Utah's Quality Improvement Committees
4th Annual Summit

December 1, 2009, 9:00am – 4:00pm
Embassy Suites, Downtown Salt Lake City

Welcome **Rick Smith**

Rick welcomed all to the summit. It is our fourth annual summit, and it's been a great journey! Rick introduced Lisa-Michele Church, Duane Betournay, the five Region Directors, and Page Walley from Casey Family Programs, and expressed that their attendance today shows how important these committees are for Utah. There is great attendance today from all Quality Improvement Committees (QICs), and Rick acknowledged how important it is for everyone to sacrifice their "normal" lives to be here today.

The QIC Summit is meant to help us understand the importance and purpose of the QICs. It is easy to get overwhelmed with the scope of what the committees are involved with. The summit helps us step back and refocus our energies.

Rick explained that Reba Nissen created the "New Member Information" brochure and it contains really great information. Rick asked members to have their committees focus on three primary items: 1) Study data and outcomes; 2) Suggest changes for system improvement; and 3) CPS items. The first two items will be addressed in-depth today. CPS is a focus area because the money to run the QICs comes from a grant from the federal government, which requires that the role of the QIC is to be a citizen review of the CPS program area and that CPS items be reviewed at least quarterly. The Safety Model is a good way to accomplish this. The Safety Model was created to help caseworkers make decisions based on safety factors.

Rick asked that all members look for items today that spark their interest and take those items back to their committee. He expressed gratitude to all participants today for taking time to participate on the QICs.

The Value of Quality Improvement Committees **Lisa-Michele Church**

Lisa-Michele stated that in Utah, we get the child protection system that we deserve. We have a great system because of everyone here who is willing to help the system. We were able to get out of the David C. lawsuit by trusting that the community would maintain the oversight that the federal court had been performing. Our system will respond to community needs. The value of this system is challenged everyday, especially by the people who fund it. It takes community members, the governor, and others to step up and advocate for the system.

Lisa-Michele expressed that the value of our system is that we are a voice for children who do not have a voice. We advocate for those who cannot advocate for themselves. She stated that we are also the voice for the parents. It is very important that we balance these items right and act as a team who is helping a family. QIC members can authoritatively express this balancing act. Another value is that there is a need for an agency to take the abuse and neglect calls, which is

what Child and Family Services does for the community. The value of the data is tremendous. Data reports are very helpful when addressing federal and state government officials to show outcomes accomplished for families. Our system is managed to data.

Challenges that we have faced this past year were budget cuts, and the upcoming year is not looking any better. Lisa-Michele expressed that in Human Services, she will not do more with less. If we try to do that, our response times go up, people do not get visited, and accountability cannot be maintained. She has explained this to the legislature, and hopefully they will treat Human Services differently with budget cuts. She asked that members help with this message.

Another challenge we will face this year is around efficiency. It is challenging as a manager to have the focus on inefficiencies when so much has been taken away from the system to meet budget demands. Lisa-Michele asked that members be able to articulate that Human Services is not full of inefficiencies as they have looked into this as part of the QICs.

Medicaid is being re-designed. Utah built a system where children received intensive one-on-one therapy that Medicaid will no longer pay for. Because of this, Lisa-Michele will be at the legislative session asking for more money to cover this loss of funding. Our children in state custody will suffer from the Medicaid cuts. She asked the committees to help figure out how this system change will be accomplished.

As for CPS, each QIC needs to review the CPS system on a quarterly basis. They can do this by selecting an item and asking for the data around that item.

Lisa-Michele talked about the Immersion experiences that have been held in each region. These show the system from Intake to foster care. Sometimes consumers have been willing to participate and explain their experience being involved with Child and Family Services. She encouraged all members to attend Immersion experiences.

It is also very helpful to attend Juvenile Court sessions. During these sessions, you will see mental illnesses, diminished capacities, drug issues, domestic violence issues, and others, and you will come out of there with many questions and ideas of how to improve the system.

Another item is to decide to make one partnership work better. Child and Family Services is one part of an entire system. It is important for educators, medical partners, legal partners, etc. to be part of the teaming process. QIC members can help strengthen these partnerships.

