



Rob McKenna
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF WASHINGTON

July 30, 2008

Via e-mail

Braam Oversight Panel
John Landsverk, Chair
Jeanine Long
Jan McCarthy
Jess McDonald
Dorothy Roberts
c/o Carrie Whitaker
Box 354900
4101 15th Avenue NE
Seattle, WA 98105-6299

RE: Compliance Plans on caseload reduction action step, monthly visit benchmark and CHET benchmark

Dear Members of the Oversight Panel:

Attached are compliance plans from Children's Administration for your consideration on three topics: caseload reduction as required by Action Step 1(c)9 in the Settlement Agreement; monthly visits as required to achieve Outcome 6 of Goal 1 of the Unsafe/Inappropriate Placements section of the Revised Implementation Plan; and CHET screens as required to achieve Outcome 2 of Goal 1 of the Mental Health section of the Revised Implementation Plan. In reviewing these plans, please note that the section on background information in the first two plans is essentially the same as caseload and workload reduction analysis and strategies overlap. .

Also, please note that the proposed compliance plan on the monthly visit outcome does not contain a section on documentation or verification as requested in Carrie's e-mails of July 16 and July 23, 2008 and the minutes of your conferences calls on July 15 and July 22, 2008. Before finalizing something on these issues, CA would like further clarification as to what the panel would like for this purpose.

It appears that there are really two separate issues here. First, that CA ensure that the method used to document visits be such that only private and individual face-to-face visits that meet the health and safety visit policy be counted as monthly visits for Braam compliance purposes. Second, that there be some form of audit or review policy to verify that this is in fact the case.

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The latter issue appears to have been raised for the first time in your conference call of July 22 and Carrie's e-mail of July 23.

If I understand the minutes of your July 15th call and Carrie's July 16th e-mail correctly, the first issue has more to do with whether caseworkers properly understand both the policy and documentation requirements and will have the means in CAMIS or FamLink to appropriately document that monthly visits as required by the policy have occurred and can be distinguished from other types of caseworker-child contacts or attempted visits. While caseworkers may need to record other contacts or attempted visits, it appears that your primary concern is that they not be counted as monthly visits. I assume from the minutes of the call and Carrie's e-mail that these concerns can be addressed by CA by means of a "demonstration for Panel staff on the codes used in both CAMIS and FamLink to capture monthly visits, the specific screens and fields where this information is captured and the direction given to caseworkers on entering these data."

I further assume that the audit or quality review process you discussed in your July 22 conference call and which was requested in Carrie's e-mail of July 23 has a somewhat different purpose, which is to verify that when a monthly visit is documented in CAMIS or FamLink, a private face-to-face visit that met the monthly visit standard did in fact occur.

We would appreciate it if you can verify that these assumptions are correct and, if not, provide us with more guidance as to what you would like to see. As for the audit or quality review process you would like CA to establish, it would help to have more clarity on what the potential problem is that is the basis for your concern: mistakes or inaccuracies in reporting by caseworkers as they implement the policy, false reports by caseworkers who did not do a required visit, or something else. How the problem is defined may help shape the specifics of the audit or case review procedure established by CA. Possible approaches may be supervisory reviews or use of the existing quality assurance program.

This letter also confirms that there is currently nothing due to the Panel from CA on the fourth area addressed in the recent enforcement proceeding in Whatcom County, sibling visits and contacts, as the Panel has previously approved the compliance plan in that area.

Thank you for your consideration. Please let me know if you have any questions.

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Sincerely,

STEVE HASSETT
Senior Counsel

w/ Attachments

cc: Plaintiffs' Counsel