

**HANOVER COUNTY
SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES
March 24, 2015**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Barnette, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:42 p.m.

The following Board members were present: Sheila Crossen-Powell, Larry Huber, Robert Richardson (3:42 p.m.), Lynn H. Saunders (3:43 p.m.) and G. E. "Ed" Via. Also in attendance: Jim Taylor, Deputy County Administrator; Dennis Walter, Deputy County Attorney; Tamara Temoney, Assistant Director; Jacque Althizer, Budget Management Analyst, Senior; Judy Davis, Family Services Supervisor; Alonda Gregory, Benefit Programs Supervisor; Sherrethia Lowe, Benefit Programs Supervisor; Christine Tillman, Family Services Supervisor-CPS/APS; Ginny Ferguson, Quality Assurance Coordinator; Julie Dubee, Family Services Specialist; Janet Robinson, Family Services Specialist; Derrick Champ, Benefit Programs Specialist and Robin Riley, Administrative Assistant.

II. CITIZENS' COMMENT PERIOD

There were no comments.

III. INTRODUCTION OF NEW STAFF

Dr. Crossen-Powell said the Benefit Programs Unit is now fully staffed. Ms. Gregory introduced Mr. Champ and Ms. Lowe. Mr. Champ was employed with Richmond City DSS and works with the SNAP program here. Ms. Lowe was with Henrico DSS and brings considerable experience to HDSS. Dr. Crossen-Powell added that DSS has another new BPS worker who is in training today.

Ms. Gregory, Ms. Lowe and Mr. Champ left the meeting at 3:45 p.m.

IV. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 24, 2015 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Huber moved to approve the January 24, 2015 Board Meeting Minutes. Dr. Richardson seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

V. PRESENTATION: PERMANENCY UNIT

(electronic copy of handout sent to Board members 3-25-15)

Dr. Crossen-Powell introduced Ms. Davis, Supervisor of the Permanency Unit. Ms. Davis introduced Ms. Dubee and Ms. Robinson, Family Services Specialists. Other unit employees were on intake and in the field. A handout was distributed to the Board members and components of the various programs handled by the Permanency Unit were discussed:

- Foster care prevention
- Foster care and resumed Independent Living (IL)
- Kinship care/school enrollment
- On-Notice court cases

- Adoption
- Non-agency adoptions and ICPC
- Court mandated home studies
- Resource/foster parent program
- Hanover Care for Kids

Ms. Saunders asked what is ICPC. Ms. Davis said it is Interstate Compact Placement for Children, a home study for children in foster care in another state. There is one prevention case open at this time.

Juvenile Court places DSS on notice if a child is at risk for coming into foster care. While the numbers are currently down, the complexity of cases is up. There are no Resumed IL cases at this time.

Ms. Robinson is the foster parent trainer, and there are currently 17 approved foster parents, four of whom are child specific. Foster parent training was held last Fall in collaboration with Hanover, King William and Caroline counties.

The Hanover Care for Kids (HCFK) program was established in 2001. Foster care children are matched with community partners who sponsor the children. Donations to this program average about \$4-4,500 annually. The clothing allowance for foster children is \$400 a year. Mr. Taylor asked if the community partners get to know the children and Ms. Davis said sponsorship is mostly anonymous. Ms. Saunders commented that more sponsors are needed and asked if there is recruitment for the program. Dr. Crossen-Powell said the worker in charge of HCFK has had her time split between different departments for the past few years. There are currently 15 sponsors and some who contribute for multiple children. Ms. Davis said that sponsors are asked to agree to at least a one-year commitment. There are also standby sponsors not matched with a child but who are available for needs that may occur.

DSS is seeing a trend of younger children coming into care. There are 13 children in care age 13 or younger with six of them age 2 and under. More relative placements are being obtained; however, older children have often already been placed with several different relatives making that type of placement no longer an option. There has been an increase in parents with substance abuse, poverty and domestic violence issues. Timeframes have been compressed for family reunification.

