

National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement  
The 2005 Spring Teleconference Series  
“So Your PIP is Over: Ongoing Program Improvements” – May 5, 2005

**OREGON’S LESSONS LEARNED AND PLAN OF ACTION**

**1. BACKGROUND OF OREGON’S CFSR/PIP**

- a. Oregon was one of the earliest states to be reviewed, with our federal review being held in June 2001. At that time we passed 11 of the 23 measures.
- b. Oregon’s PIP began on July 2002 and the plan was 35 pages long. It was thick with policy changes and included an extensive local branch review process, which closely mirrored the federal review process and took a minimum of 40 on site hours per person, with a team of 12-24 staff and community partners to complete. Throughout the PIP, we averaged 2 local reviews per month.

**2. THE RESULTS OF OREGON’S PIP**

- a. We DID pass the PIP in August of 2004, after re-negotiating some of the measures, which had been set very high, including some at 100%.
- b. We DID develop several new data reports: both summary and worker level.
- c. We DID implement many, many policy changes.
- d. Many field staff said the local branch review was the best child welfare practice training they had received!

**3. LESSONS LEARNED**

- a. Issuing newly written policy doesn’t necessarily result in change in practice or outcomes.
- b. Improvement in data reporting highlighted inconsistencies in business practices and interpretation of policy.
- c. While measurement alone can sometimes result in improved data, it does not necessarily result in improved practice or outcome. Counting events does not equate to evaluating the quality of interaction. (eg. Monthly Face-to-Face Contacts)

- d. Trying to change too many items at once may cause lack of focus and competing priorities.
- e. Feedback alone does not produce change!

#### **4. OREGON’S PLAN OF ACTION**

**Theme: “Spend more time improving practice than measuring it.”**

- a. Make a three-legged stool
  - i. Develop a panel of experts (“Dream Team”) from three areas of the organization: policy-makers, service delivery staff and quality assurance staff, in order to obtain joint investment in the outcome.
- b. Focus, focus, focus.
  - i. Focus on specific measures
    - 1. Provide data to the “Dream Team” so that they can select performance measures to be reviewed.
    - 2. Consider various factors in selecting measures:
      - a. Which ones are “low hanging fruit” and can be brought to passing with least effort?
      - b. Which items urgently need improvement (safety?)
      - c. Which items have a positive ripple effect on other items?
      - d. Which items may be inter-related? (e.g. reunification and re-abuse)
  - ii. Focus on effective practices
    - 1. The Dream Team will identify three branches with the best performance and three branches most needing improvement on each of the measures (or clusters of related measures). Hand selected teams will conduct reviews at each of the six branches specifically examining the practices related to the measures.
    - 2. Use the “Dream Team” to identify effective practices related to the specific performance measures in each of the selected branches.
    - 3. Use information from the reviews; develop a “cookbook of effective practices”.

iii. Focus on changing practice.

1. Reviewed branches needing improvement on a given performance measure will develop an improvement plan in consultation with subject matter experts/consultants.
2. Performance and implementation of local plans will be monitored by Field Management Staff and reviewed by the Dream Team to determine which plans effectively change/improve practice.
3. Transfer good practices to all branches needing improvement on each measure. (Still working on how to do this.)
4. Share good practices at field manager meetings.
5. Publications
6. Other ways?

c. Continually Improve Communication

- i. Customize reports to suit needs of the audience.
- ii. Communicate numbers within a context of casework practice.
- iii. Continue to have conversations about what works.

Charlotte Honse, Quality Assurance Manager (503-945-6677)  
Maria Duryea, Research Manager (503-945-6510)  
Oregon Department of Human Resources  
Child, Adults and Families