

Executive Summary:

This quarter marked the beginning of the second full fiscal year of implementation of Oklahoma's Pinnacle Plan. Public reporting related to the specific performance areas of maltreatment in care, recruitment of resource families, shelter usage, and workers contacts with children has been occurring for the last several months. Starting the month of October 2013, an additional performance measure related to caseloads is added to the public reporting. While reporting on the previously mentioned measures occurs on a monthly basis, reporting related to the caseload performance measure will occur on a quarterly basis. These reports can be accessed through the DHS website at www.okdhs.org.

On September 6, 2013, OKDHS developed a Child Protective Services Backlog Reduction Plan in response to the growing number of Child Protective Services cases that were pending over 60 days. The aggressive and focused plan outlined a strategy to achieve an ambitious goal of reducing the number of cases pending over 60 days from 3165 to under 200 by 2/1/14. In order to reach this goal, a large amount of attention and resources was shifted to focus on this effort. As the quarter ended, that number had already decreased to just over 2000 pending. This number indicates that this focused effort is making a tremendous impact. It is imperative for CWS to reduce this number even further, as this extraordinary amount of pending past due work puts a strain on already limited resources and as a result, impacts progress on other change initiatives and strategies outlined in the Pinnacle Plan.

Despite the focus of efforts on reduction of pending cases, major strides have been made towards achieving Pinnacle Plan goals. A major success of this first quarter of SFY14 is related to the effort to expand availability of placement options for children. In August, the Bridge Resource Family Recruitment, Retention, and Support Contracts were awarded. While it will take some time for the programs to be at full capacity, all four providers (Tallgrass, TFI, Angels, and St. Francis) are all well underway to building their programs. This effort impacts every other area of the system and is anticipated to among other things, successfully expand the availability of quality placement options and supports to ensure safety of children, reduce shelter utilization, improve placement stability, and achieve positive permanency outcomes for children. Because Child Welfare staff spends a tremendous amount of time searching for appropriate placement options for children on their caseloads who are placed in out of home care, it is anticipated that this effort will greatly impact their workloads as well, freeing them up to spend more engaging families to help them work towards achieving safe permanency for their children.

Another major success directly impacting the workloads of front line staff is the addition of over 600 positions to Child Welfare Services in SFY13. Of those positions, 91% were directly involved with serving families and children. DHS continued to work to hire, train, and support these staff over this last quarter. Hiring for these positions will continue through this calendar year. DHS is working to better understand turnover. An in depth analysis of turnover related to front line staff continues to occur. The hope is that through this analysis, we can glean a better understanding of the trends and contributing factors related to turnover in order to develop strategies targeted at the specific causes. This will continue to occur over the next quarter.



Over the next year, additional reporting related to progress and performance will occur and will be made available to the public. Quarterly reporting related to implementation of Pinnacle Plan initiatives will continue to occur as it has for the last year. Monthly and quarterly reporting related to performance measures will continue. Additionally, reporting for other performance areas of caseloads, placement stability, and permanency will be added to public reporting beginning this year. Within the next several weeks, the Co-Neutrals will release a report as to the appropriateness and capacity of DHS reporting methodologies. In January 2014, DHS will submit a bi-annual report discussing the metrics and progress with data analysis and projections for future reporting. Finally in the Spring of 2014, the Co-Neutrals will report publicly on DHS progress to date.

