

# **Appendix: E**

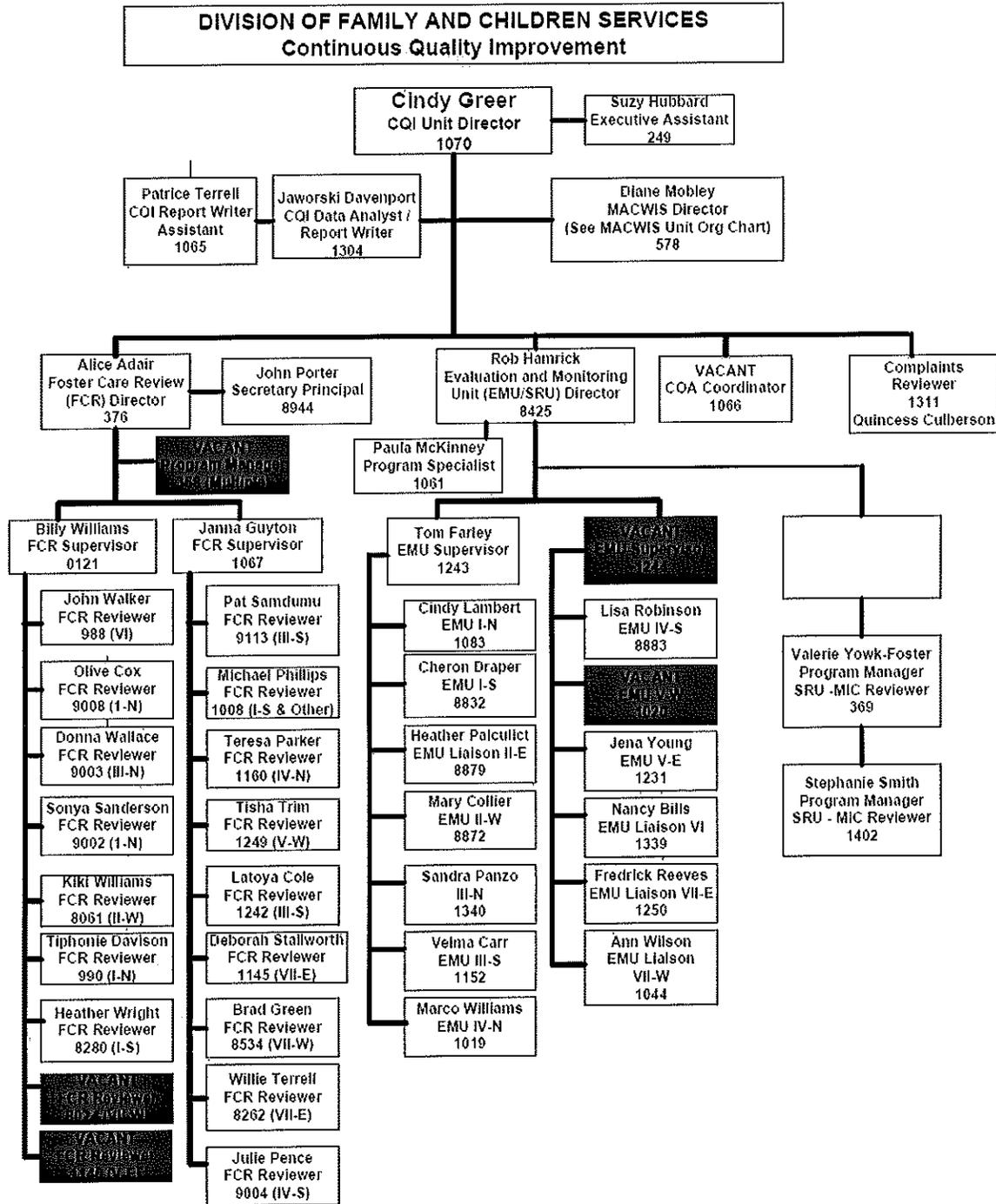
## **Quality Assurance System**

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Federal regulations at 45 CFR 1357.15(u) require States to describe in their CFSP the Quality Assurance (QA) system it uses to regularly assess the quality of services under the CFSP and assure that there are steps taken to address identified problems. However, in working with States in implementing program improvement activities required by the Child and Family Services Reviews, CB learned that many State QA systems are in need of refinements to assess and measure improvements on an ongoing basis. On August 27, 2012, CB issued Information Memorandum ACYF-CB-IM-12-07 on establishing and maintaining Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) systems (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/im1207.pdf>). In that IM, CB advised States to maintain their QA systems and enhance them through a continuous quality improvement approach. A continuous quality improvement approach allows States to measure the quality of services provided by determining the impact those services have on child and family level outcomes and functioning. Such an approach also helps States determine the effectiveness of processes and systems in operation in the State and/or required by Federal law.

