



NC FAST news

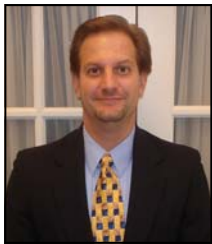
Issue 3

January 2012

North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology

Introducing new technological tools and business processes to improve how DHHS and county departments of social services deliver services and benefits to North Carolina families in need.

Program Director's View by Anthony Vellucci



Happy New Year!

We have exciting news to kick off 2012, regarding Project 4: Child Services, the health benefit exchange and document management, as well as important Project 1 updates.

Status of Project 1 Go-Live

As Project 1 rollout approaches, we want to provide the current project status. Development of the core Project 1 NC FAST solution is complete. The system is built, and testing efforts are well underway, with only one severe and no critical defects found.

NC DHHS leadership has been very clear in directing NC FAST to focus on delivering a quality system to the counties. To achieve this, the Project Team needs to perform additional testing. While the newest version of the Cúram software has many new features that will benefit our users, it requires more work to ensure it is ready for production rollout to the counties.

We will engage the Pilot Counties to help with pilot testing and conversion case validation beginning in mid February 2012. This in turn affects the manner in which we complete statewide rollout to make it the most beneficial to the counties.

We do not plan to significantly change the schedule. Instead, we are considering a 60-90 day shift in Pilot implementation that will still have all 100 counties complete rollout and Go-Live by October 2012, according to the original planned completion date. NC FAST Dear County Director Letter #12-0003, published January 13, 2012, contains more information and a timeline. Refer to the NC FAST website: www.ncdhs.gov/ncfast/countyreadiness/crDCDL.htm.

Regarding training, we believe the user's experience in a training environment should be as close as possible to real experience with the production system. The extended testing will also result in training content improvements.

Consequently, User Acceptance Testing (UAT), Pilot and Super User training are being rescheduled. UAT training is planned to occur the week of March 26, 2012. Remaining new dates will be communicated once they are known.

Training schedule changes will not affect the training quality and design. We understand the importance of adequate training. Up to five complete, consecutive days of training, depending on user role, will be conducted after users take the web-based training. Refer to the training article on Page 10.

Taking the time needed to properly test the new software features is essential to ensure that NC FAST provides the best product to meet our users' needs.

Continued on Page 2.



Program Director's View (continued)

Project 4: Child Services

To address the counties' urgent need for a comprehensive statewide child services system, coupled with the enhanced funding from the NC FAST Program's federal partners, NC DHHS leadership has directed NC FAST to initiate Project 4. The project is planned to start the 2nd calendar quarter of 2012. NC FAST has begun developing the Project Plan and other preliminary documents.

Healthcare Benefit Exchange Project

Per the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), the NC Department of Insurance (DOI) has taken the lead for the Healthcare Benefit Exchange Project. DOI has partnered with NC DHHS and NC FAST to work together on this project. This partnership leverages the investment the state has already made for a case management system and eligibility engine.

The Exchange will be a "marketplace" where individuals can determine if they qualify for either Medicaid or subsidized health insurance, with the online option to purchase health insurance directly from a provider. Federal regulation states the Exchange must be fully operational by October 2013.

Document Management Project

Based on considerable interest from the counties communicated to project management on up to the Secretary, NC DHHS leadership has placed document management in scope of NC FAST. The project will be implemented in multiple phases. NC FAST has begun developing the Project Plan and requirements. Refer to the related article about policy updates on Page 6.

In October 2011, NC FAST presented document management at the Social Services Institute Conference in Hickory, NC. The presentation described the ways NC FAST could standardize document management across all counties, providing the same functionality to all counties at the same time. For example, document management would address retention of information, such as images and evidence. NC FAST would also work with existing county document management solutions.

More information on these new projects will be provided in the next Newsletter. As always, thank you for the continued support and hard work on this important initiative.

A. Vellucci

Project Highlights

Project 1: Global Case Management and Food and Nutrition Services (FNS)

Project 1 is planned to begin pilot production May 7, 2012, with full implementation to all 100 counties completed by October 2012. To further enhance the testing effort NC FAST will be working with selected Pilot County staff to give them access to the User Acceptance Testing (UAT) environment in February. This access will be for testing purposes only.

