Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Advisory Committee

The Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Advisory Committee was held Wednesday, April 11, 2018 at the Florida Department of Health, 4025 Esplanade Way, Rm 301, Tallahassee, Florida.

Call to Order:
The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm EST by Jessica Meyer, EHDI Coordinator and Committee Leader. Roll was taken and introductions were made.

Members Present:
Jessica Meyer, Committee Leader
Sarah Beard, Healthy Start
Teryl Camus, Au.D. Arnold Palmer Hospital
Alex DeMolina, Parent of a deaf child
Robert Fifer, PhD, Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) Program
Karen Flanagan, Parent of a deaf child (via phone)
Erica Floyd Thomas, Agency for Health Care Administration
Jillian Gerstenberger, Au.D. Mednax
June Ann LeFors, Deaf Educator
Stephanie Mourkakos, President of Hands and Voices (via phone)
Walter Niles, Department of Health, Office of Minority Health
LaKera Reddick, Early Steps
Gail Strassel, Florida School for the Deaf and Blind (FSDB)

Guests:
Victoria Buchanan
Miranda Nerland
Jennifer Cato, FSDB
Chris Moleski, FSDB

DOH Personnel Present:
Cassandra G. Pasley, JD, BSN, Tallahassee - CMS
Marcy Hajdukiewicz
Caitlin Roberts
Laura Olson
Nikema Peterson
Felicia Clowers
Harriet Hinson-Charlton
Jatarra Bradley

Attended Via Conference Call:
Lynn Miskiel
Mandy Longo
Victoria Gaitanis, FDOE
**Government in the Sunshine Training:**

Kim Tendrich addressed the Committee on their responsibilities regarding public meetings, public records requests, and recusing oneself during a vote. The Committee is subject to Sunshine Law/public records requests. A meeting is defined as any discussion (by any method, i.e., email, phone, text, mail, or in person) between two or more members of the Committee.

**Introduction to the State of Florida’s EHDI Program:**

Jessica Meyer provided a presentation on the EHDI Program’s structure, the HRSA grant mission and related goals, the CDC grant mission and related goals, and an update on programmatic statistics and current data related to grants goals.

**Follow-up Letters and Scripts Discussion:**

Copies of follow-up letters and scripts were provided to the Committee members for review and input.

It was recommended that the word “mother” be replaced with “caregiver,” and that the term “abnormal” should be removed and replaced with other language. Additionally, it was recommended that the language be revised to a lower reading level.

The consensus was that the term “refer” is confusing and does not capture the sense of urgency needed to obtain follow up testing. The term “fail” does provoke attention, however, it could be perceived as unnecessarily harsh. It was suggested that both terms be replaced in favor of “your baby did not pass.”

Dr. Fifer expressed concern regarding the level of language reduction in the parent letters when translated to Spanish and stated that it is critical for Spanish speaking families to have direct contact rather than using a translator.

Teryl Camus reported that insurance problems are the primary cause of loss to follow up in the Orlando area. There was discussion of hospital screening programs versus third party screening organizations, and how this affects insurance and out of pocket expenses.

Jessica Meyer stated that she will revise the letters and provide a couple of new drafts at the next meeting for input.

**Learning Community Discussion:**

Jessica Meyer explained that one of the new requirements for the HRSA grant involves establishing a learning community; however, guidance on this has been vague. Jillian Gerstenberger stated that other states have broken the learning communities up by region and have set up groups for each region. Several committee members volunteered to present on topics to these groups once identified.

Jessica Meyer stated that the development of regional learning communities will be a challenge but agrees that face-to-face collaborations may be the best way to promote engagement.
**Parent Support Organization Discussion:**

Jessica Meyer explained that the other major part of the HRSA grant is to partner with a Parent Support Organization in which 25% of the EHDI Program’s grant budget would be designated to this group. This partnership will require a contract with EHDI; however, feedback is needed on what we want to come out of the partnership as a state.

A parent support program that can serve the entire state is needed; however, the question is whether or not there is currently such a program that exists. There are several good programs already in existence around the state, but most of them are very localized. The national Program of Guide by Your Side through Hands and Voices seems to be what the grant requirement is modeled after, however Florida does not have a Guide by Your Side Program set up at this time. The Parent Infant Program with the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind was identified as a possible statewide partner, and currently have a statewide infrastructure.

Jessica Meyer stated that more research and discussion is needed before an agreement or contract of any kind can be established. EHDI will move forward with the next steps of this process.