In the APSR, assess the State's current QA/CQI system based upon the information shared in IM-12-07 and any improvements elected or planned. In the IM, CB advised States to focus on the following:

# Foundational administrative structure



## **Quality data collection**

The data that is used to manage the child welfare services in Mississippi and for the effective use by the CQI unit is collected from multiple sources. The primary sources of the data used are collected from monthly MACWIS reports, Foster Care Reviews and Periodic Administrative Reviews (PAD), AFCARS files, and the Evaluation and Monitoring Unit's case reviews.

## **Case record review data and process**

### **Evaluation and Monitoring Case Review Process**

To support the results of the data indicators from MACWIS, regional qualitative case reviews are conducted by Evaluation and Monitoring and Foster Care Review to provide deeper context to the data results. The following process outlines the Evaluation and Monitoring case review process:

After requesting and receiving a universe of cases from each of the implementing regions (baseline or follow up), a random sample of 14 foster care and 10 in-home services cases from each region is obtained. Twelve teams made up of two people conducts the case reviews in each region, and are supported by one team leader and two quality assurance reviewers. In addition, regional EMU liaisons conduct 2 monthly case reviews per region to provide additional data to the regions to target areas of improvement.

The case review process involves a half day of training for reviewers on the details of the review as well as how to use the web-based review instrument. The actual review time allotted is 2 days including client/staff interviews. Two reviewers, utilizing MACWIS and the EMU automated web-based instrument, conduct a detailed review of the case based on the instrument questions. Once the case review and interviews are complete and all information is gathered and entered into the instrument, the reviewer submits the review data and EMU assigned QA staff review the case review data for validity/accuracy. Any issues found within the review data are sent back to the reviewer via the automated instrument for correction and explanation. After all corrections/explanations are finalized, the reviewer submits the final version of the case review and the review is considered complete.

The results of the onsite reviews are aggregated and presented at an exit conference on the last day of the review. All stakeholders and staff are invited to attend. The results of all reviews held during the year are presented in a CQI annual report.

### **Foster Care Review Process:**

Every child in DFCS custody receives a "foster care review" every 5 months as long as they remain in custody. The Foster Care Review staff review the child's MACWIS and paper file record to gather information on the case. The review staff also conducts a "county conference" with each case review to gather stakeholder information that adds to the overall review findings.

The county conference is held in the DFCS office in the county that holds jurisdiction of the child.

Once the reviewer completes the entire case review and county conference, the Periodic Administrative Review instrument is utilized to document and collect data. It is located in the child's MACWIS case file and once completed it is submitted to the county supervisor who supervises the case. The instrument utilized for the county conference is known as the Youth Court Hearing and Review Summary. This instrument is also completed by the Foster Care Reviewer after the case review and county conference. It is used to document the discussion that occurred by all stakeholders including agency representatives at the county conference and to summarize the reviewer's overall administrative findings related to permanency for the child. This instrument is submitted to the Youth Court holding jurisdiction of the child after the county supervisor adds additional information to document the agency's recommendations.

Both instruments are located in the MACWIS system and both provide quantitative and qualitative data to be utilized by the agency.

Foster Care review also collects, analyzes and produces data on specific foster care related topics and these topics vary based on what areas have been found to need improvement. Some of the recent topics that data has been collected, formatted and disseminated to DFCS management relate to overdue TPR packets (untimely completion by agency staff), children in region 7W who have lingered in foster care, but who are living in their own homes, individual cases requiring immediate corrective action issues related to safety, permanency or wellbeing.

### **Analysis and dissemination of quality data**

MACWIS reports – MACWIS is the automated case management tool used in Mississippi for caseworkers to document all child welfare services provided. This system is also used to produce numerous monthly management reports, federal reports and Olivia Y. reports. Upon initial development, the reports are validated and then are revalidated every six months to ensure accuracy, validity, and reliability. These reports are scanned to the DFCS P: drive for all staff. These reports are discussed in management staff meetings as well as regional CQI meetings.

Data dashboard – Data from the monthly MACWIS reports is charted and displayed in chart and graph format. These charts and graphs are published to the DFCS connection/Data Dashboard for all staff to view and or print. These reports are discussed in management staff meetings as well as regional CQI meetings.

Evaluation and Monitoring Case review exit Conference - The data following each review is aggregated by item and rated as a "Strength" or "Area Needing Improvement". The results are presented in aggregate form at the exit conference for all stakeholders in attendance.

Youth Court Hearing & Review Summary (YCHRS) - This report produces qualitative data for agency supervisors and managers and the Youth Court. The county conference discussion is

captured here. The county conference is held every 5 months that the child remains in custody and the following stakeholders are required to be notified of their right to participate in the review: the agency staff (including supervisors) assigned to the case, the Guardian Ad Litem assigned to the child by the court, grandparents, parents, resource (foster) parents and the child in custody.

PAD – Periodic Administrative Determination data produces qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data is found in the comments of the instrument and is reported directly to the case managers and supervisors within 15 days of the county conference and case review. PAD quantitative reporting occurs monthly and covers a rolling 6 month reporting period. Following the FCR, the reviewer completes the PAD. A PAD data file is extracted on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month based on the following methodology:

### **Population**

The population of children reported on for the PAD reports is determined by extracting records of children in custody (or who have left custody) that had a county conference with a “*Conference Date*” that fell within the 6 month reporting time frame.