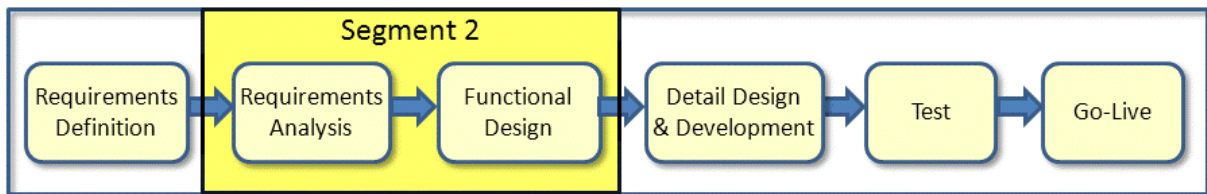
Project 2&6: Eligibility Information System (EIS)

Part 1: Screening and Intake and Part 2: Eligibility, for Work First (TANF), Medicaid, Special Assistance and Refugee Assistance

Project 2&6 is on schedule to begin pilot production February 4, 2013, with full implementation to all 100 counties completed by October 2013. Lessons learned from Project 1 are being incorporated in Project 2&6. These will help the Project Team avoid issues encountered during Project 1, and assure that all project phases progress more smoothly. Lessons learned sessions were conducted with NC FAST and county staff. Process improvement is ongoing and critical to NC FAST's success.

The Requirements-to-Webpage Series

This series of articles for Project 2&6 will explain the documentation processes the Project Team follows to ultimately determine the design, functionality and appearance of the NC FAST pages.



Segment 2: From Requirements Analysis to Functional Design

Functional Design focuses on the business and user point of view for the system. The Business and Application Development Teams together translate the project requirements from the Business System Functions (BSFs) into Functional Design documents (FDs). The FDs describe the functionality to be created during the Detail Design & Development and Test phases. This effort is guided by the direction set from the fit-gap analysis to meet the BSFs.

Many activities take place in order to complete each FD.

The first step is to organize all BSFs into logical groups of functionality that will be covered in separate design documents. Next, the team members research applicable sections of policy to confirm their understanding of current business processes. The team also evaluates existing capabilities within the Cúram out-of-the-box (OOTB) software and how it could be used to satisfy the BSFs.

The Design Team reviews the modifications made as part of a prior project (e.g., Project 2&6 builds on Project 1) to determine if additional modifications are needed. The team leverages existing OOTB capabilities, and designs with the intent to minimize further modifications and build a long-term NC FAST system solution.

The team then documents to-be process flows, detailed mockups for new artifacts, batch processing logic and task configurations. This information is added to the FD.

Throughout the entire process, multiple teams are involved, and provide varying degrees of input depending on the complexity of the business requirement and the OOTB capabilities. This effort always includes the Business Team, business analysts and designers.

The Business and Application Development Teams review the FD during several Joint Application Design (JAD)

sessions. The Architecture & Infrastructure and Project Management Teams participate as needed. The primary purpose of a JAD session is to confirm the business requirements are addressed within the FD.

Approved FDs are used as the primary input for detail design, development and testing activities. They are also used by the Testing and Implementation Teams to develop test plans, test scripts and training materials.

All the FDs are compiled to create the Software Design Document (SWDD), which provides a complete picture of all project functionality to be developed.

When the FDs are complete, it is common for functional designers to transition into new roles on the Testing or Implementation Teams due to their knowledge of how the solution is designed to support the business requirements.

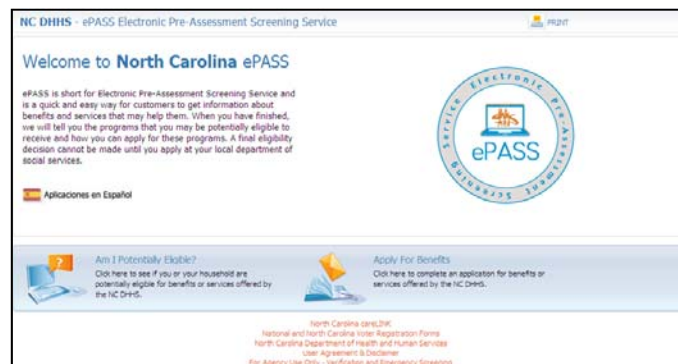
Stay tuned for Segment 3!

ePASS

The Electronic Pre-Assessment Screening Service (ePASS) supports Governor Perdue's initiative to "Set Government Straight" by working more efficiently for the residents of North Carolina.

ePASS is an easy to use internet-based tool that lets individuals check if they are eligible for several North Carolina benefits and services. ePASS provides secure online access for individuals to self-screen and apply for a range of assistance programs or services. ePASS is accessible from the privacy of one's home or any internet location. Using ePASS is anonymous; personal information identifying the individual is not requested or recorded. ePASS saves the information entered in the system, and provides the user with a completed application once the questions are answered. ePASS went live July 2010.

www.ePASS.nc.gov



FNS Features in ePASS

The goal of the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Program is to help North Carolina residents feed their families. Phase 2 FNS of ePASS supports this goal by helping families determine if they are eligible to receive FNS benefits, as well as other benefits or services.

ePASS allows individuals to answer detailed FNS interview questions, then print the FNS application and mail, fax or take it to their county agency. Families are able to use their time and resources more effectively, and be better prepared when they come into their local department of social services to apply for services. Local departments of social services also benefit by having shorter wait times for applicants.

