



Data Systems Workgroup Summary

June 29, 2011 (9:00am-11:00am)

In Attendance:

Diane Murphy, SDE, representing Sarah Ellsworth; Walter Gilliam, Yale University; Lori Schroeder, DSS; Sherri Sutera, Child Care 211; Sue Wilson, Charts-a-Course; Anne Littlefield, Shipman & Goodwin, Linda Goodman, DDS; Sheryl Horowitz, CAHS; and Sherry Linton-Massiah, SAC

Absent:

Marcie Cavacas, DPH and Beth Petroni, DCF

Discussion:

After a round of introductions, the list of workgroup members was reviewed to determine if the necessary areas were represented. In addition to the membership criteria recommended by an external consultant, the frame of reference for group membership was the need to ensure there are members that could inform the workgroup on child, program, and staff level data. There was also acknowledgement of the importance of having users of data and expertise on privacy. The group deliberated on what agency or organization possess health data after birth, beyond Medicaid data. School districts were identified as one source of such data. The presence of data users as members was also affirmed as a resource to guide and raise relevant policy and implementation-related questions. The group concluded that the current membership of this Data Systems Workgroup meets the needs as outlined by the frame.

The Charge to Committee was reviewed and accepted. Some discussion took place about the history and challenges of other initiatives having the goal of establishing MOUs for data-sharing cross agencies. The distinction was provided that the work of this group will be an expanded effort to link child data, beyond that of smaller initiatives in the past. The point was made that the experiences and lessons from those initiatives will inform and guide this work. It was stressed that the work of this group is imperative because, "We place value on the things we measure."

Current early childhood and education data systems initiatives were reviewed. Those initiatives included,

- The national *Data Quality Campaign* initiative that provides access on the status of other states in their efforts to develop and implement quality data systems.
- The *Early Childhood Data Collaborative* was also mentioned and identified as a multi-state effort, possibly an initiative of Harvard.
- DPH is the lead agency for three federal *Home Visitation Grants* being awarded to states through the Maternal and Child Health legislation. The focus is on seven approved home visitation models from which states will select a model or models to expand implementation of services. Two of the grant opportunities are formula grants, and one is a competitive grant, for which CT has submitted an application. These grants require specific benchmarks that may tie directly into the data systems work.
- The P-20 Council has been charged with analyzing the education system from pre-school through post-secondary experiences. The focus to date has been on secondary school transitions to college. This workgroup will be partnering with the P-20 Council in hopes of jointly benefiting from free technical assistance services being provided by the National Center for Education Statistics to evaluate the options for a data systems infrastructure, including the existing interoperability schemes, and make recommendations.

FERPA and IRBs (Institutional Review Board) were discussed in the context of the recent proposed regulation changes for FERPA (see handout in your packet) which includes a lot of references to “research.” The complex dynamics of privacy as covered by FERPA were also touched upon. A suggestion was made to consult an IRB expert to address the implications of different data uses (e.g. case management, policy questions, and research).

Also discussed was, *The Right from the Start Initiative* convened by the Graustein Memorial Foundation to ensure that any early care and education system developed at the state level reflects direct interplay with the local early care and education systems.

- The *Data Quality and Access Consortium* (previously known as Data Partnerships), is focused on gathering aggregate data to develop a data mapping tool. The project is supported by the Graustein Memorial Fund, with Jim Farnham consulting. It is possible that an MOU might include agreement to provide the consortium with the types of data they are requested (list to be sent to workgroup members by Linda Goodman). This effort could be a good partnership with the data workgroup because communities’ access to data was one of our objectives.
- *RBA* was discussed in its capacity to offer a change in culture from qualitative evaluation to more quantitative measurements of the work being done by state and community agencies. It was highlighted that a recent RBA practitioners’ meeting was focused on data systems.

A rich conversation evolved from the RBA discussion to include, the thought that must be given to the risk for harm that need to be considered when sharing data. It was stressed that the decision to share

data should use a risk to benefit analysis, with significant consideration to whether a greater good is an outcome of that data sharing.

The Race to the Top (RTT-ELC) was discussed as an opportunity to validate the work to be done within this group, and represents the urgency to get this work underway. It was discussed that the likelihood is high for the guidance of this grant to require collaborating systems, with considerable focus given to data systems. It is also possible that this grant could be a source of funding for a Connecticut early childhood federated data system or data warehouse.

There was a discussion of other data collection entities including the National Registry Alliance and the National Association for Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies.

Work Plan Review

The discussion of past challenges to establishing an MOU across state agencies for the purpose of data sharing was revisited.

Establishing unique identifiers for children, programs and teachers is a charge that the group will undertake. The current status of identifier assignments was discussed. Pre-school children currently in publicly-funded early care and education programs have been assigned an identifier, but a host of children in private centers, and some receiving Care4Kids (state funding) are not assigned state identifiers. This discussion stressed the importance of widening the pool of children with identifiers, with possible consideration to be given to birth certificate numbers as identifiers.

The discussion on unique identifiers also revealed that program ids are generated differently based on the agencies collecting data. Some use the licensed number, while the Registry utilizes a computer generated number. DDS uses a contracted agency number of its providers and some SDE assignments are school district code driven.

The ability to aggregate and disaggregate data was also stressed.

The discussion of staff id assignment led to the suggestion that possibly the process through which background checks is administered may be a means to assigning unique identifiers to staff.

The group discussed the utility of developing a template for gathering some foundation information on unique identifiers from the agencies. The template will include the ask for,

- The numbers given?
- Who is included and who is not included in the assignment of identifiers (who is it limited to)?
- How are the numbers defined (SMART or random)?
- At what point/age is the number generated?
- Triggering event for activation and/or deactivation?

- How, if so, is the id linked to other ids?

The point was made to account for whether protected information is listed in any fields when sharing data.

A draft MOU template will also be shared with the group.

Adjourn

Next Meeting

July 18th, 9-11am, Childcare 211

1344 Silas Deane Hwy

Rocky Hill