

Henderson County Board of Social Services

October 18th, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes

A. Call to Order

The Henderson County Board of Social Services meeting was called to order by Chair Josh Simpson at 12:02 pm.

Board Members Present	Josh Simpson, Member Melinda Lowrance, Member Judy Smith, Member Stephen Gwaltney, Member Rebecca McCall, Member
Staff Leadership Present	Jerrie McFalls, Secretary to the Board/Director Lorie Horne, Social Work Program Administrator Joseph Maxey Jr., Administrative Officer Debby Freeman, Economic Services Program Administrator Deborah Johnson, Administrative Assistant/Board Clerk
Guest	Amy Brantley, Assistant County Manager

B. Public Input

None

C. Adjustments to the Agenda

None

D. Approval of Minutes

Chair Simpson asked if there were any changes to the minutes from the September 20th, 2022, regular meeting, there were none. Mrs. Smith moved to approve the minutes as written. Mrs. Lowrance seconded the motion. The motion passed.

E. Reports

Director's Monthly Report (Attachment I)

Questions Only:

Mr. Gwaltney questioned Director McFalls if she felt the certificate of need would pass legislation and what the effect on Medicaid Expansion would be. Director McFalls stated that it is unknown at this time if it will remain part of the Medicaid Expansion legislation. Medicaid Expansion is still expected to go into effect. The federal reimbursement rate for the state would benefit hospitals with increased revenue from previously uninsured clients. Mrs. McCall stated that Pardee hospital feels it would greatly benefit those who don't currently have insurance.

NC-DHHS announced a delay in the implementation of the NC Medicaid Managed Care Behavioral Health and Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities Tailored Plans until April 1, 2023.

The State System, NC Fast, The Child Welfare system, Child Support and Day sheet system all went down last Thursday October 13th. Multiple state agencies were impacted. All state systems requiring an NCID (security password assigned by the state) went down. We were down all-day Thursday and Friday. We implemented our disaster plan by reverting to paper.

Saturday afternoon Director McFalls received a call from the state saying everyone working during the weekend (on-call) should reset their NCID passwords and try to go back into the Child Welfare System (CWS). The system currently is not staying up consistently, but workers are continuing to enter data into the system.

Mr. Simpson asked what contingencies are in place to make sure applicants are getting their actual benefits. Director McFalls explained that Income Maintenance started pulling paper forms to process applications. For food and nutrition, we used our vouchers with Ingles to be able to provide food for anyone in need. Debby Freeman stated that each department is working from their case logs to go to each case and verify that the client received their benefits. It is a time-consuming process, but each department is ensuring keyed applications are being processed by the state.

October Employees of the Month (Attachment II)

Mrs. Smith requested that the Board meet the Employees of the Month at the beginning of monthly board meetings.

September 2021 – September 2022 Statistical Report (Attachment III)

No Discussion

October Program Administrator's Report (Attachment IV)

Questions Only:

Mrs. McCall inquired about interest in our Foster Care Training Program. Lorie Horne stated that the next Mapp class will begin in January. There are twenty-two participants in the current Mapp class that will finish at the end of October. Our agency currently has five foster children that aged out and are currently enrolled in college.

Financial Report October 2022 (Attachment V)

No Discussion

F. Old Business

DSS staffing update

Director McFalls stated DSS currently has seventeen vacancies. Seven of the vacancies are in Social Work. Eight vacancies are in Economic Services, one in Reception and one Lead Child Support Worker. We have had several workers moving into new positions within the agency due to promotions and position changes. We currently have two new workers scheduled to begin November 7, 2022. Multiple positions are in the interview process stage.

G. New Business
Four Year Budget Plan

Economic Services

If Medicaid expands, we have the potential of up to six thousand additional recipients. Some of those recipients are currently enrolled in the Family Planning Program (FPP). If you are not eligible for any other Medicaid, but are low-income, you can qualify for FPP which is basically one physical per year. Once the Public Health Emergency ends and clients can be terminated from Medicaid, a lot of those will be eligible for Medicaid, if Medicaid expands. These participants would qualify In Magi Medicaid, income is considered but no other resources such as life insurance and bank accounts. We believe we will need seven additional Medicaid case workers to cover the additional clients, primarily Magi Medicaid. The state gave us the number of six thousand new participants, but the state is not updating the numbers. For the state, it is anticipated six hundred thousand new participants. Our agency currently has twenty-four thousand one hundred twenty-three recipients.

In the four-year plan, we are requesting seven ICM 2 positions. It is anticipated that Medicaid Expansion will be approved for NC. We are estimating that will require an additional seven positions for MAGI Medicaid. The sooner they announce the expansion, the sooner we need to post the positions.

We are requesting two lead workers that will assist the newly developed unit and the additional unit developed by adding an additional supervisor and reducing the number of employees on current teams. The Lead workers are responsible for answering staff questions and second party reviews, assisting in training of new workers and policy changes.

We also need to increase our quality control. We are requesting two Quality Control positions filled by Income Maintenance Caseworker 3 workers. These positions would assist the QC auditor, conduct second party reviews, develop training plans, train staff, and implement an employee onboarding program for economic services. We need these positions whether Medicaid expands or not.

The first ICM Supervisor 2 we are requesting is due to Medicaid expansion. The current Family and Children's supervisor has thirteen staff members. This position would supervise the additional ICM2 staff and three staff currently on another team. Each supervisor would each have ten employees to supervise.

The second ICM Supervisor 2 we are requesting, is to help once we get past the initial six thousand additional cases. This position would be for the ongoing management.