What's New with ePASS?

Phase 2 Medicaid

Screening and application intake is on schedule to be rolled out to all 100 counties by the first quarter of 2012.

Applicants will have the opportunity to review the new Medicaid Information Fact Sheet when beginning the application process or opening an already existing application. The Fact Sheet provides helpful information regarding Medicaid and North Carolina Health Choice (NCHC) for children; covered services; and an individual's responsibilities and rights.

Phase 3

Phase 3 is on schedule to be implemented in December 2012, a timeframe similar to the implementation of NC FAST Project 1: Global Case Management and FNS.

Phase 3 includes the following features:

- Electronic signature
- Disbursement of electronic applications
- Date of application
- Electronic submittal for all 100 counties
- Electronic recertification submittal
- Online recertification forms

What's Next for ePASS After Phase 3?

After ePASS Phase 3 and NC FAST Project 1 are integrated as part of the NC FAST Case Management System, ePASS functionality will enable individuals to:

- Check the status of their application
- Receive electronic notices via a secured logon to ePASS
- Report changes in circumstance
- Perform online recertification

ePASS Phase 2 FNS Screenings

From January to December 2011, local county departments of social services in North Carolina averaged more than 6,000 ePASS screenings for FNS benefit eligibility per month.

ePASS Metrics for December 2011

FNS Screenings: 5,009
FNS Applications: 2,733
EA Screenings: 1,612
Quick Screenings: 4,174

ePASS Metrics, 2011 Year to Date

FNS Screenings: 72,396
FNS Applications: 37,540
EA Screenings: 22,733
Quick Screenings: 57,061



Contact Us

As you continue to use ePASS, we encourage you to give us your comments. Please send comments or questions to ncfast@dhhs.nc.gov and let us know what you think.

Please report technical issues regarding ePASS, by calling the FNS Customer Service Center at 1-888-622-7328 or 1-877-452-2514 (TTY dedicated).

On the Technology Front

The High Availability of NC FAST Technology

Technology modernization is an important part of the new NC FAST system. The new system provides high availability access for its workers, clients and providers to retrieve information and process transactions to deliver benefits and services.

The high availability technology of NC FAST is designed to allow processing to occur in real time when needed. This increased availability provides flexibility for workers, and allows other systems that share data with NC FAST to perform transactions in real time. The new system is designed so that no single failure of a server, network or system software would cause an outage that impairs processing.

The new system uses a cluster of multiple servers that provides redundancy to continue processing transactions even if one or more servers fail. Each individual server in itself has redundant processors, storage and network connectors that allow each server to keep processing even if an internal or server hardware component fails.

The software that runs on servers is virtualized so that if a software problem occurs other instances of the software on a server can take over. Our last issue explained how NC FAST uses Virtual Technology to enable improved scalability, improved redundancy and higher service levels. These layers of redundancy provide a defense to keep the system up and available.

During business hours, the high availability design means the system will remain available and provide a consistent response time experience. Compared to the shared processing environment of the old systems on the mainframe, this improvement means more system up time and response time that is not impacted by other mainframe processing.



During non-business hours, the system's high availability features enable online processing to stay up 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Overnight batch processing will still occur, but the NC FAST system does not require bringing down the online system for batch processing. With online available all the time, the impact of long batch processing at month-end or during disasters should not limit NC DHHS' flexibility to work when needed to meet the human service demands of the state.

Overall, the modernized high availability technology is a critical part of helping both the NC FAST system and legacy NC DHHS systems access and process information to deliver human services in real time, anytime.

Upcoming State Business Policy Changes



In the upcoming months, many state policies will change. NC FAST is working with state agencies to adapt the policies, where possible, to be in line with the business rules inherent in the NC FAST base software. This effort is to minimize cost and deliver the system sooner to users.

One example of the coming changes impacts the required document retention policy in NC FAST. Due to the new processes and case management workflows that NC FAST brings, fewer documents will need to be kept in paper files or document management systems.

