

## **MILWAUKEE CHILD WELFARE PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL**

**Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services**

**DRAFT**

**Friday, June 2, 2023**

**12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

The meeting was conducted by Zoom. The Zoom meeting information was made available on the DCF DMCPs Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership Council webpage on May 30, 2023. (<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/mcps/partnership-council>).

**Members Present:** At the request of Chairperson Christine Holmes, a roll call was taken to identify the Partnership Council members present for the meeting.

Present were Ms. Libby Mueller, Judge Jane Carroll, Ms. Christine Holmes, Supervisor Willie Johnson, Supervisor Patti Logsdon, Linda Davis, Bria Grant, Senator LaTonya Johnson, Community Member Kelly Pethke, and Representative Darrin Madison.

A quorum of the Council was present on the Zoom meeting.

### **Notice of Meeting**

Chairperson Christine Holmes reviewed compliance with Open Meetings Law requirements. First, the notice of the meeting was published on the DCF and DOA websites on May 30, 2023, and in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel on May 31, 2023. Second, the notice was emailed to the newspaper of record for the State of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin State Journal, on May 25, 2023. The notice was emailed to the Partnership Council stakeholders including any media who had requested such notice on May 30, 2023. Finally, the agenda was posted on the front door of the DMCPs building at 635 N. 26th St. on May 30, 2023. This satisfies the requirements for notice under Wis. Stat. 19.84(1)(b).

Chairperson Holmes introduced Representative Darrin Madison as the newest Partnership Council member.

### **Review and Approval of Past Minutes**

Chairperson Holmes requested the approval of the last meetings minutes. Linda Davis made a motion to approve the minutes from the Friday, February 10, 2023, Partnership Council meeting. Libby Mueller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Council Member Recognition**

Sarah Henery recognized Chris Holmes's term as Chairperson of the Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership Council and expressed gratitude for her 20+ years of service as a member of the Partnership Council. Her term ends at the end of June 2023 and she will be departing from the Council. Chairperson Holmes shared her appreciation for the progress of child welfare during her years of service and the Division's incredible work. Linda Davis congratulated Chairperson Holmes on her hard work at Penfield and for chairing the Council.

Chairperson Holmes shared because of restructuring of the Council, Steve Gilbertson and Maria Rodriguez, both Associate Members, will leave the council effective after the June 2, 2023, meeting. She thanked them for their services.

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### **Independent Monitoring Report (IMR) and Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services Response**

Tyler Oettinger reported results for 2022 Annual Report January through December 2022 and Historical Jeanine B. Settlement Agreement measures. He gave background that the Settlement Agreement was dismissed in September 2021; included in the dismissal was the Department's commitment to remain transparent and report information on Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS) including at a minimal the Settlement Agreement measures until the end of 2022. As a result, this will be the last presentation to include all the former Settlement Agreement measures. However, DCF will continue to report information about:

- Access and Initial Assessment/Independent Investigations
- Safety
- Permanency
- Well-being
- Workforce

New metrics and information will be added to the report prior to the next report out. This report will continue to be published semi-annually. The full report is available at:

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/mcps/Partnership-Council/minutes>

Sarah Henery added context on the changes of the Independent Monitoring Report. There will be changes to modernize the report such as including more Initial Assessment data. The Settlement measurement was more focused on children in the child welfare system in out-of-home care placements. Moving forward there will be a focus at the starting point of a referral to the point of permanency.

Linda Davis suggested that Partnership Council members should have input on what is included in the new monitoring report and set goals, content, and standards. She also suggested there may be a need for an orientation on the report. She has concerns on the reported measurements maltreated children, re-entry, not meeting AFSA requirements, and medical and dental stats. She acknowledged the great strides that happened during COVID but expressed there is more work to do.

Senator LaTonya Johnson asked if the presented numbers on case carrying child welfare case managers included either managers or supervisors. Sarah Henery answered that this number does include case carrying supervisors. Senator Johnson asked how many cases supervisor were typically carrying. Tyler Oettinger clarified that the information presented was based on the number of children on a case. Including the number of cases versus children is being discussed as a possible addition in 2023 and could be potentially provided in future reports. Senator Johnson asked what the average age was of the 388 children that met the contract AFSA requirements. This information was not available during the presentation; Tyler Oettinger stated this could be looked into. Sarah Henery shared typically the ASFA number dipping is a result of lack of documentation of TPR exceptions. Senator Johnson asked if there was a primary cause

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for the 76 children who re-entered out-of-home care. Tyler Oettinger answered that there was not but indicated there is a hope to dive deeper into this for future reports.

Kelly Pethke asked what the ideal caseload size for a case manager was. Sarah Henery and Bridget Chybowski answered 15 children or under for each child welfare case manager. For Initial Assessment Specialists, the ideal caseload would be carrying 12 - 15 open cases at a time.

Judge Carroll asked for ASFA compliance where the TPR exception is documented. She asked specifically if it was in the court order or DCF records. Libby Mueller stated it is in DCF records. Linda Davis shared that the Critical Incident Committee could choose to review an out-of-home care maltreatment case. Chairperson Holmes recommended an update on trends for staffing in the next meeting and in the future seeing how the statistics relate to the Family First legislation.

