

RICC Meeting

11/16/06

12:00 noon



Present were: Andrea Peterson, Jaret Cvancara, Barb Olson, Rod Gillund, Maranda Phelan, Dana Deegan, Colleen Baker, Betty Omgig, Cheryl Saeman, Cynthia Gardner, Darlas Rogers, Kathy Molland, Tim Coughlin, Harlan Fixen and Kathi Benth (Support Staff minutes).

Minutes of the last RICC meeting were handed out. Tim asked if there were corrections to these minutes. There were none.

Betty reported on the status of Infant Development Program since she retired her position of Program Administrator. Erica Turnquist was hired for Betty's position. Erica had been a half time Early Interventionist. As caseloads grew, Erica felt she could not do justice to the program and her family. Erica resigned her position as Program Administrator with her last day being 11/10/06. Erica has accepted a position with Alexander Schools as a Title Teacher. During the last 1 ½ years, the Infant Development Program has been under the administration of Minot State University (MSU). Budget cuts were requested across the state by the State Office. Minot and Williston were asked to cut \$41,000. Therefore, MSU does not feel they can fill the Program Administrator position in Williston. Kathy Lee from Minot will be traveling to Williston one time per month to fill in as Program Administrator for the time being. Betty shared MSU is hoping some of the budget cut can be recovered. Kathi Benth will be adding a few more hours of her time for support. Betty continues to work approximately 15 hours per week and Erica is keeping 1 child on her caseload from Watford City. The recent changes in the Infant Development Program has been hard on families as when a family has gotten to know their Early Interventionist and this changes, it takes away from the rapport built with the family and child.

Tim asked if there were any questions or suggestions regarding the current Infant

Development Program situation. Rod asked what problems are foreseen regarding this change? Supervision of staff is a problem, but it is felt this will be worked out as Kathy Lee gets more accustomed to how business is conducted in Williston. Another question is who will be assigning children to staff? There is a 45 day time line to see, enroll, etc. a child. DD staff meets every Thursday morning to determine eligibility and it is felt once the wrinkles in communication are ironed out, this will run more smoothly. Deb Bingeman is new to the Infant Development Program as an Early Interventionist. Betty has offered to help Deb become more familiar with the ASSIST Program. There are little problems that are not always thought about such as forms, copying them so the program does not run out of them, etc. It has been observed that Kathy Lee is not always easily accessible by phone and lot of "phone tag" has been being played. Tim states staff need to be clear when calling Kathy by leaving a message regarding what the phone call is about, what questions we have, etc., so when Kathy does return the call, she will have the answer. It is felt things will get better once Kathy Lee meets with staff and everyone is aware of what duties they will be responsible for.

The "Baby PAR" is now on the ASSIST Program. DD Casemanagement is responsible for setting up the PAR, ID is responsible for filling in the PAR and it goes back to the responsibility of DD Casemanagement to make sure it is done correctly and to activate the PAR on the ASSIST Program. It is felt this involves too much "back and forth" play with this PAR. It is very time consuming to enter the PAR. DD Casemanagement has opened some PAR's, but have not yet been asked to activate them. Barb talked about time lines regarding when the PAR shows up on DD Casemanagement's alert system and when the actual PAR is done. Questions have been posed to the State Office however, we have not yet gotten answers back. No flexibility and training on new programs is viewed as a real problem.

Infant Development is now serving 42 children. There have been a couple more referrals and a couple of children will be aging out of services. Jaret is serving 7 children, Tim is serving 2 children and Barb is serving 33 children. This count puts Barb over her limit of clients to serve as each child represents 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ people and Barb is still serving adult clients.

Andrea Peterson had inquired of the State Office to produce what Part C funds have been used for since June of 2001. Andrea reported she had changed her e-mail address so was not sure whether the State Office had received this request. She sent this inquiry once again yesterday, but as of today, has had no response. Andrea plans to re-send this request. It was discussed it would be interesting to know these statistics so we are aware of who is getting what.