The next Newsletter will provide more information, including a comprehensive list of documents required to be kept in NC FAST.

Business Update

How NC FAST Will Handle Forms and Notices



Like many other NC FAST functions, the generation and storage of electronic notices and forms will be new or improved.

System-Generated Notices. Currently, FSIS generates only one notice — DSS-8592, Notice of Action Taken. With the implementation of NC FAST two additional notices — DSS-8562, Effect of Change, and DSS-8553, Notice of Adverse Action — will be automatically generated by NC FAST based on case activity.

A caseworker will be able to view these three automated notices in draft form, but not modify them. Most of the time these notices will be mailed centrally. If needed, however, the caseworker can print them locally (although this should happen infrequently).

These notices will be populated with the following information:

- ✓ Case head of household and address
- ✓ Reason for the notice
- ✓ Appeal deadline dates

The “reason for the notice” description will be based on case data and will not require entry of a code to identify it.

System-Generated Forms. Paper forms that are now prepared manually will be generated in NC FAST, including among others:

- ✓ Appeals forms and notices
- ✓ Change Report Form
- ✓ Wage Verification Form
- ✓ Contribution Form
- ✓ Designation of Authorized Representative
- ✓ EBT Account Debit Request

The system will not suggest that these forms may need to be completed, so it is still the caseworker’s decision to prepare them. The

system will prepopulate the case head of household and address. The caseworker will key additional information to complete the form.

For DSS-8650, Notice of Information Needed to Complete Your FNS Application Form, the system will initiate the form; prepopulate the verifications needed based on case data entered; and enable the caseworker to add additional text if necessary.

Recertification Notices. These will also continue to be centrally generated. If a client states they did not receive the recertification notice, the caseworker will have the ability to generate and print another notice.

Barcoding. One new feature is the inclusion of a barcode on each form encrypted with case identification information that can be used for document management purposes. Although NC FAST will not provide document management when Project 1 is implemented, barcoding is part of the long range goal to incorporate document management in NC FAST.

System Storage. Forms not automatically generated can be selected and printed from a Communications tab located at the person, application, product delivery or integrated case level. The Communications tab will also provide the option to view forms generated within NC FAST and include both system-generated and caseworker-generated forms. Any forms developed at the county level will not be tracked within NC FAST so it will be critical to use the official ones offered by the system.

Notices will have essentially the same look and feel as the current versions of them. An electronic copy of each system-generated form will be saved within NC FAST at the person, application, product delivery or integrated case level.

Spotlight on the NC FAST Foundation: Cúram Software V6



NC DHHS has partnered with Cúram Software, an IBM Company, to deliver end users across the state a modern, flexible solution for their case management operations.

Cúram is the leading provider of packaged software solutions for social services, delivering best-in-class applications for health and human services, workforce services and social security organizations globally.

Since the partnership began in December 2009, NC FAST has been involved in Cúram's user conferences and workgroups, and as ad hoc Design Team members. This collaboration assures that NC FAST requirements are considered and implemented where possible in the Cúram base software framework.

In addition, several Cúram business and technical subject matter experts have been assigned full time to the NC FAST Program. They are co-located onsite with the team in Raleigh, NC.

The Cúram framework is the foundation for the NC FAST Case Management System. The framework combines the advantages of commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) software

with social services best practices, and an enterprise platform built to support enterprise architecture. End users benefit from the client-centric business processes and outcomes-driven integrated service delivery model.

Out of the box, the framework delivers the business and technical functionality needed to meet 80% or better of the NC FAST requirements, with minimal base software modification needed. NC FAST's intent is to use as much out-of-the-box functionality as possible to minimize cost.

NC FAST is currently implementing Version 6 (V6) of the Cúram Business Application Suite™. Cúram V6 was designed using a user-centered design process, as explained later in this article.

Throughout the V6 development process Cúram sought continuous input from its customers, including a close working partnership with NC DHHS, to ensure enhancements are relevant and valuable for NC FAST as well as the industry on the whole.

This process involved analyzing the biggest challenges and problems for end users, and determining how the application could assist them. The end result is a highly flexible solution designed to support key social services processes out-of-the-box.

Cúram's User-Centered Design Process for V6

A 5-step, user-centered design approach was used. NC FAST has been involved at each step in this process.



