



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

Department of Children, Youth and Families
101 Friendship Street
Providence, RI 02903

**The Charter of
The Systems of Care (SOC) Practice Implementation Work Group,
Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families**

Background

In January of 2009, the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) rolled out the long-planned Phase I of converting the State's service delivery system into a system of care (SOC). Phase I focused on creating a system of care that deflects children and families from coming into the child welfare system through preventive services and practices.

In 2009 and 2010, the DCYF leadership focused on developing plans for Phase II SOC—specifically, converting the rest of the service delivery system into a system of care for all clients of the Family Services Unit (FSU), Probation, and the Rhode Island Training School (RITS), based on High Fidelity Wrap Around. Development activities included:

- Development of an initial concept paper describing Phase II.
- Consultations with internal stakeholders about the draft concept paper. The internal stakeholders included all DCYF supervisors and frontline workers. Feedback from these consultations was incorporated into the concept paper.
- Community Stakeholders in multiple community meetings with discussion and feedback incorporated
- Creation of an ad hoc work group of managers, supervisors, frontline workers, and some central office staff to take the concept paper to the next level—the development of Practice Guidance for Phase II. The DCYF leadership concluded that the involvement of these field staff was essential in designing how Phase II would look like on the ground in actual practice and service delivery.

Practice Guidance was defined as descriptive best practice of all stages and tracks in child welfare, Behavioral Health and juvenile corrections. This Practice Guidance, when developed, was intended to be used to create other needed products for Phase II SOC—specifically, policy and procedures, training and staff development, and the Request for Proposals (RFP) for contracted services and practices needed for Phase II.

The Practice Guidance Work Group began its assignment in November, 2009. It broke into three subgroups to develop the practice guidance for FSU, Probation, and RITS. They completed their work in June, 2010.¹ Regular meetings and consultations were held between the Work Group members and members of the DCYF SOC Design and Development Team. Technical assistance

¹ However, Rhode Island went through its onsite Child and Family Services Review April 26-30, and the DCYF leadership asked the Work Group to ensure that the Practice Guidance address the Areas Needing Improvement by working with the Program Improvement Plan Work Group. So this task will be undertaken this summer, 2010.

to the Work Group was provided by the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement (a service of the Children's Bureau).

The involvement of these field staff proved so valuable to the DCYF leadership that mid-way through the work, the leadership asked the Practice Guidance Work Group to develop plans for it to continue after it completed the Practice Guidance. The goal was to create a forum for ongoing dialogue between the DCYF leadership and the field on how to improve practice to achieve better outcomes. So in June, 2010, the Work Group developed this Charter to be submitted to leadership for review and approval.

A charter is a written instrument, executed by the participating parties, that formally specifies an entity's purpose and other elements of its work. These are some of the benefits of having a formal charter:

- A charter can help the Work Group's credibility—it provides a formal definition and identity.
- It is an instrument that will help others to understand the purpose of the Work Group.
- It can help other potential partners understand how they can participate in the work of the Group.
- A charter can help establish a system of accountability—it defines the purposes, functions, relationships, boundaries, and responsibilities. Defining these can help the Work Group remain functional and productive.

Designation

The proposed name of this entity is *the SOC Practice Implementation Work Group*.

The SOC Practice Implementation Work Group is a standing group of DCYF, created at the request of the DCYF leadership. While it is a standing work group, it serves at the pleasure of the DCYF director and can be modified, continued, or de-commissioned by the DCYF leadership.

Vision

We envision a regular, continuing dialogue between the DCYF leadership and the field staff that uses data to focus on improving outcomes by improving child welfare, Behavioral Health and juvenile corrections practice.

Purpose/Functions

We propose three functions for the DCYF SOC Practice Implementation Work Group.

