

MASSACHUSETTS CHILD HEALTH QUALITY COALITION

Progress Report • July 2014

Communication and Confidentiality (Task Force 2)

Recent Highlights

The Communication and Confidentiality Task Force is pleased to announce that "Communication Matters: a guide for sharing information about a child's care" was released in June 2014 and can be accessed here:

<http://www.masschildhealthquality.org/work/communication-and-confidentiality-task-force/>

Objective

Support effective communication among members of a child's coordination network, while addressing issues of confidentiality

Next Steps

The target date for completion of the Guide is June 2014.

1. Finalize content.
2. Finalize graphic design.
3. Disseminate the Guide.

Background

The CHQC reviewed data on child health care quality in Massachusetts and found that some of the major gaps were in:

- Coordinating care for all children, with a special focus on children with behavioral health needs
- Understanding how communication and privacy challenges can limit sharing information that is needed to coordinate care

To address the communication and privacy issues, the CHQC formed a Communication and Confidentiality Task Force. This task force included families, providers, school staff, lawyers, and advocacy groups.

The Communication and Confidentiality Task Force identified a number of challenges to communication, including:

- Difficulty in attaining and maintaining trusting relationships between parents/youth and providers
- A misunderstanding of the importance of information-sharing for coordinated care
- A lack of understanding of rules governing information-sharing (which becomes all the more challenging when schools are involved)
- A lack of structures and methods to support information sharing among providers, the child/youth and family, schools, and other members of the child's coordination network

Confidentiality is important in any exchange of information, and the Task Force has highlighted those confidentiality issues that are of particular concern when behavioral health issues are involved. The Task Force noted that tools do exist to address these communication challenges, but that many of these are not well known to most families, providers and community-based programs. The Task

Force determined that collecting and compiling these tips, tools and resources in one place, in a format that can be easily used by the various members of the child’s network, would be of value, and therefore decided to work on creating a Guide.

The Task Force is also involved in providing input to organizations and groups on issues of communication and confidentiality.

Appendix – Task Force and Work Group Members

Members of Communication and Confidentiality (Task Force 2)

Chair:

Kathy Hassey Director, School Health Institute, Northeastern University School of Nursing

Staff Lead:

Val Konar Project Manager, CHIPRA Quality Demonstration Grant & MA PCMHI Medical Home Evaluation

Brittany Bell Youth Advocate, Parent/Professional Advocacy League

Craig Bennett Attorney/Family Law, Boston Children’s Hospital

Lloyd Fisher Site Chief, May Street Pediatrics; Assistant Medical Director for Informatics, Reliant Medical Group

Linda Grant Medical Services Director, Boston Public Schools; Adolescent Pediatrician, Boston Medical Center

Cathy Hickey Information Specialist, Mass Family Voices

Lisa Lambert Executive Director, Parent/Professional Advocacy League

Kitty O’Hare Adult & Pediatric Primary Care/ Director of Transition Medicine, Boston Children’s Hospital, Brigham & Women’s Hospital

Beth Pond Family Integration Specialist, Parent/ Professional Advocacy League

Jennifer Reen School Psychologist, Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School

Bonnie Thompson Family Resource Specialist and CHIPRA Family Leader, Mass Family Voices