Lisa-Michele thanked her staff, especially the caseworkers who are out there making a difference in families' lives. She is honored to represent Child and Family Services.

Child and Family Services Administration Panel **Rick Smith, moderator**

Duane Betournay (Director), and Brent Platt, Carol Baumann, Lori Orton, Paul Smith, and Staci Ghneim (Region Directors) participated on the Child and Family Services Administration Panel.

Rick started with asking participants, "From your perspective, what have QICs brought to the division?"

- *Duane: Most notably has been citizen input and citizen involvement. This represents hundreds of hours educating the public about Child and Family Services. He also said that examination of challenging issues has been helpful.*
- *Staci: QICs offer viewpoints and perspective as people who are not part of Child and Family Services, which is absolutely crucial for helping Child and Family Services hold ourselves accountable.*
- *Brent: It has been great watching partnerships develop. Relationships have been strengthened, which helps the entire child welfare system.*
- *Paul: The QIC has supported the enhancement of the In-Home Services program. It is also amazing how many great ideas come from the QIC.*
- *Carol: Bringing the unique perspective of community members to the table has been very helpful. The Northern Region QIC has really grown over the past year and has helped show that the child welfare system is very transparent.*
- *Lori: Her region has three QICs. It is important to remember that members are taking time from their responsibilities to be part of these committees. This is so appreciated. QICs brought employee recognition to the Southwest Region at a time when they were struggling with worker retention. Another thing is that the committees are taking data and putting a positive twist on how they look at the data to see how the outcomes came out right. Members have been a voice to legislators, and have written articles to local papers about the life of a caseworker.*

Rick shifted the attention to the potential of the QICs. He asked, "What has not been seen from the QICs in general?"

- *Staci: It is a challenge for anyone to translate observations into actions and questions into answers. It is very difficult to understand the complexity of the system and what action a committee can take. She asked that members not be hesitant to make suggestions for improvement.*
- *Carol: The committee struggles with focusing – this is due to meeting only once per month and the huge amount of information they review. She likes these summits, but would like to see more communication between all QICs as we can learn from each other.*
- *Duane: Become more involved in day-to-day administrative matters that take place within Child and Family Services. He suggested that members participate in the interview process in the future when Child and Family Services is hiring for upper-level management positions.*
- *Paul: He would like to have the QICs find answers around the issues of domestic violence.*

Rick then asked, "What are the hot topics in child welfare for the coming year?"

- *Brent: Outreach to individual communities and city leaders to help them understand that the children and families we serve are community children and families, not just Child and Family Services children and families.*
- *Carol: Continue to focus on permanency and the relationship between foster parents and Child and Family Services caseworkers. They just held an Immersion, and may do one this coming year. She would like to train members in the Safety Model.*
- *Lori: We are facing another tough year due to budget issues, and it is so important to get the message out that we need the community more now than ever before.*

- *Paul: Eastern Region will be focusing on In-Home Services, and this cannot be accomplished without community assistance.*
- *Duane: Pick indicators to see how effective Child and Family Services is such as Qualitative Case Review (QCR) scores, Case Process Review (CPR) scores, and caseload numbers. Our private provider system is at a critical time due to budget cuts, and we have more of those on the horizon.*
- *Staci: Her region has had members participate on interviewing panels, which has been very helpful. CPS and In-Home Services because of budget cuts are very important for the upcoming year.*

Rick expressed that Child and Family Services management personnel are very approachable and want to hear from QIC members, whether it is criticism, praise, suggestions, etc.

Regional QICs Panel **Julie Steele, moderator**

Panel members are chairs of regional committees: Daryl Melton (Northern Region), he and his wife have been structured foster care providers for eight years; Debbie Hofhines (Southwest Region/ Washington County), former Child and Family Services caseworker who now works for the Utah Foster Care Foundation; Kobi Marcello (Eastern Region/ Price Office), former Child and Family Services employee, who now works for the Utah Foster Care Foundation and is a foster parent; Mike Hamblin (Salt Lake Valley Region), former Child and Family Services caseworker who now works for the Utah Foster Care Foundation; and Wendy Bunnell (Western Region), who works for the Utah Foster Care Foundation and is a former foster parent.