- 1. Research User Needs.** Information was gathered about the user through stakeholders, users of V5, end users, competitor products and prevailing technologies.
- 2. Analyze Research.** Research was analyzed and used to create personas. Personas describe the goals, skills and behavior patterns of different groups of users. Personas were referenced throughout the design of V6 to ensure the application satisfied user needs.
- 3. Establish Requirements.** Based on the business requirements gathered and the personas identified, user scenarios were created. A scenario is a description of the interactions between a persona and a product. By using scenarios the Design Team identified functional requirements for V6 from a user perspective.
- 4. Design.** Based on the requirements, the product interface was developed. The design was refined until it satisfied all personas and scenarios. After approval of the design template by stakeholders, details of the design were developed by working together with subject matter experts and analysts. The solution was reviewed regularly with stakeholders.
- 5. Test and Refine.** An evaluation of the detailed solution was performed to test the effectiveness of the application with regard to how it helped users achieve goals and tasks. If necessary, the application was modified to address the findings.

As a result of the user-centered design process:

- ✓ Cúram V6 provides a customizable, intuitive, web-based user interface.
- ✓ Role-based home pages feature customizable areas with real-time data to help users manage their workload more effectively.
- ✓ Tabbed navigation, mouse-over detail windows, collapsible shortcut and action panels support navigation ease. They also provide users a context throughout the case management process.

By leveraging Cúram's modern, flexible architecture, NC DHHS benefits from the innovations Cúram brings to market. For example, in August 2011, Cúram released its first iPhone application, the Cúram Child Welfare App.

This App leverages the native capabilities of the iPhone, providing secure access to client and provider contact details, GPS-driven mapping and directions in support of the case investigation process.

The goal of the App is to keep caseworkers on the front line longer where they can spend more time with, and, ultimately, improve outcomes for their clients.

NC DHHS had numerous conversations with Cúram regarding the App to provide input and assure the App could meet the NC FAST out-of-the-box requirements. The App is planned for use during the upcoming implementation of Project 4: Child Services.

As Cúram continues to release additional applications for iPhone or other mobile devices, NC DHHS will have the opportunity to leverage these capabilities.

Cúram's vision and ongoing commitment to its customers is based on the three core objectives within the V6 release: next generation COTS, innovation and packaged subject matter expertise.

Based on the enhancements to the V6 Cúram Business Application Suite, Cúram continues to further these objectives in future releases to help make the NC FAST Case Management System the most beneficial for its end users.

Training Preview

Classroom Training Locations

The time is fast approaching for NC FAST classroom training to begin. The County Readiness Team is working with counterparts in the Pilot and Phase 1 Counties to finalize classroom training locations.

NC FAST is providing the training computers and equipment so use of existing computer labs is not necessary. The classroom training plan calls for approximately 7-9 classrooms to be located across the counties in each implementation phase. This means that training classrooms will not be placed in each county, but rather spread across each implementation region.

The objective is to locate the classrooms in larger counties to minimize the drive time and travel expense for the majority of classroom participants. Classrooms will be located in facilities capable of comfortably accommodating 18-20 students.

In the majority of situations, training locations will be available within a 1-hour drive time for each participant.

Training participants will sign up for classroom training using the NC FAST Learning Management System (LMS). The LMS will ensure that classroom training capacity is not exceeded. Sign up for classroom training will be done on a first come, first served basis. Once a class is full, it will no longer be available for sign-up.

The Training Team is now finalizing the curriculum and refining the duration of classroom training modules. All users will attend the same training sessions regardless of role.

This means that all training participants will begin classroom training on Monday morning. Reception staff

training will be encompassed in the topics covered in the first 2 days of training. After they leave on Tuesday they will not return to training. Eligibility workers will continue training the next few days.

Supervisor training topics will begin on Friday afternoon. Eligibility workers can leave training around 2-3 p.m. on Friday, while Supervisors will remain to cover the topics specific to their role.

This approach provides maximum scheduling flexibility for county staff, as all training sessions will be open to all users regardless of role. It also means Supervisors will learn everything that reception and eligibility workers learn.

More information will be provided in future issues of the Newsletter and through county readiness activities once the training curriculum is finalized.

Step Right Up and Get Your NCID

When your county goes live, you will access NC FAST with your NCID and password. NCIDs are unique, and used to authenticate valid NC FAST users. They will replace FSIS worker numbers.

Your county NCID Administrator will assign your NCID and a temporary password at least 90 days before your "Go-Live." You must change your temporary password within 14 days or your account will be deleted. NCID will then send you a reminder email to update your password every 90 days.

