



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Social Services

ROY COOPER • Governor

MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH • Secretary

SUSAN OSBORNE • Assistant Secretary for County
Operations for Human Services

November 17, 2021

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**ATTENTION: DIRECTORS, CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS, MANAGERS,
SUPERVISORS, AND SOCIAL WORKERS**

**SUBJECT: INTER-RATER RELIABILITY TESTING FOR THE PROPOSED STRUCTURED SCREENING
AND RESPONSE TOOL**

REQUIRED ACTION: Information Only Time Sensitive Immediate

Thank you to all of the county partners who have collaborated with Division staff to develop a draft Structured Decision Making (SDM) screening and response tool. Your input and experiences have helped to create a draft decision support tool to assist staff in making screening and response time decision for child maltreatment reports. The next phase is inter-rater reliability (IRR) testing. The outcome of this testing will help ensure that all 100 counties are using the same document and process to screen and ultimately make consistent decisions across the State.

Currently, local child welfare workers are being sought to help test the new SDM screening and response tool. The participation in this testing will support strengthening consistency, accuracy, and highlight training priorities for screening child maltreatment reports. Each participant will review a series of actual case examples that have been redacted to allow Evident Change to analyze responses to help ensure that the screening and response tool can support consistent decision making amongst staff. Participants will be asked to read a series of example intake reports. There will be a group of participants who will identify how they would respond under the current reporting system and others who will complete the SDM screening and response tool. This is not a test of your staff's decision making or knowledge of policy. It is a test of the language, definitions, and structure of the draft SDM tool and individual results will be kept confidential.

Evident Change will host a 45-minute instructional webinar on December 6, 2021 at 10am to provide instructions and an overview of the screening and response tool. A link to the webinar will be sent out to all participants. For those who are unable to attend or for follow up at a later time, the webinar will be recorded. The testing will be offered from December 8, 2021 through December 21, 2021. It will take between two to four hours and will allow the participant to complete it in multiple sittings, if needed.

NCDHHS is requesting each county Director identify at least two child welfare workers who either receive CPS reports or screen or support staff who screen intakes to participate. This can also include afterhours

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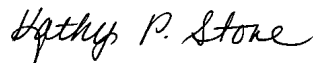
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staff and there are no limits to the number of participants from each county. This is an opportunity for each county to review the new intake tool and provide feedback to the State. The larger the participant pool the more effective the IRR testing results will be. IRR testing will be conducted by Evident Change and all responses will go directly to them for analysis. Only group trends and aggregate results will be shared with the Division.

Interested participants should click [complete this survey](#) by December 1, 2021 to provide your information to Evident Change and then watch your email for next steps on IRR testing.

Any questions regarding this information should be directed to Kathy Stone at Kathy.Stone@dhhs.nc.gov, Amanda Hubbard, DSS Program Consultant at Amanda.Hubbard@dhhs.nc.gov, and Erin Wicke Dankert at ewickedankert@evidentchange.org, or your Regional Child Welfare Consultant.

Sincerely,



Kathy Stone
Section Chief for Safety and Prevention
North Carolina Division of Social Services

Cc: Susan Osborne, Assistant Secretary for County Operations
Lisa Tucker Cauley, Senior Director of Child, Family and Adult Services
Teresa Strom, Section Chief for County Operations
Carla McNeill, Section Chief for Permanency
Linda Waite, Section Chief for Licensing and Regulatory

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