In the four-year plan, we are requesting one position for a Quality Control Auditor Specialist. We have numerous monthly and annual audits: SA audit, PERM (Payment Error Rate Measurement), REDA (Recipient Eligibility Determination Audit), Statewide Single Audit, Single County Audit, MEQC (Medicaid Eligibility Quality Control), CCAFR (County Comprehensive Annual Financial Report), ME Review (Medical Evaluation Review) and TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families). It would be cost effective, efficient, and beneficial to have one person at the agency interact with each of

the auditors for Medicaid and Food and Nutrition Services, learning to “speak the same language” and develop trainings that mimic what the auditors look for.

Social Work

In the four-year budget plan, we are requesting one Social Work Supervisor 2 in Adult Services. Currently, Adult Services has no State-mandated supervisor-to-social worker ratio. We have fifteen adult services social workers, one Community Services Support Technician and two supervisors, a 1-to-8 ratio. These two teams manage eleven different program areas, each with its own set of policies and procedures. Adding a supervisor to cover staff working to support elderly residents in their homes (thereby preventing placement) creates a more equitable distribution of duties and programs and a more reasonable supervisor-to-staff ratio.

Also in Adult Services, we are requesting one Social Worker 3 Adult Protective Services Social Worker. Adult Protective Service (APS) report numbers continue to trend upwards: in FY 19/20 we assigned 195 reports; in FY 20/21 we assigned 319; for FY 21/22 we assigned 297; for the first quarter of FY 22/23 we have assigned 100 reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of disabled and elderly adults. We currently have three full time employees devoted to APS investigations and one Guardianship Social worker with a full caseload of twenty-four cases that assist. The Guardianship Social Worker assists when the reports are too numerous to be managed by the APS workers. Our first quarter FY22/23 substantiation rate of APS reports is higher than in the previous five years. Ongoing services must be provided in these additional cases. As the numbers continue to rise, so has the acuteness of the situations being addressed by Adult Protective Services.

We are requesting one Community Social Services Technician in Adult Services. Over the last four years, we have underspent our In-Home Aid funding due to increasing difficulty getting contracted agencies to take new clients (a result of their own staffing challenges). Contract agencies are often selective with the clients they accept and home conditions impact those decisions. We have seen great success with our CSST providing In-Home Aid services, especially with those clients presenting more challenges. The In-Home Aid program provides services helping older adults who might otherwise have to enter a facility remain in their homes. With fifty-four people on the wait list for In-Home aid services, an additional CSST would enable us to serve more.

Spending history: In-home aid through contracts:

- FY 21/22 we spent 39.6%
- -FY 20/21 we spent 61.7% of our funding
- -FY 19/20 we spent 72.5% of our funding
- -FY 18/19 we spent 86.9% of our funding

We are requesting three Human Services Planner/Evaluator 2 positions. These three positions will focus on continuous quality improvement (CQI). CQI system is the framework for defining measuring and improving child welfare and adult services outcomes on an ongoing basis. This framework incorporates our quantitative and qualitative data and information from internal and external outcome measurement reports to assist in determining the effectiveness of our Social

Work Services. CQI focuses on program evaluation, strategic staff development, as well as employee retention and wellbeing. We currently have 1 HSPE III and 1 HSPE II. Their work has mostly been with our Child Welfare program and the development of peer support. With the additional positions, we would expand CQI to Adult Services, Federal and State audits for Child and Family Services Reviews, Title IV-E and State Funding, Adoption Assistance, MAC funding and MOU outcomes. With the volume of cases in Adult Services and Child Welfare, these positions are vital for the success of continuous quality improvement and positive outcomes for the social work departments.

In the four-year plan, we are requesting one Social Worker II Placement Specialist. Many children in foster care require higher levels of care due to abuse, mental illness, neglect and/or traumatic experiences. While these higher levels of care can sometimes be planned, the majority of the higher-level cases are the result of a placement disruption or some other emergency. Locating and obtaining these kinds of placements is a very time-consuming process and doesn't happen immediately. The process involves reaching out to numerous providers, completing applications for service, obtaining mental health and medical records, arranging transportation, collaborating with our local MCO, coordinating interviews for placement, attending Child and Family Team meetings concerning the need and involvement in locating crisis/emergency placement on the weekends or after hours. Social workers are often dealing with the immediate needs of a child, such as securing food and clothing, assuring prescribed medications are available and arranging for school and temporary placement until the most appropriate level is secured. Currently, our Family Resource Supervisor has been providing placement services for these higher levels of care, spending approximately 50% of her time arranging for higher levels of care for our foster children. When there are multiple children with high level needs, that percentage increases. This supervisor also has a team of five SWII's and four CSST's. Social Work Supervisors do not submit day sheets for reimbursement. Adding this position would allow this supervisor to give 100% of her time to the team she supervises. It would also allow us to claim reimbursement on the time it takes to coordinate these kinds of services, as this social worker would complete day sheets resulting in Federal and/or State reimbursement for the time spent on these tasks.

When you look at the overall 23/24 budget requests, we have fifteen positions requested.

Operational planning for the next four years, we are looking at the cars we have and the number of miles on each car. We have two vehicles that currently have engine problems. We have put the replacements in to rotate what we have. We only have seven cars, but the cars stay busy. We are requesting five new vehicles over the next four years.

Assistant County Manager Amy Brantley stated that she is going to advocate that the DSS fleet is increased. We save money using our fleet gas and vehicles, so Ms. Brantley is also suggesting that we increase our fleet even more. She suggested requesting four in the first year.

The financial impact the first year includes the salary and set up cost for additional employees, equipment, and technology. The financial impact the second year goes down because you don't have the startup cost.

We have increased the startup cost to ensure that the estimate is sufficient to cover the needs.