Julie stated that the Regional QICs are so important as they can focus on specific regional issues as well as statewide issues. She talked about the New Member Information brochure and what a useful tool this will be. It will be available on the QIC website (http://utahqic.utah.gov/) for recruiting purposes. Also, if members have any feedback for improvements to the brochure, let Reba Nissen (rebanissen@utah.gov) know.

Committee chairs shared committee accomplishments:

- *Daryl:*
  - *Priorities for children are to return them home, so they looked at possible software tools and a contract for man-hours in assisting Child and Family Services in kinship searches. The solution the committee came up with is a letter of agreement to use part-time help from the Family Support Center and volunteer help for kinship searches.*
  - *Another accomplishment is the need for more foster families and the need for them to understand what their responsibilities will be. A subcommittee was formed to interview foster families to find out why there are so many disruptions. Foster families do not feel they get enough training to deal with the problems the children bring to their families; they would like to hear more during basic training about possible effects on their own biological children when bringing in a foster child; they want more disclosure in general; and they want to know what to do when they are not experiencing a good relationship with a caseworker. From these findings, it is being emphasized in training that the foster parents can talk with the caseworker, Resource Family Consultant (RFC), cluster group facilitator, and others to deal with intervention between foster parents and*

caseworkers; they are including more information in the Home-to-Home Books, such as emergency numbers; and the foster parent training syllabus is being updated to include information from the Utah Foster Care Foundation website (http://www.utahfostercare.org/).

- *Also, a training called "Insight" has been created that includes panels of caseworkers and foster parents. Part of this training is that caseworkers and foster parents were paired together to look over a case story to come up with proposed solutions for the family. Northern Region will continue to hold these sessions.*
- *The committee also had an article published in The Standard Examiner about the interaction between the QIC and Child and Family Services.*

- *Debbie:*
  - *Their committee focused on employee retention. They held a luncheon where they gave caseworkers of the year awards. Nominations came from within Child and Family Services and also from community members. This recognition was greatly appreciated by the caseworkers.*
  - *They also focused on the delivery of services and how they will be impacted by budget cuts. Youth Corrections has a matrix to help determine who will receive their services. They are looking into if Child and Family Services can have a similar matrix when delinquent youth are ordered into care.*
  - *They want to be proactive in letting the legislature know how important the services that are offered through Child and Family Services are.*
- *Kobi:*
  - *They looked at the need for urinalysis (UAs) testing for Child and Family Services clients. They combined tools and came up with a form that caseworkers can use to help determine if clients can decrease the number of UAs they are taking. This tool is being piloted by three different caseworkers.*
  - *They are working with the Transition to Adult Living (TAL) program and a TAL summit to be held in Eastern Region. This will provide an opportunity for an "immersion" type of experience for community members.*
  - *They are looking at domestic violence data to see what goals can be set to enhance these services.*
- *Mike:*
  - *Their committee has looked at retention and has done "Heart of Gold" awards. A local caseworker presented the CPR data from the Office of Services Review, which included a list of all caseworkers who attained 100% on their reviews. From this list, a letter was generated congratulating those caseworkers for their high performance. They also recognized the nurses and others who helped attain those scores.*
  - *The TAL program and youth coming into care has been a focus for the committee. They looked at how to help youth transition out of care, as well as where youth are coming from when they enter care. They found that at least 60% of the time, judges follow the recommendations of the caseworkers. They want to look at what other resources may be available to keep youth from coming into care. The current client satisfaction survey is being updated to gather more information from youth about what services would be helpful for them and their outcomes.*

- *Wendy:*
  - *The committee focused on the TAL program and developing a mentor program for these youth. They found a grant opportunity to help with this mentor program. They currently have 20 youth who are linked with a trained mentor. They have 30 other mentors who will be trained and matched with a youth.*
  - *Another project is the creation and use of a Drug Court video. This will be given to potential Drug Court families and foster families to help them see the requirements and successes of Drug Court. Community members have helped with the funding to create this video. They are hoping to launch the video in February 2010.*
  - *They focused on the Child Advocate Awards. These awards are given to community partners and others who have gone above and beyond in advocating for children.*
  - *Currently, they are looking at the Medicaid restructuring and how that is affecting the children who are being placed in structured foster families. We are losing proctor agencies and some of our structured foster families are becoming worn out with caring for these more troubled children. A subcommittee has been formed to come up with some out-of-the box ideas of how to support the structured foster families.*

