

Early Intervention Integrated Work Plan

Status Report for the Virginia Interagency Coordinating Council

September 8, 1999

1. Legislative Activity: Implementation of HB-1413 & HB 2716 - Mandated Coverage for Early Intervention Services

The Part C Coordinator continues to provide guidance and information to HMOs and private insurers. She is working with localities and communicating with HMOs to help resolve issues. A statewide meeting of HMOs will likely be held later this year.

2. Ability to Pay/Uniformity of Fees

Results from parent surveys, council information and family focus groups were presented to the VICC in June. VICC passed the following motion: that the management team develop a legislative or other administrative proposal for a statewide equitable, family-friendly sliding fee schedule for early intervention services. Some remedial action should be implemented as soon as possible. Furthermore, that the management team explore whether certain non-reimbursable early intervention services could be exempted from fees to families (in addition to assessment, child-find, and service coordination, such as special instruction, respite, and transportation services.

The Part C Early Intervention Management Team (EIIMT) accepted the recommendation of the Virginia Interagency Coordinating Council (VICC) to find strategies for resolving ability to pay mechanisms and appeals processes issues and, after considerable discussion, referred the matter to their respective Agency Heads. The EIIMT is waiting for responses but indicated the Agency Heads reluctance to move forward with implementing a statewide fee system and/or changes to sliding fee scales and ability to pay mechanisms without further information about which issues are state-wide versus locality-specific.

In response to a request from the Virginia Babies Can't Wait! Office, the DMHMRSAS Office of Research and Evaluation was asked to undertake further analysis of the data collected on localities' ability to pay mechanisms and sliding fee scales. This report, representing all regions of the Commonwealth offers general findings and additional information on local interagency coordinating councils' (LICC's) ability to pay mechanisms and appeals processes and is included as a separate handout for VICC members.

Another activity involved site visits to three local interagency councils by an EIIMT representative and staff from the Virginia C Babies Can't Wait! Office to:

- 1. examine the localities' ability to pay mechanisms and appeals processes,***
- 2. assess how families were informed about the ability to pay mechanisms and appeals processes,***
- 3. gather data about the number of appeals in each locality, income range and number in***

family, and general information about the number of families covered by Medicaid and private insurance,

4. collect information to assess specific categories of reasons for families having difficulty paying for early intervention services, and

5. gain a clearer understanding of ability to pay issues to identify specific intervention.

Information about the site visits is included in the EIIMT ATP report to the VICC.

3. Maximizing Financial Resources/Payor of Last Resort

The Virginia Babies Can't Wait! staff continues to provide technical assistance on an as needed basis.

The financing technical assistance document is in the process of revision.

4. Non-Supplanting (Maintenance of Effort)

Discussions continue at DMHMRSAS and with the EIIMT concerning ways to assure non-supplanting.

5. Funding Formula

No action will be taken on the funding formula by Part C staff during 1999-2000. The Early Intervention Interagency Management Team has recommended that a contract to evaluate the funding formula and to recommend modifications be developed and awarded during 2000-01 implementation. A separate contract (for a thorough evaluation of the Part C system) is currently being developed (by the VICC Administrative Committee and Part C staff) and will include a component related to the funding of localities.

6. Accountability: Interagency Agreements, Contracting, and Sanctions:

The state interagency agreement is in the process of revision.

The local contract has been revised and is now being used.

Discussions continue about ways to enhance accountability through performance contracts or other means.

Technical assistance is provided on an as needed basis by BCW staff.

Discussions have occurred at Management Team meetings and Agency Head meetings regarding the feasibility of development of interagency linkages with the data systems of each agency. Funds were budgeted for the high priority infant tracking data system. Evaluation of existing and potential interagency linkages will be a part of the evaluation of the Part C system.

7. Monitoring

The MIMS Pilot project has been completed and the evaluation of the method is presently under way. Plans are to have 20 of the 40 councils evaluated by the revised process beginning in the fall.