1. With the DCYF leadership and SOC Design/Implementation Team, the SOC Practice Implementation Work Group contributes to and reviews all products needed for Phase II SOC roll-out to ensure consistency with and fidelity to the Practice Guidance. Such products include the combined three sections of the Practice Guidance, policy and procedures, training and staff development, and the Request for Proposals (RFP) for contracted services and practices needed for Phase II.
2. The Work Group members will represent the field which helps the DCYF leadership and the SOC Design/Implementation Team address problems and issues that emerge as

Phase II is rolled out. In this function, Work Group members bring forward issues that need addressing that have been identified by their colleagues in the field, and also serve as DCYF “ambassadors,” going back to the field to explain needed adjustments and changes to their colleagues and bringing back subsequent feedback.

3. The Work Group serves as a forum for regular, ongoing dialogue between the DCYF leadership and the field on how to improve practice to achieve better outcomes. Data is used in this forum to monitor changes in outcomes that may result from changes in practice.

Members of the DCYF SOC Design/Implementation Team always meet with the Work Group whenever it is working on the first two functions listed above—review of products and problem solutions work. They may also meet with the Work Group in its third function at the invitation of the DCYF Director.

Membership, Leadership, and Terms of Service

Typically, the Work Group’s membership consists of approximately 15 members:

- One supervisor or one worker from each of the four FSU regions (four members with four alternates). When any of these positions becomes vacant, a replacement member is selected by the Regional Director.
- One clinical social worker and one manager from the RI Training School (two members with two alternates). When any of these positions become vacant, a replacement member is selected by the Superintendent with alternates identified.
- One supervisor and one worker from Probation (two members with two alternates identified). Vacancies are filled by the Assistant Administrator of Probation and Parole.
- Child Protective Services (one member from intake, one investigator, with two alternates identified)
- The director of Data and Evaluation (one member or designee).
- One representative from the DCYF Policy Office (one member).
- CSBH Staff who serve as SOC Partnership managers.
- Permanency Support/Licensing (one member).
- Youth Transition Services (one member).

Additional members may be added to the Work Group by recommendation of the Work Group to the DCYF leadership or by the leadership itself.

Approximately six months after beginning operation, the Work Group will review the current membership of the Group to determine whether other members are needed.

Members from the FSU regions, Probation, and RITS are appointed for two year terms of service (these should be staggered for the purpose of continuity). Regional representatives should be appointed so that only one regional representative per region goes off the Work Group in any

given year. Appointments are made at the beginning of the calendar year. Work Group members may be re-appointed for additional terms of service. The other members of the Work Group serve because of the positions they hold in DCYF and serve as long as they hold these positions.

The Work Group is chaired by a chair and vice chair who will be elected. The chair and vice chair positions should also be staggered for the purpose of continuity. The chair and vice chair prepare the agendas for the meetings, convene the Work Group, and chair the meetings.

A recorder for the Work Group shall be appointed for a one year term. The recorder keeps minutes of meetings and sends them to the co-chairs within two weeks of the meeting date. The recorder also copies any materials that Work Group members need prior to or following meetings as requested by the co-chairs.

Meetings

The Work Group will meet with the DCYF leadership on an ad hoc basis as needed in its first two functions—reviewing Phase II SOC products and working as a team to address needed Phase II SOC roll-out issues.

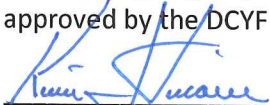
For its third function—working with the Leadership to improve practice and outcomes in the field—the Work Group will meet weekly for the first year. After six month of its operation, Work Group members will determine whether to continue weekly meetings or move to another meeting schedule—e.g., monthly meetings.

Committees

The DCYF SOC Practice Implementation Work Group can establish committees to work on specific issues as needed. Committee membership is not limited to the membership of the Work Group but can include other field staff and other stakeholders as needed.

Changes to the Charter

Changes to this Charter can be made at any time by recommendation to the DCYF leadership. However, intent to amend the Charter should be noted on the agenda for the meeting where a change will be proposed, and the agenda should be sent to the Work Group members prior to the meeting to give participants time to think about the proposed changes. Changes must be approved by the DCYF Director.



Signature, DCYF Director

3-16-11

Date of Approval

Updated: February 28, 2011