Dr. Richardson asked for more information about court "on notice" cases. Mr. Walter said that in the past, attorneys would issue notices to DSS; however, now only the courts can issue them. The average time is about once every 2-3 weeks. Dr. Richardson asked if it is practice or policy for a child aged 12-24 months to be placed for adoption with an adoptive family other than the foster care family. Ms. Davis said that all foster families are now dually approved as adoptive families. The goal is to make the child(ren)'s first placement their last placement. Ms. Dubee cited a case with twin infants who have been with a foster family since the age of one month. They are now a over a year old and are still with the same family. The family's goal is adoption, and court is scheduled in June. Making decisions about placements is a large part of what the Permanency unit does and a great deal of attention is focused on making that determination. Meetings are

held with Dr. Temoney to discuss the cases. If CPS is involved, Ms. Tillman, Family Services Supervisor-CPS, and her employees also work with the unit. Employees also work with community partners on a regular basis:

- Juvenile Courts and Court Services Unit
- Hanover Attorney's Office
- FAPT, CSA, CPMT, County Finance
- Utilization Review (CSB)
- Hanover Schools
- HDSS (CPS, Benefits, Finance, Admin., HSA)
- State DSS
- Private Providers
- CASA

These partners are often very involved in the decision-making process. The family engagement model is used in making these decisions as well as in all the practices for children and families. Ms. Dubee is one of the family partnership facilitators. The purpose of family engagement is collaborating with families, children and extended family to make an informed decision about permanency or safety. Families are the experts on themselves, and if they are actively involved in developing the plan, they are more likely to accept it. Family partnership meetings involve having a non-biased facilitator who directs the meeting. Decisions are made as to whether a child needs to be removed, can return home or if more services are needed. With everyone contributing to these decisions, there is more likelihood of follow through.

Mr. Barnette and Ms. Saunders thanked Ms. Davis, Ms. Dubee and Ms. Robinson for the information. Ms. Davis, Ms. Dubee and Ms. Robinson left the meeting at 4:10 p.m.

VI. MARCH IS SOCIAL WORK APPRECIATION MONTH

(Letter sent electronically to Family Services Specialist employees March 25, 2015)

Dr. Crossen-Powell asked for the Board's approval of an appreciation letter to be sent to all Family Services Specialists. The letter will be signed by the Board Vice Chair and Director.

Dr. Richardson moved to approve the letter recognizing March as Social Work Appreciation Month. Ms. Saunders seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

VII. APRIL IS OFFICE SERVICES SUPPORT EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION MONTH

(Letter sent electronically to Office Services Support employees March 25, 2015)

Dr. Crossen-Powell asked for the Board's approval of an appreciation letter to be sent to Administrative employees. The letter will be signed by the Board Vice Chair and Director.

Ms. Saunders moved to approve the letter recognizing April as Office Services Support Employee Appreciation Month. Mr. Huber seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

VIII. LOCAL CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION PLAN: ACTION NEEDED: RECOMMENDATION THAT FY 16 PLAN BE APPROVED

Dr. Crossen-Powell said that Hanover DSS is a fully deviating agency which means the department follows County policy and employees are with the County rather than State. Reimbursement is received from the State but the agency is a County agency. Each year, DSS is required to complete a Class and Comp plan and submit to the State. There are minor changes from last year which reflect Mr. Harris' budget letter to the Board of Supervisors, a one percent merit increase and several other minor changes. Mr. Taylor asked if the Plan could be structured such that whatever the Board of Supervisors approves for employee compensation is approved by this Board and submitted to the State. Dr. Crossen-Powell said that ranges are indicated to include possible changes and HR also has to sign off on the Plan. Ms. Lawson, Director of HR, is aware that the plan is being sent for her review and approval. Ms. Saunders asked if the major change was the one percent increase. Dr. Crossen-Powell said the major change is that there "may" be a merit increase this year.