During the last RICC meeting in August, a letter was sent to Yvonne Smith, copied to Deb

Balsdon, signed by the Region I RICC members, inquiring about the Right Track funding cut. Yvonne responded back to Tim regarding the fact that she was unable to attend the Region I RICC meeting in November, and also attached were agenda items for a DD Unit staff meeting where it was stated, "We don't have any unexpected windfall, . . . ", referring to Part C funding. Deb Balsdon did not respond at all.

Betty reported the reason Region I Part C money for Right Track was cut so much was because the State Office wanted to spread the money across all 8 regions based upon population. Rose Shafer was very successful in conducting screenings and follow up visits, however because Region I's population is very low compared to other regions, our money was cut extensively. More money was given to the eastern part of the state where there is more population. During the Crossroads training held in Bismarck last week, Betty talked with staff from Fargo asking whether Right Track screenings have picked up in their region. Staff said they have not done more screenings as their Right Track Program has remained through the Department of Human Services (DHS) instead of being a part of their privatized Infant Development Program and therefore, administration has not written a position description to cover this so the money is just "sitting there." It is felt that if Fargo is not doing more Right Track screenings, there is the possibility other regions are not either so there has to be money available somewhere. It was discussed that as a committee, would it be possible to request from Deb Balsdon the number of Right Track screenings that have occurred across all 8 regions in the last 6 months? Tim volunteered to do this. Number of screenings since May through October will be requested by Tim. It is felt a problem exists in that originally, we were to try to find children in need of services at a younger age and it is now felt this will go backwards and we will be missing a lot of children.

The transition process change was discussed by Jaret who stated instead of conducting a meeting when a child is 2 years 6 months, a meeting will be held when a child is 2 years 7 months. Jaret is on the State ICC Committee comprised of participants from all 8 regions and headed by Deb Balsdon. He recently participated in a conference with this committee to work on child find items. It seems everything has been put on the sideline other than transition. There has been no more talk of natural environments, child find, etc. For transition, a letter will be sent to the parents when a child turns 2 years 7 months. A letter will also go to Special Education, but a confirmation they received this letter is needed. It has been decided to send Special Education the letter and they will e-mail a statement back regarding the fact they received the letter. A copy of the e-mail will be retained for documentation. Rod asked if there was a possibility the State ICC meeting minutes could be accessed. It was discussed there should be a website where these minutes may be accessed. This will be researched and if there is a website, this information will be forwarded to Region I RICC Committee members.

Erica had made an offer to a parent to accept being the Experienced Parent in Region I however, the offer was rejected. The qualifications for an Experienced Parent does not require a degree however, if a person does have a degree, it would allow this person to take on some other responsibilities such as help with casemanagement, etc. At this time, Deb Balsdon has stated there is no money in the budget for Region I to have an Experienced Parent but she is looking for some dollars. Betty reported other regions have used their Experienced Parent to visit families as they start the transition process as a parent who has already gone through the process. An Experienced Parent would also have the qualification of having had a child that had been involved in Infant Development who is still under the age of 12. It would be ideal to have an Experienced Parent who has just gone through the transition process.

The Regional Compliance Team was discussed. This is a team that reviews 6 Infant Development cases to make sure the file is in compliance and if it is not, what areas need to be worked on such as making sure there is all documentation for an IFSP, the needs of the child are being addressed, are natural environments used, were there at least two professionals used during evaluation, was the ISP completed within 45 days of evaluation, does the evaluation look at all areas of development, etc. The Compliance Team has already conducted this evaluation one time in Williston.

An update on the Fort Berthold Program was given. Lynn Baker is a new technician hired to handle the Mandaree area. Miranda Phelan handles the 4 Bears area. Dana Deegan states this will be her last RICC meeting for this area. Bernadine Young Bird is looking at Right Track screenings to be conducted on the reservation next year. There are currently four technicians with the program, each having 100 cases on their caseload. They are trying to see the children every 3 months. The RV Unit has been retired for the winter so the technicians are visiting families on their own.

Referral from New Town to Northwest Human Service Center was gone over and clarified by Barb Olson so it will run more smoothly.

RICC Meeting Agenda for 2007 is as follows: February 14, 2007; May 17, 2007; August 16, 2007 and November 15, 2007.

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.