8. Consistency Across Local Early Intervention Systems

A standardized IFSP form has been drafted and is ready to be piloted. Training has been recommended for use of the new IFSP form, natural environments, prior notice and consent.

9. Evaluating the Early Intervention System

The Administrative Committee of the VICC has been re-activated. An RFP is being drafted for evaluation of the early intervention system.

10. Legislative Committee

Amy Marschean, Legislative Services, is planning several meetings of the Joint Legislative Subcommittee between now and December. The following information has been requested and will be provided by Virginia Babies Can't Wait!

- 1. Interagency coordination of services and funding to ascertain the most cost effective and appropriate service delivery approach***
- 2. Performance and outcome measurement pilots***
- 3. Standardization of forms, data collection and assessment procedures to support a seamless, integrated and coordinated system***
- 4. Technical assistance for localities***
- 5. Training on EPSDT***
- 6. Fees for families***
- 7. Strategies for reaching traditionally underserved populations because of cultural diversity***
- 8. Child find and public awareness activities***
- 9. Part C provider networks in HMO contracts***

11. Previous Requests for OAG Guidance

The Virginia Babies Can't Wait! Office is continuing with efforts for OAG Guidance.

12. IDEA Re-authorization: Changes to Virginia Policies and Procedures

Virginia's revised policies and procedures were approved by OSEP in March 1999. Copies were distributed to each local interagency coordinating council this summer. The policies and procedures will be put on disks and mailed to localities.

13. Personnel Standards: Early Intervention Assistant

Approval has been obtained from OSEP for the Early Intervention Assistant.

The PTDC will finalize the required elements of an application this fall.

14. Legislative Study: Early Intervention Personnel from Traditionally Underserved Groups

The PTDC is linking with the Cultural Diversity Advisory Committee, and members attend each other's meetings to communicating information and share activities.

15. Comprehensive System of Personnel Development, Training and Technical Assistance

The PTDC will review summer and fall awards for tuition assistance, and will possibly make recommendations to broaden course work which may be funded, particularly with the development of the early intervention assistant occupational category.

The PTDC will work with the BCW office to post training opportunities on the BCW web site.

The Committee would also like to discuss with the Public Awareness Committee the idea of feature articles on early intervention personnel in rural areas, highlighting the profession in small, rural newspapers as another recruitment strategy.

The PTDC will continue to be informed of activities regarding the implementation of the universal newborn hearing screening. Beverly Crouse will provide this information.

The PTDC discussed the Indicators of Recommended Practice and will have further discussion at another meeting.

16. VICC Early Intervention Service Guidelines for Physicians and Early Intervention Personnel

The PTDC discussed the status of the physicians' and nurses' training. Adrienne Frank shared materials for the nurse's training. Anne Stewart reviewed the materials and wrote a letter for the introduction of the manual.

17. Direct Services: Natural Environments, IFSP Services, Transition, use of Technology

The IFSP draft is ready to pilot. The IFSP and Natural Environments Technical Assistance Documents are in the process of revision. Training is being planned.

A contract has been awarded for training for the Local Continuous Improvement Pilot Project. The project will begin in the next month.

18. Central Directory

Virginia Babies Can't Wait! has contracted with United Way Information and referral. They have been answering the phones and referring families and providers.

19. Public Awareness/Child Find

Virginia Babies Can't Wait! has contracted with a private public relations consultant and a marketing plan has been developed this plan will be presented to the VICC at its September 8 meeting.

20. Strengthen interaction among all parts of the system and with other agencies and resources.

DMHMRSAS, DOE and Head Start are in the process of finalizing an interagency agreement.

21. Facilitate maximum family involvement at all levels of the BCW system

There are family members on each of the VICC committees.

The number of councils with paid family members is increasing.

There is a goal of having two local family contacts (supported by the five regional family representatives) for each locality. There are now between 60 and 70 local family contacts.