Julie stated that the State QIC has been working on very similar areas. They have looked at the Utah Foster Care Foundation and their training, supporting foster families, substance abuse issues, efficient use of drug testing, use of data and what questions to ask to get the important data, and placement stability and delinquency. It is exciting to see how this all comes together and how we learn from our successes.

Julie asked, "What barriers are the Regional QICs facing and how we can help?" Suggestions included chairpersons meeting on a regular basis, mission statements for Regional QICs, etc. Regional chairpersons stated:

- *Daryl: Barriers are legal in nature, but can be worked around as they found when working with an Attorney General on one of their issues. Another barrier is the budget challenges. They want to pursue more articles in the newspapers and increase visibility of the child welfare system. They would like legislators to fully understand the system.*
- *Debbie: Consumers have been verbally invited to participate on the QIC, but it has been difficult to actually get them to attend. She feels this New Member Information brochure will be very helpful with this barrier. It would be helpful to provide chairs with specific training around what their role is. Budget cuts may affect participation and employee recognition if funds are not available.*
- *Kobi: The committee came up with suggestions for respite for foster families, but it was not accepted by the families, so it was challenging to know what data can be used to help improve a situation.*
- *Mike: The meeting schedule has been a barrier in that there is such a limited amount of time they meet as a group. Training of committee members could help bring new members up to speed on what the committee is charged with accomplishing.*
- *Wendy: Recruiting new members and helping them understand the goals of the committee have been difficult. The New Member Information brochure is so helpful for this barrier. Training for chairs and co-chairs, standardized bylaws, etc. would be very helpful and may help with statewide consistency in what these committees accomplish. Quarterly meetings with chairs and co-chairs on a statewide basis would be helpful.*

Wendy presented a Child Advocate Award to Marla Raff for her commitment to children and families in Utah.

How to Maximize Your Committee's Use of Data **Navina Forsythe**

Navina explained that over the last decade, the amount of data available has expanded. She gave a presentation of CPS data and suggestions of how to decide what would be useful data to review. She suggested that each QIC make sure key people are at the table when they are examining specific data and issues around that data. Each region has an information analyst available to pull data and help explain what those data mean.

It is important to try to narrow down data for review. The issues that QICs tackle are huge. Think about the questions that are raised around a certain topic, brainstorm around those questions, and decide what data you would like to review to explore that topic. It is important to stay focused on one or two items and not get side-tracked on different topics that come up during discussions.

Navina presented a data chart around recidivism in CPS cases and the Federal Child and Family Services (CFSR) data measure. Committee members asked questions around what these data mean to our system and how to break it down to a more meaningful level. She then showed another national chart that addressed some of the questions that the members had asked. She explained that it is difficult to compare different states' data as each state has their own definitions of child abuse and/or neglect.

Navina made the following suggestions:

- *Tackle only one or two subjects at a time.*
- *Try not to get distracted by associated topics.*
- *Keep a tabled list of things to explore.*
- *Keep questions to those that can inform practice or recommendations.*
- *Use a specific hypothesis to look at.*
- *Data are simply information: demographic reports, process reports (exception reporting and best case practice reporting), and outcome reports (need to be tied to practice).*
- *Narrow down questions and data for review to help come up with specific areas of improvement.*

Ideas and recommendations for utilizing and interpreting data include:

- *Demographic view of who we serve.*
- *Assessing performance and outcomes.*
- *Use with legislature to evaluate proposed legislation.*
- *Predictive to ask for resources.*
- *Resource allocation.*
- *Partner agencies/ grant awards.*
- *Inform practice.*
- *Alleviate concerns.*

- *Review how caseworker/office/region is performing.*
- *Identify system factors that are impacting success.*
- *Identify if there are specific populations that seem more challenging.*

