

CQI Workgroup on Part C Fees
Meeting Summary
March 22,2000
Henrico CSB-Conference B
Glen Allen, Virginia

Those Attending: Glen Slonneger, Elisabeth Hutton, Anne Lucas, Anne Simmons, Barry Mason, Carmen Sanchez, Emily Dreyfus, Joe Sharrer, Beth Skufca, Carmen Sanchez, Joan Pine, Forrest Mercer, Geri Pratt, John Jackson, and Mary Ann Discenza

Those Absent: Patti Seklemian, Pat Abrams, Wanda Pruett, Liz Fletcher, Joy Yeh, Martha Adams, and Joel Rothenberg

Discussion occurred around hypothetical fee scale # 3 developed according to parameters identified by the workgroup at the previous meeting. Concerns were expressed about the fee scale and questions raised about whether the hypothetical scale represented a shift away from the guiding principles adopted by the workgroup at earlier meetings, especially the principle about fee appeals would be the exception in determining families ability to pay. Of paramount concern is that the fee scale is closer to what already exists and perceptions that the scale would be burdensome for families.

The issue of the third fee scale brought into focus a number of related questions/issues:

- a) Should the workgroup attempt to define affordability?
- b) What is reasonable for families in relationship to fees?
- c) What is the balance between a affordability and a fee scale that is politically realistic?
- d) Were fees unaffordable across all income groups?
- e) Do alternatives exist, i.e. exempting fees for services for lower income families which Medicaid will not reimburse?

Other questions centered around data related specifically to identifying the % of families who would reach the cap, if fee scale # 3 is not affordable, what is affordable and is there data about frequency of services. The workgroup concluded that at this point there is not enough information to make a recommendation about any of the fee scales that have been proposed.

This was followed by an extensive discussion about strategies for collecting data and the recognition that families currently in the early intervention system would provide the best information about the questions raised above. A suggestion was made to conduct focus groups in different areas of the state with a variety of income groups using two or three hypothetical fee scales and to pose questions about the scales' affordability. It was suggested that the Part C Office contact the Virginia Institute for Developmental Disabilities (VIDD) at VCU for technical assistance and guidance in formulating questions and for recommendations for a process to collect this information from families. Emily Dreyfus also suggested including provider groups in focus group discussions about fee scales.

The workgroup reviewed CSB data reports for FY 98 and 99. The reports reflect information from CSB performance contracts, contain state and local revenue data for services provided by CSBs (Part C funds are excluded), do not reflect revenue from private providers, and do not fully address the issue of the amount of revenue collected from direct client fees. Observable details from the reports include: 1) revenue reported statewide appears low (\$280,000); 2) the data reported is not specific to Part C services; 3) 26 councils contract out with private providers and we don't know the amount families are paying private providers or how CSBs supplement payments

to private providers; 4) approximately 80-90% of the fees (reported revenue) can be accounted for in 6 boards. The discussion about these reports reinforced the need for additional data in order for the workgroup to fully analyze the impact of implementing statewide fee scales. A suggestion was offered to give one or all three of the hypothetical fee scales to localities to determine what effect these specific scales would have on families currently in the early intervention system. (Note: This specific issue requires further discussion.)

Outcomes from the discussion:

- a) Staff to work with DMHMRSAS Office of Reimbursement and clean up the numbers on hypothetical fee scale #3.
- b) Identify a small workgroup to develop a few questions related to determining what effect hypothetical statewide fee scales will have on families using family scenarios illustrative of high and low need and collect baseline information from CSBs. Determine how hypothetical scale # 3 compares to existing fee scales and compare to current CSB fee scales and determine if scale # 3 more or less than the majority of existing scales by taking family scenarios and determining out-of-pocket costs for families using fee scales 1, 2, and 3. How do families compare using the hypothetical scales? What is the household income range? What would be the impact if scale 1, 2, or 3 were implemented, i.e. how much revenue would a CSB lose, how much revenue would be collected, what would be the cost if families were held harmless at specific income levels, how many families would go to appeal using the fee scales, etc. Where possible, determine the cumulative effect on families.
- c) Review data from the EIIMT site visits, make follow-up call where necessary, prepare report and disseminate to workgroup.
- d) Secure statewide median income levels by region. (Forrest Mercer)
- e) Initiate contact with the MR Council for assistance in designing a survey instrument to collect data about the amount of revenue from private providers. (Joan Pine & Shirley Ricks) the small workgroup will include representatives from the CQI workgroup and DMHMRSAS Office of Research and Evaluation as well as representatives from the MR Council.
- f) The DMHMRSAS Office of Reimbursement will identify CSBs with long term and short term fee scales and will review data from Mount Rogers, Western Tidewater, Cumberland, and Loudoun and provide feedback to the workgroup.
- g) Invite DMAS to meet with the workgroup to discuss policy questions in relationship to exempting fees for families who are on Medicaid. It was noted that DMAS has written to the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) requesting clarification about the exemption policy, i.e. billing Medicaid and not charging family fees for covered services.

The workgroup scheduled for Thursday April 3, 2000 at the Henrico CSB located in Glen Allen was canceled.

The revised meeting schedule is as follows:

April 20, 2000	12:00 PM until 4:00 PM	Henrico CSB	Conference Room C
May 11, 2000	10:00 AM until 3:00 PM	Henrico CSB	Conference Room C