If you don't know your NCID Administrator, contact your County Champion or visit:

https://www.ncid.its.state.nc.us/NCID_County_gov_map.asp

You must take the web-based training through the NC FAST LMS 2 months before your "Go-Live" date. While NCID is not yet connected to the LMS, it will be. The LMS is currently set up to have a user create an ID and password. NC FAST suggests you use your NCID and password, so that when connected to NCID you will not need to remember to use a different ID and password.

NC FAST Learning Management System: Web-Based Training Overview

The NC FAST Training Team has completed the first version of NC FAST Web-Based Training (WBT). This training is being used by User Acceptance Test (UAT) participants to help them prepare for upcoming testing activities. In December 2011, Pilot County UAT staff began taking the WBT as a prerequisite for their classroom training, which will be delivered the week of March 26, 2012.

The WBT is available via the NC FAST Learning Management System (LMS). The LMS tracks who has completed the required WBT. The LMS is also used to register users for classroom training, capture training surveys and print certificates of completion.

The WBT is intended to provide trainees with a basic overview of NC FAST features and capabilities. It provides hands-on interaction through simulations of the production NC FAST system. Completion of the WBT should increase staff confidence in their abilities going into NC FAST classroom training.

The following NC FAST WBT lessons are available:

Lesson	Title	Description
Lesson 1	NC FAST Program History and Purpose	Overview of the background of NC FAST, benefits provided, economic program impacts and a rollout schedule.
Lesson 2	NC FAST Program New Concepts	Key NC FAST terminology and functional areas.
Lesson 3	NC FAST Navigation	Description of navigation within NC FAST, including windows, menus, icons, bookmarks and pods.
Lesson 4	NC FAST Intake and Cases	Introduction to the NC FAST case lifecycle, case components, as well as status and ownership.
Lesson 5	NC FAST Evidence and Eligibility Part 1	Introduction to evidence concepts, types and the evidence dashboard.
Lesson 6	NC FAST Evidence and Eligibility Part 2	Introduction to completing eligibility checks and final case authorization.
Lesson 7	NC FAST Case Details	Introduction to the review of case concepts and how to view case-related details.

Additional communication about the availability of WBT for your county will soon be available.

County Readiness Team Update

Where We Are Working with the Counties

The County Readiness Team is traveling across the state helping counties prepare for successful implementation of NC FAST.

As of the end of January:

- * The team has initiated preparatory activities with all 100 counties.
- * The team has conducted 138 different kick-off sessions with county staff from Pilot, Phase 1, Phase 2, Phase 3, Phase 4 and Phase 5 County groupings.



In January, the team completed Change Discussion Guide meetings with 8 counties and Readiness Assessment evaluations with 2 counties.

In February, the team will be on the road to continue kick-off sessions, Change Discussion Guide meetings and Readiness Assessment evaluations.

In addition, the County Readiness Liaisons will be traveling to the Pilot Counties to do conversion case validation.

Project 2&6 Pilot County Selection

In total, 81 counties responded to the request for Project 2&6 Pilot County volunteers, with 34 of those requesting to be Pilot Counties. It is interesting and encouraging to NC FAST that all Project 1 Pilot Counties volunteered to be Project 2&6 Pilot Counties.

Next steps included evaluating the volunteers against the selection criteria and making Pilot County recommendations. Revised criteria was approved in December 2011, by the NC FAST Executive Advisory Subcommittee (EAS) and NC FAST Executive Advisory Committee (EAC). The recommended Pilot Counties were approved by the EAS, and submitted for approval to the EAC in January 2012.

When EAC approves the Project 2&6 Pilot Counties, they will be announced in NC FAST Dear County Director Letter #12-0004, to be published in February 2012, and posted to the DSS and NC FAST websites.



Thanks to all the counties who responded!

Expert Interview

"When Buncombe County was chosen to be an alternate Pilot County we understood that effective communication was the key to making the transition a success. In order for communication to run smoothly among different divisions, our NC FAST Team began meeting every 2 weeks starting in March 2011, to discuss any updates, concerns or questions. Those concerns or questions are then passed on to our County Readiness Liaison through our County Champion."

One of the best tools to support communication has been the Change Discussion Guide (CDG). Even though we have met often, the CDG opened up new areas and concerns that the team had not discussed. We completed the CDG before meeting with our County Readiness Liaison, which made the meeting go quickly and smoothly as everyone was on the same page. We now use the CDG as a "living" document, in that all questions and answers are housed in the document and are reviewed at our biweekly team meetings.

For our staff, we have begun sending out weekly emails with our NC FAST 'Tips for the Week' where we share information from our meetings, the NC FAST website and newsletter. In December 2011, we began holding weekly 'Lunch and Learns' where staff can come and learn about NC FAST. We will encourage staff to use these forums as an opportunity to ask questions they have regarding NC FAST.