### **Accepted PAD Records**

The records that are accepted from the population is determined by PAD records that met (1) the population requirement and (2) the most recent PAD for the reporting period that have a “*Complete Date*” on the PAD. This will allow for complete PAD records.

### **Methodology**

CSF and DFCS staff have identified the PAD questions that relates to each data indicator required for Olivia Y. reporting. The data analysis unit uses the identified questions in the PAD for each indicator and creates each of the approximately 40 reports. The statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) is the software used to analyze and create each report.

The data reports are aggregated in three ways; by region/county, detail, and regional summaries. Upon initial development, the reports are validated and then are revalidated every six months to ensure accuracy, validity, and reliability. A complete data report is compiled and posted internally on the DFCS P: drive for all staff. These reports are discussed in management staff meetings as well as regional CQI meetings.

### **Feedback to stakeholders and decision makers and adjustment of programs and process**

As a means of ensuring that Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) findings and data are actually used to craft plans for implementing the Practice Model and to meet the requirements of the Settlement Agreement, the State Office CQI Unit will conduct Data-to-Action meetings in the regions in which reports are issued following baseline and follow-up Evaluation and Monitoring reviews.

Data-to-Action meetings were established as a means for the State Office CQI Unit to collaborate with regions shortly after the finalized regional CQI report is received following an Evaluation and Monitoring baseline and/or annual follow-up review. The sessions are attended by the Regional Director, key regional staff which would include but is not limited to the ASWSs, the Regional Practice Coach, and Adoption Supervisors. The Evaluation and Monitoring Liaison, the Foster Care Reviewer, Regional Implementation Team representatives, and key external stakeholders are also in attendance. External stakeholders present at the Data-to-Action meeting shall sign a confidentiality statement upon their arrival at the meeting. A copy of each signed confidentiality statement shall be sent to the Evaluation and Monitoring Unit and kept on file with the other documents resulting from the Data-to-Action meeting (minutes, sign-in sheets, copy of presentation). These meetings aid in the interpretation of the case review results and data indicators, along with information obtained through stakeholder surveys and Foster Care Review data, and identify strengths and areas of needed improvement in order to inform practice and support program improvement plan efforts within the region. Data from the Evaluation and Monitoring review, Foster Care Review data, and Data Dashboard information drive the discussion in which strategies for improvement efforts are brought forth. The effort is designed to generate analytic strategies to ensure that CQI results are effectively integrated into the ongoing regional implementation plans so that the regions operate on an informed basis in implementing the Practice Model. The Data-to-Action meetings are designed to assist the region in understanding their data and interpreting it as a “road map” to improvement.

**The APSR should also include any training or technical assistance the State anticipates needing from CB resources or other partners.**

Mississippi began working with NRCCWDT in March 2012 and established a training session for all of DFCS managers called “Turning Data into Conversations and Conversations into Actions”. This training was helpful and we may be requesting a similar training in the future.

With the NRCCWDT, Mississippi established monthly webinars for CQI staff entitled “Building the capacity for CQI”. We would like to continue to have these ongoing monthly sessions.

**In addition, in the APSR, provide an update on QA/CQI results and data that have been used to update goals, objectives, planned strategies or use of funds in the APSR. Also describe any specific practice or systems improvements the State has made since the last APSR based on QA/CQI findings.**

Mississippi has benefited from the TA assistance provided by NRCCWDT in many ways. Mississippi’s CQI unit was able to conduct item specific analysis on PIP data as well as additional state data for goals that were not met. These analyses lead to successfully negotiating several items of the current PIP.

We now have enhanced the capacity and capability for *Olivia Y.* settlement agreement data reporting from the foster care review (FCR) and periodic administrative determination (PAD) processes.

The evaluation and monitoring unit has enhanced the capacity of its staff to use data in exit conferences, data to action meetings and regional CQI meetings with field staff following onsite case record reviews.

The Foster Care Review unit has developed master excel custody tracking forms that combine the data from multiple MACWIS reports, developed an overdue TPR tracking spreadsheet and disseminated that information via the DFCS connection, corrective action is currently being tracked on excel spreadsheets. Data is being developed now that will assess the tracking over a period of time.

Based on lessons learned from the TA, CQI findings and results, Mississippi understands the need for continuing to build a quality CQI system to enhance the delivery of the Mississippi practice model of service delivery. Since the last APSR, Mississippi has:

- Enhanced FCR and PAD reporting
- Established regional CQI teams responsible for structured annual, monthly, and follow up case record reviews. Special case reviews are held as needed with a focus on specific practice and data issues needing improvement within the regions
- Increased stakeholder involvement
- Produce and post data dashboards monthly instead of quarterly
- Developed a Maltreatment in Care (MIC) unit to review and follow up all reports of ANE of children in foster care
- Established data analysis unit
- Continues to develop automated reporting from the evaluation and monitoring automated review tool.