Recommendations may include:
- *Suggest management or supervisors work with struggling employees.*
- *Praise employees who are performing well.*
- *Share innovative practices that are successful.*
- *Increase management or supervisor oversight.*
- *Suggest that Practice Guidelines need to be written.*
- *Practice improvements to increase effectiveness.*
- *Implement training.*

Navina challenged each QIC to examine CPS recidivism in your area. There is a list of data experts and program area experts available, so ***Reba will send that to all committees for their information****. Contact Reba if you feel there is a certain expert that should attend a meeting to help with data interpretation.*

Rick wanted to know if there are people within Child and Family Services that can bring troublesome trend data to committees for review. Duane said that is absolutely possible. Child and Family Services is in a position to provide accurate trend data. Duane suggested that committees look at the QCR and CPR data.

Navina's presentation will be sent out with the minutes from today's summit*. If committee members would like help in finding a data expert to help them with data they are interested in reviewing, please contact Reba or Katy Larsen (katylarsen@utah.gov).*

General Questions

What should a member do if they feel a member of a QIC does not belong on that committee? Talk with the chair of the committee and go from there.

Is there a specific confidentiality form for HIPPA purposes? Yes, ***Reba will get that form out to all committees****.*

QIC Priority Focus Areas **Linda Wininger**

Linda talked about the previous priority focus areas and explained how Child and Family Services selected those focus areas (worker retention and recruitment, substance abuse, and placement stability in foster care). The QICs took these on as their focus areas over the past year.

It is now time to change the priority focus areas to upcoming Medicaid changes, the In-Home Services program, and the Safety Model.

Medicaid – What's on the Horizon **Staci Ghneim**

Staci explained that the changes being made in Medicaid are daunting and complex. She explained that every state has a Medicaid plan and how the federal government reimburses the state for their services. Utah was audited in September 2008, and as a result Utah was placed on a corrective action plan. Programs and services will be affected by this corrective action plan. These changes need to be initiated by July 2010. Various steering committees and workgroups were formed, along with gathering community partner and provider input.

Staci gave a quick overview of how services are currently bundled for children in care. Residential treatment programs are great for treating a child in care as all services are provided at the facility. We have limited providers who can provide these services. The anticipated Medicaid changes will include that Child and Family Services redesign:

- *Contracting and billing programs. All services will need to be separated and billed for separately. Some of these services will not be Medicaid reimbursable.*
- *Treatment and placement services and programs. Medicaid will no longer pay for many of these services, so providers will need to restructure their business models.*
- *CPS and In-Home Services programs. We want to keep children from coming into care.*
- *Various other internal processes and people. Personnel will be affected as we cannot bring more people in due to budget cuts.*
- *Culture and beliefs. People are comfortable with residential settings, even though home-based settings are more successful.*
- *Public policy.*

Medicaid is moving to a medical model, and because of our budget concerns we will struggle with paying for needed services for our children and families. Anticipated impact includes:

- *Twenty-seven percent of children currently in placements (about 728 children) will be impacted. About 20 children have already been affected.*
- *About 60 Child and Family Services' contracted placement providers will need to significantly redesign their services.*
- *Staff are scrambling to identify alternative placement options.*
- *We will see increased disruptions and decreased stability.*
- *Millions of dollars will be lost from Medicaid, which will impact state budgets.*

Looking for the "Silver Lining":

- *Opportunity for improvement and innovation.*
- *Opportunity to pull together for safe children and strong families.*
- *Better long-term success and permanency for children in family/home-based settings.*

It was suggested that QICs get foster family input about how to help these children. There needs to be a new type of transition from residential care to family foster care settings. ***Staci will follow-up with Cosette to make sure foster parents are included in this system redesign.***

Another suggestion was that we need to find ways to make religious organizations and other community partners more involved in the child welfare system. This includes deciding whether or not children need to be in the custody of the state and design public policy around those

decisions. Also, find out what coalitions are available in each community and make sure there is at least one faith-based member on each committee.

Enhancing In-Home Services **Paul Smith**

Paul explained that Eastern Region created a model called, "Creative Interventions" to enhance In-Home Services. Within In-Home Services there are court-ordered services, voluntary services, family preservation services, coordinated clinical services, and counseling individual services. The In-Home Services philosophy is to keep children in their home, enhance safety, and remain solution-focused. Paul presented a graph illustrating that In-Home Services cases have dropped over the last few years.