At Buncombe County we are eagerly awaiting our Go-Live date. We are truly excited to see North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology (NC FAST)!"



Kelli Buckner
County Champion
Buncombe County



Geneva Ray
County Champion
Johnston County
and
Wilbert Morris
NC FAST Readiness Liaison
Johnston County

"The mission statement of Johnston County Department of Social Services (DSS) is to assure the basic social and financial needs of Johnston County residents are met and that we are effective in the delivery of these services."

"How can we accomplish this mission statement? Why not pilot NC FAST in the Food and Nutrition Services Program?"

Johnston County DSS has always searched for new and innovative ways to reach and serve citizens. There was some apprehension when staff were first introduced to NC FAST. However, as the details unfolded, questions began to surface and ideas began to fly. We began to realize that our old search and seizure process for files may soon be a thing of the past. No more: Where is that file? Who had it last? Who has my customer?

Soon all information will be available online and customers will have one interview and receive automatic/immediate benefit calculation. One major task was to determine how to transition from an all-paper system to a system completely supported by technology. Everyone agreed that technology is requiring that we look at eligibility determination as a new and different process. Much preparation is needed to simplify the procedures for the staff and not interrupt the services of the citizens. Therefore, the staff began to embrace the changes and cooperate in the trial and error processes implemented in preparation for NC FAST.

Yes, through NC FAST we feel that we will cross a major hurdle in accomplishing our mission statement. Yes, there are and will be challenges. However, we the staff of Johnston County DSS are committed to keep 'NC FAST on the FAST TRACK.'"

NC FAST Presents CMIS Interface at Web Conference

On October 18th, 2011, NC FAST hosted a web conference on the topic of Case Management Interface Synchronization (CMIS) for any county interested in using the CMIS interface. All 100 County Directors of Social Services were invited to attend the web conference, and submit questions related to CMIS to be addressed by the NC FAST team during the session.

NC FAST presented the CMIS interface design, and the major considerations to take into account as the interface is constructed. CMIS is a data interchange tool that will connect the NC FAST Case Management System to various existing county-specific case management systems. It will be designed and integrated into

NC FAST during Project 1, and enhanced as the remaining projects complete their lifecycles.

A question and answer period followed the presentation. The NC FAST Project Team, including Anthony Vellucci, NC FAST Program Director, fielded the questions submitted live through the web-conferencing application and those submitted previously.

The session lasted about 90 minutes, and approximately 60 different parties attended with nearly 40 questions submitted. The presentation is posted on the NC FAST website:

www.ncdhhs.gov/ncfast/libraryncfast/libraryncfast.htm

New Terminology

We'd like to introduce some of the terms used by NC FAST that might be new to you.

Reference Number: A unique identifier assigned by the system for a specific record such as an Integrated Case or an Application.

Register a Person: The process used to turn a Prospect Person into a Person.

Special Caution: An indication that a case member requires special attention. Special cautions are typically directly associated with the safety of the person or the safety of others in relation to a person.

Tab: A navigation tool that allows workers to select the function to be performed within a case.

Work Eligibility: A system indicator, based on the evidence entered, that generally means a Person is required to register for work.

NC FAST Double Puzzle



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SAKT	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
CRPOPSET	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
NMEINOE	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Final Message:	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

Unscramble each clue word.

Take letters that appear in boxes and unscramble them for the final message.

** Puzzle solution is on the NC FAST website: www.ncdhhs.gov/ncfast/program/program News.htm

County Readiness Bulletin Board

GET TO KNOW YOUR COUNTY CHAMPIONS

By now each county staff person should be familiar with the term — County Champion!

Your county director has asked this individual to serve as primary contact between the NC FAST Program and the county as it prepares for implementation. The County Champion serves as the onsite “go to” person to help you understand all the activities and events that will occur in your county as you prepare to implement NC FAST.

NC FAST represents not only a process change, but a culture change. Before activities can begin to transition from the current way of doing business a lot of work must be done at both the state and county levels to prepare for this change.

Your County Champion will be heavily involved with the NC FAST County Readiness Team to examine the current process for doing business locally, while keeping an eye on the “to be” process to ensure that proper preparation for change has been employed.

Take time to get to know your County Champion and use their knowledge to better understand how NC FAST will affect your job, and to understand what you can do to help make the pieces fit together.