#### **Administrator's Report**

Sarah Henery expressed that it is important to the Division to be transparent about what is going on in the child welfare system and this is a community response to a social problem. She shared that staffing is looking better, but a lot of the recent staff lost were Initial Assessment hires within the last two years. Onboarding may need to be thought about differently. There is a movement to modernizing staff's pay. Sarah Henery expressed that the last year felt like a rebuilding year. Sarah reported that foster care numbers are decreasing, but relative placements are up which is consistent with the goals of Family First. There is a focus to ensure relatives have the supports they need to care for a child or children, especially financially. In the Governor's budget proposal, there was a proposal to expand the relative support and to allow people who are like-kin to be caregivers.

The Division is focusing on how to provide mental health support to children with high levels of need. There were no bidders related to contracting out for a provider for crisis mental health services for youth. The Division is thinking on how to use that funding. MFIS is a program for parents that struggle with older youth and giving access to services before court intervention. There are proposals for funding in the budget in the Milwaukee area, to build gap services for children.

Bria Grant asked how the decrease in foster care is measured in relation to Family First and if success is measured by reunification or placement with family. Sarah Henery stated there has been discussion on if there is a right number of foster homes to have, and the conclusion is there is not, it is too complex to come up with a target number. There are staff working together to analyze the decrease in foster care.

#### **Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) No Wrong Door and MKE Mobile Crisis**

Jenna Kreuzer, Associate Director Wraparound Milwaukee - Children's Community Mental Health, shared the redesigning work has been going on for some time, but a lot of pieces cumulated in 2022. There was focus on looking into opportunities to increase access to care.

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There is a Youth Behavioral Health Crisis Re-Design Charter with Milwaukee members whose primary objectives are:

- High Acuity Care Options and Transitional Care Management for Complex Youth
- Mobile Response Support
- Outpatient Access

Some key timeline highlights from 2020 to present were:

- Boys Youth Crisis Stabilization Facility (YCSF) opened in 2020 with Wisconsin Community Services and Girls YCSF opened in 2022 with Lad Lake
- In November 2022, Granite Hills Hospital began accepting youth
- Th Behavioral Health Services and Psychiatric Emergency Center September 2022 and the Mental Health Emergency Center (MHEC) opened

The main places for youth in the Milwaukee community for inpatient hospitalization options are Granite Hills, Rogers, and Aurora. Mental Health Emergency Center (MHEC) is a public-private partnership between Milwaukee County and four area health systems. Jenna Kreuzer highlighted this as an emergency center and which does not have beds for children or youth. Milwaukee County Mental Health Clinic continues to serve youth and young adults enrolled in the Wraparound and REACH programs. The clinic added capacity to serve youth and young adults in regular Comprehensive Community Services (CSS) and there is plan for expansion to non-system of care enrolled youth and accept private insurance.

Youth Crisis Stabilization Facility (YCSF) is an option for diversion of in-patient care, a step-down from in-patient care, or from the Mental Health Emergency Center. Youth cannot go to YCSF if actively suicidal. Typically, youth stay between 3 to 7 days and assessed daily. They can stay up to 30 days if needed. It is a voluntary placement so the youth and guardian must agree for the youth to go. Lad Lake currently accepts referrals from 8am-8pm Monday through Friday for female youth ages 13-17 and Wisconsin Community Services accepts referrals for male identifying youth from 8am-8pm 7 days a week. There is support for transportation to YCSF.

Lauren Hubbard, RN Director of Community Crisis Services, Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services, gave an overview of the Crisis Mobile Integration. Children's Mobile Crisis (CMC) and Crisis Mobile Team (TMC) have officially integrated in 2023 into Milwaukee Mobile Crisis. Crisis line services are available 24/7 with partnership with IMPACT and no call goes unanswered. The main number is (414) 257-7222 but previous numbers remain in service. A full-time 3<sup>rd</sup> shift clinician was hired and there is an effort to continue to recruit to expand availability to clinicians. The goal is to have a "No Wrong Door" approach to crisis mobile response.

MKE Mobile Crisis is aiming to serve individuals who are suffering with mental health or substance abuse challenges over the phone. They provide support, screening and assessment for suicidal thoughts and ideations, crisis counseling, de-escalation, safety planning and help to connect individuals to resources. There are in-person mobile services available to work to make

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sure the setting for the individual is safe and to help with stabilization. After the initial visit, staff either call or visit to follow up to ensure the crisis is resolving or to continue to support the person if needed. MKE Mobile Crisis consists of licensed mental health professionals, registered nurses, psychologists, social workers, and bachelor level graduates in the human services field. MKE Mobile Crisis is hiring at [mkemobilecrisiscareers.com](http://mkemobilecrisiscareers.com).

Jenna Kreuzer presented that DHHS vision of integration is to center services around participants and serve people across the lifespan with care that promotes the dignity of the individual. DHHS is committed to collaborating with partners to lead to Milwaukee County becoming the healthiest County in Wisconsin.