Dr. Richardson moved that the FY 16 Local Classification and Compensation Plan be approved. Ms. Saunders seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

IX. BUDGET UPDATE

(electronic copy of graphs sent to Board members 3-25-15)

Ms. Althizer handed out two graphs: 1) Reasons for Visits to DSS FY 2015 and 2) HDSS Expenditures as of January for FY 2015. Mr. Huber asked if the budget year had started. This fiscal year is from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2015. Dr. Richardson asked what the numbers are like. Dr. Crossen-Powell said that Ms. Althizer meets with the supervisors and managers every month to review the budget. Dr. Richardson asked if there is ever a time when DSS has to request funding from the County. Dr. Crossen-Powell said it has not been needed yet, although the County is aware of variability and allows for extra expenditures. Mr. Taylor asked how the return amount compares to prior years and Ms. Althizer said it is about the same. Dr. Richardson asked if the agency is still within the "comfort zone" and Ms. Althizer said it is.

A graph showing reasons for customers' visits to DSS was discussed. The information was obtained from the electronic check-in system used by customers in the lobby. Dr. Crossen-Powell said most interview appointments are now conducted by telephone (88%). Numbers are down, impacted by ABAWDs (Able Bodied Adults without Dependents) as they can only receive SNAP for a limited time and must also be employed.

Mr. Barnette thanked Ms. Althizer for the information.

X. HANOVER DSS DASHBOARD

Ms. Ferguson discussed the Dashboard for January and February 2015 data.

Benefit Programs

The number of new benefit program customers was 10. This information is tracked through the State data depository in the SPIDeR program. Many customers are applying through the on-line process so DSS receives these cases as a second entity. Intake count was 325 and VIEW job retention is still above 50%. For January, Medicaid reviews were at 93.9% and the State standard is 97.0%. Due to State program system errors, a number of cases not belonging to DSS were included in Hanover's data. Dr. Richardson asked if the cases have uniform tracking numbers. Dr. Crossen-Powell said each program has its own case number so there are different numbers and different workers for each program. The same types of errors occurred in TANF percentages with the State including cases that did not belong to Hanover. Thank you to Dr. Temoney for determining the inaccuracies. Dr. Crossen-Powell said that Ms. Ferguson and Ms. Jackson are continuing to contact the State regarding these errors. Dr. Temoney said the VIEW workers' caseloads are at 50% and 77%, respectively. When the State assigns cases incorrectly, it causes the percentages to be lower. The VIEW unit is participating in a grant through RSVP which is an agency that will work with DSS' clients who have an exemption for being temporarily disabled. They also have an employment program where clients can be referred for 30 days. RSVP was scheduled to do assessments last week, but DSS did not have anyone to refer. All the VIEW clients are either exempt or actively working. The participation rate does need to be higher, and employees are working on figuring out how to make that happen. The percentage of participants staying employed is 65% which is high. Thank you to the VIEW workers and supervisor.

Services

These measurements are the critical outcomes reported to the State. Some of the standards have been increased. Tracking of kinship placements was discontinued in November, 2014. Dr. Temoney said that for the discharges to permanency measurement, a lot depends on how the family is performing. They may not fit into that time frame but are working diligently to achieve reunification rather than termination of parental rights. The congregate care measurement is the lowest it has ever been at 9.5%. The State standard is 16% or less. Mr. Taylor said that measurement has been as high as 25-30% and Dr. Crossen-Powell said it has been much higher. Congregate care is the term for locked residential facilities.

Ms. Tillman said that the percentage for number of ongoing contacts was negatively impacted by several factors:

- In addition to regular responsibilities, the ongoing worker has been completing CPS investigations and assessments because there has only been one person in the unit for that program area.
- Workers were unable to contact or locate one family that is transient. The family has finally been located and the case is being closed.
- There are two vacancies in the unit and one worker was on extended medical leave.

Dr. Richardson asked about a similar trend in November, 2014. Ms. Tillman said that the ongoing worker at that time, who had been out on medical leave, resigned. She had been scheduled to return to work but decided to resign. The ongoing cases had to be reassigned to the two CPS workers. Then, one of the CPS workers moved into the ongoing position, but her responsibilities did not change.

