Care programs, as first they must be recognized as a Medicaid provider before they can begin the process of being recognized as a Medicaid Managed Care provider. J. Slaughter discussed the need for a more streamlined process, stating more providers would be willing if the process was simpler. It was suggested an Ad Hoc Committee be established to focus on provider and insurance issues with the goal of increasing EI service providers.

### **SSIP Updates: Review and Feedback on the Infant & Toddler Standards**

S. Callender updated the Council of efforts to revise the Infant and Toddler Early Learning Standards, including the collaborative work lead by the Mississippi Department of Education and the Head Start Collaboration Office completed in the fall of 2017. She explained the need to align the infant and toddler standards with MDE's standards for three and four year olds and Head Start's standards. Copies of the proposed Infant & Toddler Standards were distributed and reviewed. The Council reviewed the standards to provide feedback and recommendations. The organization and content were well received; however, C. Perigoe expressed concerns about the age ranges used for the standards (i.e., 0-9 months, 8-18 months, and 16-36 months), particularly the upper range of 16-36 months. She noted a need for increased differentiation in the age ranges. S. Callender requested additional feedback be provided to her so she could forward it to MDE.

### **Public Comments**

Information was shared by an attendee about HB 985, which includes language to replace several committees/councils with a Children's Cabinet. A question was asked about the impact on the current SICC membership. S. Callender explained the federal requirements for the SICC and its composition. She stated changing the state law did not remove the federal requirements; however, she did not know the impact of having state law in conflict with federal regulations.

A question was asked about pending legislation regarding insurance coverage for services for children with Autism. R. Blakely explained that several bills were proposed to require insurance providers to cover services to children with Autism beyond the age of eight.

### **Adjourn**

The SICC Meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.