There are two main strategies for DHHS integration plan. Strategy 1 is a No Wrong Door approach/Integrated Services and care and Strategy 2 is Population Health & System Change. Strategy 1 includes a shared intake and options counseling for several programs. There is a joint referral process that can be assessed through phone, website, email, or an internal referral. There are Options Counselors who meet with youth and guardians at a comfortable setting to listen to their story, gather supporting documents, and assist with determining enrollment decisions. There has been positive progress with the process.

The full report is available at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/mcps/Partnership-Council/minutes>

Linda Davis asked if young children were served by the re-design. Kelly Pethke answered yes, everyone is served through DHHS service areas. Linda Davis asked are children involved in child welfare automatically eligible for enrollment in the DHHS HMO. Jenna answered no, child welfare case managers can make a referral to the Resources and Referral line, or it can be court ordered to be screened. Linda asked what the average time between a court order or case manager calling for referral to a child getting approved for services. Jenna Kreuzer estimated between 45-60 days and said depending on the services there can be a wait time after enrollment. Linda Davis asked if any specific programs for young children such as Lad Lake for girls. Jenna Kreuzer replied there isn't a program in place for girls under the age of 13 currently and boys under the age of 10.

Supervisor Willie Johnson asked what the context of the suicide rate presented, was it a local or national rate and what population did the numbers reference. Lauren Hubbard answered the numbers were national rates and were not specific to youth, but the general population of people leaving in-patient and going back into the community.

Supervisor Patti Logsdon asked how the extra funding for mental health services earmarked to provide help and how does this involve the Council. Supervisor Logsdon also asked if DMCPs worked hand and hand with DHHS to provide services. Sarah Henery answered in the child welfare system the services that are typically provided are geared toward case management and family reunification, but if there is a need for mental health services, staff outreach to partners for those services. Jenna Kreuzer stated that some of the extra mental health funding went to Adult Community Access and the opioid crisis, but she cannot answer on all funding. Kelly Pethke stated this can be looked into more if there is a specific allocation that there is

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interest in. Supervisor Logsdon asked if the Council could receive more information on the Milwaukee County Mental Health Board and how the funding is being spent to help constituents. Jenna appreciated the takeaway and will work to be able to share the deliverables that are being put into place. Supervisor Logsdon asked which number constituents can call to receive direct contact to get help for a child. Jenna answered the Resource and Referral line at (414) 257-7607.

Susanna Leggio, Director of Child Welfare at Children's Wisconsin, asked how younger children with higher acute needs will be served by this redesign. Jenna Kreuzer replied that the charter is trying to come together to develop solutions, but there are no tangible options available soon. Susanna Leggio asked about the current staffing patterns and levels for mobile crisis and if there is utilization data for children involved in the child welfare system specially. Lauren Hubbard answered since the re-design they currently do not have access to the numbers of children enrolled in the child welfare system and generally, 2-4 teams are in service during the height of the day. Susanna Leggio asked if there can be more opportunity for proactive collaboration outside of youth in a state of crisis. Jenna Kreuzer answered that is something that was done historically that they would love to continue to do but staffing at this time could make that difficult. Lauren Hubbard answered that DHHS's intention and hope is professional consultation to serve more people through people calling and to assist before significant crisis arise. Lauren still encourages people to call the crisis line outside of an immediate needed response if a family would like to meet days later.

#### **DMCPS FFPSA Efforts**

This topic was not discussed at this meeting because of shortage of time. This topic will be added to August 2023 agenda.

#### **View from the Bench**

Judge Carroll stated the 5 judges who serve the child welfare system are unique. They see families in the system regularly and routinely and their observations are valuable. She shared there is a need for more foster homes. She has excitement in the proposals for support for like-kin placement and focus on mental health.

Judge Carroll shared there has been much change and movement in the judicial system. A lot of new judges have been appointed and judges are departing. Ana Berrios-Schroeder is being sworn in while Judge Triggiano is departing and will be doing restorative justice at Marquette. There were 3 judges appointed by the Governor to fill the vacancies this August related to 2 retirements and one judge appointed to the Supreme Court. Judge Carroll sent the press release related to the appointments to Sarah Henery and this info can be requested if interested. Judge Chris Foley is retiring, and his last case will be an adoption.

There is 1 more Family Court commissioner position open and anticipation of 2 more retirements within the next year. Judge Carl Ashley has been working on rotations and the budget. By local rule, there is requirement for judge rotation from a position every 4 years and

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those changes happen by August 1. Clerical Court and County Board are working on budget as well.

Supervisor Logsdon asked how the backlog is doing in Children's Court. Judge Carroll answered there is no backlog in Children's Court because of strict timelines. The backlog is only in the Criminal Division.

**Community Input**

There was no community input discussed.

**Concluding Remarks**

Chairperson Holmes thanked everyone on the informative meeting and provided encouragement to the Council to keep moving forward in the wonderful work. She expressed she looks forward to hearing what is happen in the community as she transitions from the Council. Chairperson Holmes shared that Bylaws Subcommittee meeting will occur June 26, 2023, from 10:00-11:00 via Zoom.

**Adjourn**