Dr. Crossen-Powell said that in another case, the family had been known to CPS in another locality and a number of other people had lived in the home at that point in time. When the case was merged with the new referral received by HDSS, all those people came with the case. Policy requires that face-to-face interviews be conducted with every person in the home. However, the same adults were not in the home in Hanover but had not been removed from the case.

Dr. Richardson asked if there is an option of bringing in substitute workers for temporary vacancies, or does the work just have to be redistributed. Ms. Tillman said most of the departments in the Central Region have vacancies in CPS, so it is virtually impossible to have someone come in on a temporary basis even if the funds were available. Dr. Crossen-Powell said that workers have to be CPS certified and must have completed all training required by the State. It is difficult to find workers with this specialized skill set. Dr. Richardson asked if there was cross-training for social workers in other departments that are non-CPS workers so they can carry out some of the responsibilities. Dr. Crossen-Powell said the Permanency unit has trainings so the workers can do "on-call" at night, but they do not have all the necessary training for CPS. That unit's caseloads are quite complex. Ms. Ferguson said that other employees are also used for Intake so the Protection unit employees can work their cases as well as go out in the field. Ms. Tillman said the APS worker is trained to do CPS, and she has been given some of those cases. However, the APS caseload has also increased.

Mr. Barnette thanked Ms. Ferguson for sending the Dashboard information early. Ms. Ferguson said the goal is to send it early; however, the State does not always have the information available. Dr. Crossen-Powell said this past month, the State had doubled the numbers for Eligibility and Ms. Ferguson had to contact them to correct the error.

XI. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

- Employees participated in a Governing webinar, "Sharing Data with your Friends-The Integration". This webinar discussed integrating data between the different departments. Since DSS is moving toward having some overlap with CSB and Community Resources, this was an important webinar.
- Employees met with the Finance Department regarding the Social Services Financial Workbook which will now be a simplified version. Unneeded columns can be hidden and ones that are needed can be easily accessed.
- Dr. Temoney attended the Virginia League of Social Services Board meeting.
- A IV-E (federal funding stream) evaluation of new foster care cases was done by VDSS.

- Employees participated in Homeward's Point in Time (PIT) count. Four families were identified, one with two parents and a total of four children. All the families were living in a church campground and receiving benefits from HDSS. Ms. Saunders asked if the children are counted and they are. Mr. Taylor asked if the number of families are reported or the number of people. Dr. Crossen-Powell said both as noted on the survey, i.e., whether it is a couple and if their children are living with them or not living with them due to their homelessness. This was the highest number of people in a long time. Mr. Barnette asked if there was a way to capture if the persons are veterans – yes, that question is on the homeless survey. Mr. Taylor said that Homeward issues a report every year which breaks down the data as to a person's status, whether they are a veteran, have been in jail, or have mental health or substance abuse issues. Homeward also asks where the last permanent address was.
- The new Benefit Programs Supervisor, Ms. Sherrethia Lowe, joined DSS on February 2nd. Ms. Amanda Payne, former HDSS Benefit Programs Specialist, was promoted from within to Benefit Programs Supervisor in charge of the long-term care unit. The Benefit Programs unit is now fully staffed.
- The Services supervisor and IT employees visited Norfolk DSS to observe the Laserfiche program. The Benefit Programs supervisor and manager also visited Norfolk to observe how Laserfiche is used in that division (different location and different methods used for services and eligibility units/programs).
- Employees participated in the Local Departments of Social Services/Department of Medical Assistance CPU Communications call.
- Dr. Temoney attended the VAHLSO legislative and VLSSE meetings.
- A staff meeting was held on February 12th and a survey monkey sent to employees regarding how often meetings should be held, what topics need to be addressed and how the meetings should be formatted. A retreat will be held on May 14th, and the Board members are invited. Information will be sent soon. Staff meetings (how internal employees can be served best) will be one of the topics.
- Members of the Learning Collaborative (the child welfare program in which Dr. Temoney is involved) participated in Casey Family training, conference calls and check-ins.
- Ms. Ferguson, Quality Assurance (QA) Coordinator, hosted the QA Network meeting and also participated in the Learning Collaborative's Data subgroup conference call.
- Teams from Services and Benefit Programs visited Henrico and Norfolk DSS to observe the paperless/scanning processes.
- Dr. Crossen-Powell attended the Hanover Early Childhood Council (HECC) meeting.
- Dr. Temoney and Ms. Tillman attended an observation of the Child Fatality Committee. This was in preparation for a fatality review of a child who died in Hanover in 2010. The coroner ruled it an accident and there was no CPS finding; however, this case was chosen for the Committee's review.
- Employees met with the "Food Insecurity" workgroup, with Yancey Jones from The Supply Room.
- An appreciation event was held in honor of Benefit Programs Appreciation Month. BPS workers appreciated the letter from the Board.
- Ms. Tillman held interviews for the vacancies in the Protection unit.
- SNAP, TANF and VIEW case reviews were conducted by VDSS Central Region.

