



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Social Services

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April 1, 2014

**DEAR COUNTY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**ATTENTION: DIRECTORS AND CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS**

**SUBJECT: CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW (CFSR), QUALITATIVE CASE REVIEWS AND CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT (CQI) PRACTICES**

The highly anticipated resumption of the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) have recently been announced by the Administration for Children Youth and Families (ACYF) through a Child and Family Services Review Technical Bulletin #7

(<http://www.aphsa.org/content/dam/NAPCWA/PDF%20DOC/Home%20Page/CFSR%20Round%20III%20-%20TB%207.pdf>). This Technical Bulletin announces the next round of reviews and profiles changes to the review process. It is indicated at this time that North Carolina will once again be one of the first states to be reviewed under this new guidance which means that we can expect a review to occur in 2015. The Technical Bulletin identifies the period of time covered by the data profiles (or sampling period) will be April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015.

Just as we seek to support the development of a county's capacity to evaluate its own Quality Case Record (QCR) Review and implement REAP as our Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) system, ACYF will begin working with states around these same processes. ACYF points out that Qualitative Case Reviews are just *one* piece of evaluating the effectiveness of child welfare systems and services. The Division seeks to learn more from, and share with, county staff how to structure qualitative case reviews in a manner that leads to continuous service delivery improvement. ACF has defined CQI as "the complete process of identifying, describing, and analyzing strengths and problems and then testing, implementing, learning from and revising solutions...it is dependent upon the active inclusion and participation of staff at all levels of the agency, children, youth, families and stakeholders throughout the process." For additional information on CQI, ACYF previously released an Information Memorandum (IM) ACYF-CB-IM-12-07 (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/im1207.pdf>) that provides guidance to states on establishing and maintaining Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) systems.

The following counties have agreed to participate in a 3 month effort regarding the development of a more efficient and valid on-going QCR and one that seeks to build county capacity to conduct their own internal case review process as a part of their CQI system: Craven, Hoke, Mecklenburg, Pitt, Scotland.

The work with these 5 counties will involve for the first time a review of Foster Home Licensing records in addition to CPS records if relevant during the period under review (PUR). Attached to this letter is a case record organizational outline for Foster Home Licensing records. The process being piloted involves:

Child Welfare Services

[www.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.ncdhhs.gov) • [www.ncdhhs.gov/dss](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss)

Tel 919-527-6335 • Fax 919-334-1018

Location: McBryde Bldg. • 820 S. Boylan Street • Raleigh, NC 27603

Mailing Address: 2401 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, NC 27699-2401

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- Training and technical assistance to county staff on the CFSR Instrument to build capacity in the county to conduct internal case record reviews
- State and county desk record review to include key informant interviews with fidelity to minimize inter-rated reliability
- Inclusion of Foster Home licensing record review
- Continue the inclusion of jurisdiction case reviews when applicable
  - For those counties who are not a REAP or QCR pilot county, you will be notified that your portion of the case record is needed.
- Individual county report of findings and a pilot final report of the outcomes of the pilot to be shared statewide and with ACYF
- Findings incorporated in county's REAP(CQI) Achievement Plan

The information learned from this effort will serve two purposes. It will provide the state with some valuable information into the form and structure of case reviews and will satisfy the ACYF requirement to report data. Although the face of the QCR's will look somewhat different it is important to note that that same tool, the DSS-5223 (<http://info.dhhs.state.nc.us/olm/forms/dss/dss-5223.pdf>) will still be used. To prepare for this some advance preparation will need to take place, we encourage every agency to initiate efforts to organize child welfare records as referenced in Section 1424 of the Family Services Manual (<http://info.dhhs.state.nc.us/olm/manuals/dss/csm-60/man/pdf%20docs/CS1424.pdf>) and a suggested format for foster care licensing records is attached.

We invite every agency to participate in an upcoming free webinar: "Quality Case Reviews: Q&A with State and County Partners". This webinar is open to all and will take place on **Wednesday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.** Please see the attached announcement for more information.

It is our hope that if you are not currently conducting quality case record reviews that you are assessing in some manner the many critical elements of a QCR system as a part of any CQI system. We would also like to recognize that there are more questions than there are answers. We will continue to work with our federal partners and share information as soon as available.

Sincerely,



Kevin Kelley, Section Chief  
Child Welfare Services

Attachments (2):  
QCR REAP Webinar Announcement  
Foster Home Licensure File Organization

cc: Wayne Black  
Jack Rogers  
Child Welfare Services Team Leaders

**CWS-10-2014**