

## Otter Tail Family Services Collaborative

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*Working Together...*

*Serving Families*

*...Improving Lives*

### **Planning and Evaluation Work Group Meeting Minutes**

**2 – 4 PM, January 13, 2010**

**West Battle Lake Room – Government Service Center**

**Present:** Bill Klein (Lakeland Mental Health Center – 5); Kay Brown (OTC Human Services); Diane Thorson (OTC Public Health); Debra Carpenter (Northern Connections- 50); Davis Leino-Mills (OTWCAC – 65); Mary Phillipe (United Way of OTC – 4); and Jane Patrick (Collaborative Coordinator).

1. Jane Patrick welcomed the group. Kay Brown agreed to chair today's meeting. A special welcome was made to Mary Phillipe from United Way who joined the group today to assist with consumer feedback for the Biennial Plan.
2. The agenda and the Minutes of the October 14<sup>th</sup> meeting were reviewed. MOTION: to approve the minutes as prepared. (D. Carpenter/D. Thorson/Carried)
3. Jane shared a brief update on the work group's budget for FY10. A total of \$129 has been expended so far for routine website costs. Jane noted that \$775 is still remaining for costs which may be associated with the Biennial Planning Process.
4. Opportunities for Collaboration – Jane requested that the group identify options for this topic as part of the January CEO Group meeting. Jane also shared a comment which was received as part of the recent partner survey pertaining to the suggestion that we have more "action times" and "decisions" included on the CEO Group agenda so that partners "feel the need to attend." Ideas for the January meeting included:
  - Backpack food bank program in Perham and Mills – North Country Food Bank in Crookston supplies the food – is paid for by a church in Perham. Jane will check with Tamara or Dee Windels to see if they could present on this at the January meeting.
  - Fruit and vegetable program that Pelican Rapids is doing - Jane will check with Deb Wanek about this program to see if it can be highlighted.
  - Perham School program to get kids more active – Jane will check with Tamara to see if she can share more information about this.
  - Henning School got a grant to get kids sitting on the exercise balls. Jane will check with Dean to see if he can share ideas about this.
5. Jane shared a copy of the 2008 Collaborative Coordination Contract evaluation for the services she provides. The group discussed options for completing an evaluation again by the time of the March meeting. They requested that Jane change the wording in the evaluation to be consistent with current contract. Diane or Kay will have Scott Backstrom from Otter Tail County run the survey through the County's program. P & E will present a hard copy of the survey at the CEO Group meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> and allow people to fill it out in hard copy if they wish. Results will be collected and compiled for the March 10<sup>th</sup> P & E meeting and they will then make recommendations to the CEO Group in April about a contract for next year based on the results.

6. The group continued their work on the FY10 Biennial Planning Process. Jane shared an overview of the information discussed at the October meeting regarding the data summaries and identified areas of concern based on local data reports. Jane also shared a summary of the feedback and responses from the Collaborative partners and staff which was recently collected via Survey Monkey. Jane asked the group to review the areas which she grouped together and to consider other recommendations for grouping ideas. The group decided to proceed with the following outline with regard to the 2010 Biennial Planning Process:

- **What do we want to accomplish?** The Biennial Plan is about identifying ways to bring partners together to maximize resources. Specifically, P & E is recommending that the 2010 Biennial Plan focus on: continued partnership opportunities; collaborate to learn how to change and better serve; share services; pool resources; enhance referrals among our agencies without duplication; and develop increased trust in our partnerships.
- **What are the needs in Otter Tail County?**
  - i) **Data** – Current data specifically shows concerns in the following areas:
    - a) **Economic environment** concerns in OTC include: food shelf usage; free and reduced lunch usage; WIC usage; increased average cost of child care; and percentage of children living in poverty.
    - b) **Social environment** concerns include: *number of children re-entering foster care system within 12 months of initial placement\**; *number of children abused/neglected\**; *number of children born to teen/unwed mothers\**; and *number of juvenile out-of-home placements\**.
    - c) **Health related** concerns include: percentage of children obese/overweight; *number of children in placement that received a mental health screening\**; *children born to mothers that received late or no prenatal care\**; *increase in children with autism or other health impairments\**

**\*Note: These indicators reflect small actual numbers of children/families directly affected.**

- ii) **Partner assessment** – A survey of our partners in late 2009 indicated the following:
  - a) Top challenges facing our partners:
    - 1) Finances & budget cuts
    - 2) Short staffed – same services, less staff
    - 3) Lack of resources available for needed services
    - 4) Intake and reporting requirements are too demanding.
  - b) Partners identified the following challenges which are affecting the families they serve:
    - 1) Poverty and borderline poverty
    - 2) Unemployment and underemployment – loss of hours
    - 3) Family structure – divorce, single parents, extreme stress
  - c) Partners think that local agencies and services could do the following to address their needs and the needs of families:
    - 1) Do a better job of connecting clients with appropriate services, resources and finances
    - 2) Offer support and advocacy
    - 3) Locate help where the need is, and not where the agency office is located
    - 4) Subsidize basic needs (food, housing, clothing, etc.)

iii) **Community assessment:**

United Way is currently working on a community needs assessment. Mary shared information about the Minnesota Compass and the possibility of United Way conducting an independent community needs assessment using web-based, paper and phone surveys. P & E agreed to look at the Compass tool when it comes out on January 29<sup>th</sup> and determine if it is sufficient to meet the need to tell us what consumers are saying. Diane also indicated that the SHIP program conducts routine assessments and these will be updated again next year. The group will continue to monitor these data sources to determine if our goals and objectives align with what the reports tell us. At this point P & E is comfortable that they have seen enough data to validate consumer needs but will continue to look at what individual surveys tell us as they become available.

• **Identify strategies we can use to address our current needs.**

RECOMMENDATION: Planning and Evaluation proposes that the Collaborative ask each work group to conduct activities during the next two fiscal years which will improve:

- Food/nutrition - identify specific strategies and tasks to improve intake systems to ensure those who qualify for food support programs are referred to available resources as part of their common intake processes
- Support – identify specific strategies and activities to be used within their programs which will help families identify and access programs, services and resources
- Education - create and promote educational opportunities for families and/or children which are specific to their agency and/or work group goals and objectives
- Family structure – identify specific strategies to enhance, support and develop the family structure when education, services and/or community opportunities are offered

• **How do we address the needs with the resources we have available?**

RECOMMENDATION: Ask each group to look at this and include in their work plans within budgets they request.

• Things to consider prior to finalizing the Biennial Plan:

- a) Look at the chemical health work group's purpose at the next meeting;
- b) Additional discussion on the family structure component of the evaluation which wasn't fully covered at this meeting;
- c) Diane shared that there will be one additional health survey summary coming out in February which will show county rankings. They agreed to use with what we have currently collected and compiled but will wait to finalize the group's recommendations until we review this most recent health report.

7. Jane shared an update on the website. A request was made for Jane to update the calendar for 2010. Jane reported that website usage increased during the month of December which may have been as a result of the fact that the Service Coordination Work Group developed and distributed a new resource card directing families back to the website for resources.

8. The meeting was adjourned by consensus. The next meeting is set for **Wednesday, February 10<sup>th</sup> from 2 – 4PM at the Government Services Center in Fergus Falls.**