- A brown bag lunch lecture for Black History Month was sponsored by the Quality Team and was well attended.
- A meeting was held with the Health Department on how to improve the UAI (Universal Assessment Instrument) process. This tool is used by the Health Department and DSS to determine whether someone could qualify for nursing home care or long-term care in the home. This is important because, without notice, State DMAS began measuring whether UAIs were being completed within a 30-day window. The Health Department was first notified of this via a letter from DMAS indicating that standards were not being met. Every locality in the State determines their starting point differently. As a result, HDSS has compared what other counties do and has determined a better way of defining terms.
- The CSA Coordinator is working on rewriting the Utilization Review (UR)/Utilization Management (UM) policy. DSS is moving away from the CSB as they have decided on different ways to use their clinicians. DSS is looking at different ways to do the URs.
- Dr. Crossen-Powell attended a Homeward Governance Committee meeting.
- Employees participated in a Kronos demonstration. Kronos is one of the applications being considered by HR for attendance, time logs, etc. This will be one of the presentations at the retreat.
- Mr. Paul Oswell, Director of the Central Regional, gave a “State of the Agency” presentation to the Leadership team.
- The MetroCash (EITC) program has been running for seven weeks and even with two snow days, 88 people signed in for tax assistance and 86 had returns filed. 34 were eligible for the federal tax credit (\$53,669) with federal refunds totaling \$149,859 and state refunds of \$24,068.
- The leadership team attended the Lora Robins “Building Resilient Organizational Cultures” seminar sponsored by Leadership Metro Richmond at the University of Richmond. The speaker’s presented information about the neurological impact of change.
- Management worked with Human Resources to update the Family Services Specialist’s Career Ladder.
- Dr. Temoney attended the State Executive Council meeting.

Dr. Richardson asked how many employees are exempt vs. non-exempt and if all the clerical positions are one classification and professional positions another. Dr. Crossen-Powell said that all Social Workers are non-exempt. That classification was changed ten years ago because, in another part of the state, the local CSB sued their locality for overtime. In order to be proactive, HDSS social workers were moved to non-exempt status so they could get overtime when they go out in the field at night. Leadership positions, managers and most of the supervisors are exempt. Everyone below those levels is in a non-exempt status. These classifications were done with the assistance of the County’s legal department.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Barnette asked for a motion to adjourn.

Dr. Richardson if there was any indication yet as to when the new Board member would be coming. Dr. Crossen-Powell will send Ms. Kelly-Wiecek an email to see if DSS can assist with a decision. If not, the orientation will be scheduled anyway. Dr. Richardson said he would wait until the new member is appointed. Mr. Taylor said a status update will be obtained.

Dr. Richardson moved that the Social Services Advisory Board meeting be adjourned. Mr. Huber seconded the motion at it was carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m. by Mr. Barnette.

Victoria Hutto, Chair

Next meeting: Tuesday, May 26, 2015; 3:30 p.m.