The list of all County Champions and their contact information is posted on the NC FAST website:

www.ncdhhs.gov/ncfast/countyreadiness/crProject1.htm

GET TO KNOW YOUR SUPER USERS

The list of all county Super Users and their contact information is posted on the NC FAST website:



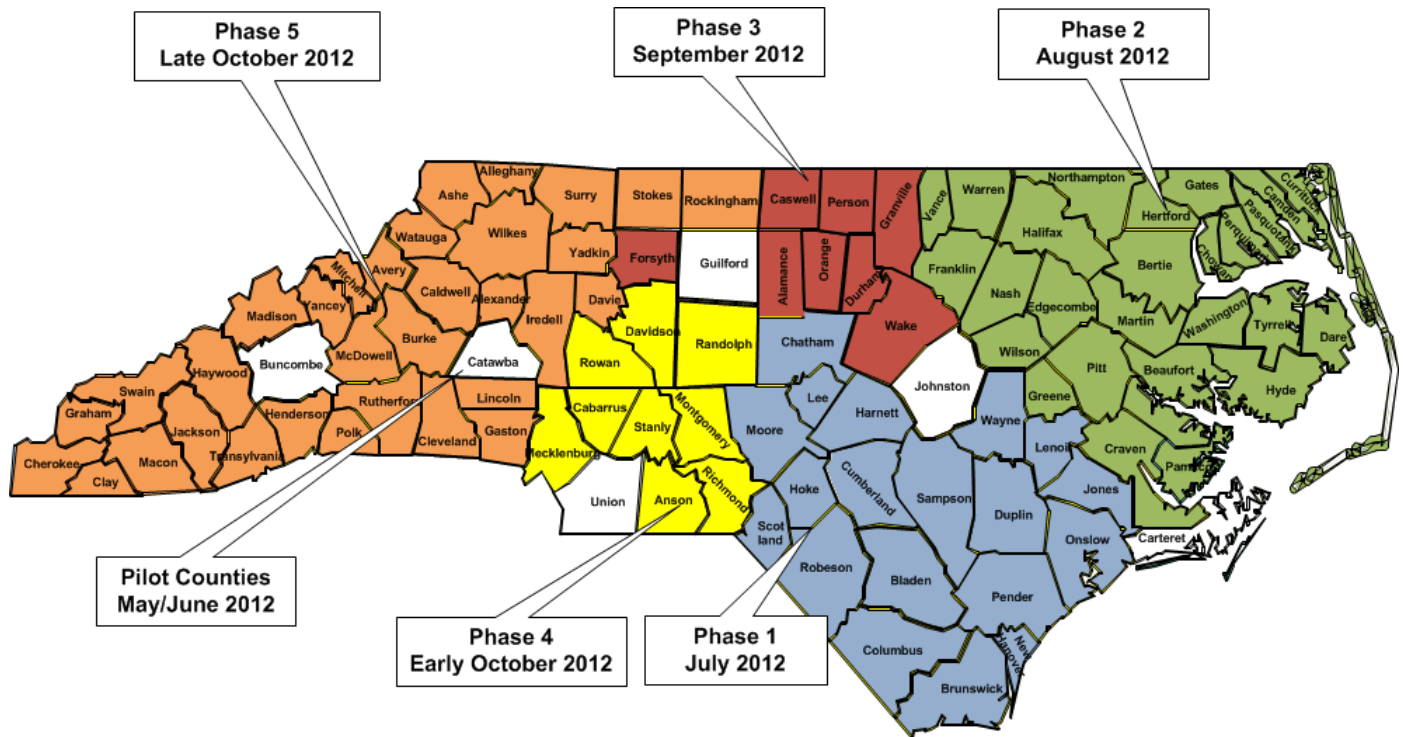
www.ncdhhs.gov/ncfast/countyreadiness/crProject1.htm

NC FAST Website Redesign: Phase 1 Now Complete

www.ncdhhs.gov/ncfast/



Phases for County Implementation Rollout



As shown by the new map, there are now 5 planned deployment regions for Project 1 implementation and training. Pilot and back-up Pilot Counties are shown in white. The number of phases was reduced to make the rollout more efficient, while still maintaining the original schedule of October 2012, to complete statewide implementation.



Have a Great Day

Upcoming Events

- * Feb. 16-17, Eastern Region DSS Directors Meeting, Atlantic Beach
- * March 15-16, Western Region DSS Directors Meeting, Asheville (tentative)

Contact Us



NC FAST Website:
www.ncdhhs.gov/ncfast/
NC FAST Newsletter Team:
ncfast@dhhs.nc.gov