

COUNTY OF CHATHAM

CHATHAM COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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Jennie Kristiansen, Director

Social Services Board
Richard Edwards
Thomas Droke
Valerie Broadway
Carl Thompson, Sr.

ORGANIZED 1770

707 SQUARE MILES

Chatham County Board of Social Services Meeting Minutes April 21, 2021

The April meeting was conducted by GoToMeeting due to COVID-19. Members in attendance: Richard Edwards, Chair; Valerie Broadway, Member; Carl Thompson, Member; Jennie Kristiansen, Director; Nancy Burgess, Executive Assistant and Cecil Wilson, Guest.

Richard Edwards called the meeting to order.

Carl Thompson motioned to approve the March meeting minutes with a second motion from Valerie Broadway; with all in favor.

Review of Monthly Data

The board reviewed the monthly data report. Childcare subsidies preliminary spending for March was 100%. Final numbers were not yet available. CPS timeliness had 28 accepted reports for the month of March. Two were initiated outside of timeframe, with a timeliness of 93%. One case was initiated four hours outside of time frame to accommodate a parent's work schedule. The second case was a second report on the same family and one of the children was not seen within time frame.

Economic Services Updates

The Food and Nutrition Services Employment and Training Plan Annual E&T Plan was submitted the week of April 19th to the Division of Social Services. The plan was reviewed by both CCCC and DSS and detailed how the program is administered in Chatham County including the referral process, information exchanged, data collection and budget/reimbursement process.

Pandemic EBT was set to start for children enrolled in childcare centers in May. This would be similar to the benefits that were being provided to school aged children.

Medicaid managed care calls were continuing. The most common questions were about re-selecting a plan after the prior open enrollment period and why this was necessary when the caller already had Medicaid. Approximately 211 (or 3.01%) of 7,000 eligible managed care beneficiaries had selected a plan. Statewide the percentage of enrolled beneficiaries was 3.19%. Information regarding enrollment numbers in Chatham was requested from the enrollment broker. The Medicaid program open enrollment for transformation to managed care began the week of April 19th and will run through May 14, 2021.

Family Services

April was Child Abuse Prevention month and May (from Mother's Day to Father's Day) will be Elder Abuse Awareness Month. There was a press release and article planned for Child Abuse Prevention Month. The Health Department was working with the children's services division on these items.

Cardinal Innovations, the Local Management Entity/ Managed Care Organization (LME/MCO) for Chatham County was working toward improved supports for children served by child welfare. Clinical liaisons were assigned to each DSS agency with goals to include an increase to the number of children receiving community-based services, a decrease in wait times for services, and an increase in the percentage of caregivers who report positive experiences. Cardinal Innovations also developed a Child Welfare Reinvestment Agreement that provided additional funding (a per-member, per-month payment) that could be used toward emergency placements, additional assessments/evaluations, supplies (e.g., clothing, toiletries, hygiene items), foster/kinship parent training, additional supports for foster/kinships parents, and "unmet health-related" resource needs).

The first session of Chatham County Family Treatment Court was held the week of April 12th. Three families were being screened for participation. A court counselor will coordinate the sessions and preparation for twice monthly court sessions. In addition to the court counselor, participants will also receive support through a parenting counselor and financial assistance with expenses (e.g., transportation expenses).

Agency Updates

DSS is working out a process to refer all potentially eligible families to the WIC (Women, Infant and Children) Program. The WIC Program provides free supplemental nutritious foods for income-eligible pregnant and postpartum women, infants, and children until the child's 5th birthday. It also offers nutrition counseling, breastfeeding support, and referrals to other community programs. A client automatically meets income guidelines if receiving any DSS services such as Medicaid or FNS. The work of the EMBRACE grant has helped to highlight the need for more participation in the WIC program in Chatham. The WIC program specifically has been found to reduce the chance of low birthweight, prematurity, and NICU admission. There is an online portal to refer to the program and a new informational flyer has been designed with a QR code that will be sent out in mailings to potentially eligible families.

II Reception Software

DSS was scheduled to start using new reception software to register clients who visit DSS. The old software that was developed in the 1990's was becoming obsolete. The new software will include options to set up a "round robin" assignment of work without having employees manually track. It also provides for a sign in/sign out board and reporting. Training was scheduled for April 12th-23rd with a "go live" date of April 26th.

Cyber Update

Restoration had been completed with outstanding issues that included problems with the phone system and some child support functions.

COVID Update

The DSS waiting areas were scheduled to fully reopen on Monday May 3rd. The reopening plan includes the same options for accessing services remotely but offer an in-person option without an appointment. Vaccine supply was going up with an estimated 50% of residents and 50% of DSS employees receiving at least one vaccination. Masks and social distancing are required

for entering the waiting area. Clients will be served outside or remotely if they did not wear a mask.

Agency Events

Employee orientation was scheduled to take place at the Ag Center in early May. An agency staff meeting was scheduled for April 27th. The agenda included a presentation on the COVID vaccine and the WIC program.

The Board of Commissioners approved three weeks of paid family leave for new parents.

With no further items to discuss, there was a motion to adjourn from Valerie Broadway with a second motion from Carl Thompson; with all in favor.

The next board meeting will be held Wednesday, May 19th at 3:00pm via GoToMeeting.



Chair

6/26/21
Date



Secretary

6/16/21
Date