In-Home Services should be intensive, well-balanced, include child and family involvement, and continue to work with communities. There are several possible models from other states that Child and Family Services will be looking at for ideas of where to take our In-Home Services program.

Subcommittees will be formed to explore In-Home Services, gather stakeholder input, redefine the In-Home Services population, develop resources, develop Practice Guidelines, evaluate, and implement and train. All committee members were invited to join these subcommittees and participate in redesigning the In-Home Services program. Casey Family Programs and the MPCWIC will be assisting with this system redesign. Community partners can help by continuing to provide their services, be creative, encourage community involvement, and keep us in your thoughts and prayers. Possible side effects include a happy worker syndrome, budget surplus, awareness, and improved Child and Family Services reputation. Paul presented a graph that shows how effective the intensive In-Home Services program can be and how the numbers of foster care cases have reduced in specific areas of their region.

Committee members asked questions about how the In-Home Services program will work, how long services are offered, and if the outcomes for children who remain at home are the same or better for children who enter care. It was also noticed that we are empowering families to learn how to keep their family safe and utilize the resources they need to strengthen their family.

You can contact Paul Smith (pwsmith@utah.gov) or Lisa Branch (Branchl@carbonschools.org) with any system of care questions.

Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) **Linda Wininger**

Linda explained what the CFSR entails. She gave a sample of the data indicators included in the CFSR. Not one state has passed all of these data indicators. The CFSR also includes system indicators, which more states have passed. In order to pass the CFSR, the state must pass ALL of these indicators at a 95% level. We know that we will not pass this review, but we do want to have the smallest Program Improvement Pan (PIP) possible. In the last round of the CFSR, we were in second place in passing the review.

Linda gave members a handout for review. The CFSR requirements are:

- *A statewide assessment will be written.*
- *A data indicator report from the federal government will be received.*
- *The federal government will conduct an on-site review where they look at 65 cases from three different counties (Salt Lake County will always be chosen for the on-site review; and we are proposing Weber County and a combination of Iron/Washington County for the other two counties).*
- *Stakeholder interviews will be conducted during the on-site review.*
- *Focus groups will be held with youth.*
- *A final report will be generated about the findings of the CFSR.*
- *Child and Family Services will need to create a PIP based on the results of the final report.*

Linda suggested that QIC members can help by:

- *Help gather information for the statewide assessment as it requires input from community partners. Let Linda (lswininger@utah.gov) or Reba know of all things accomplished by the QICs.*
- *Serve as a reviewer during the on-site review (contact the region director if interested).*
- *Participate in the stakeholder interviews.*
- *Attend the exit conference at the end of the review.*
- *Read the final report issued by the federal government.*
- *Participate on the PIP committees.*

Within specific regions, QIC members can focus on these three areas:

- *Caseworker visits with biological parents.*
- *Caseworker visits with children in their home involved with In-Home Services.*
- *Ongoing assessments of caregivers and meeting their needs.*

Closing Keynote **Page Walley**

Duane introduced Page Walley from Casey Family Programs in Alabama. Page explained that Alabama and Utah have a lot in common as we are the only two states who have successfully exited federal court oversight, and both states have some type of QICs. In Alabama, there are 63 county committees and one state committee. Recruiting is always a challenge.

Page explained that Casey Family Programs becomes involved in permanency for children in care. Children who attain permanency are the same as the children who do not – it is the system of care and the people who work within it who make the difference. Casey Family Programs seeks to reduce the number of children in care by half.

Page gave a background of the Casey Family Programs organization. He explained that each state is going through budget cuts and the CFSR and are finding innovative ways to keep children safe in their families. Casey Family Programs can help Utah by serving as a strategic consultant.

Final Comments/Appreciation **Duane Betournay**

Duane thanked those who helped with the preparations for today, along with the presenters for today's summit. He thanked panel members from the Regional QICs and stated that he can see such great progress over the past four years with these committees. The hard work of these committees has been the guiding force for Child and Family Services.