

Fiscal Study Conference Call
March 17, 2006
9:00-10:00 a.m.
Questions and Answers

Early On® Coordinators and Special Education Directors were invited to participate in the call. Karleen Goldhammer shared a power point presentation titled: “**Michigan Early On Early Intervention System Cost /Utilization Study Overview.**” The power point presentation can be located on the *Early On* Redesign website.

Additional questions can be sent to Karleen directly at KGoldhamm@aol.com.

Questions/Clarification:

Q. Are there additional interagency partners who would be willing to contribute money to fund the system?

A. There has been a fund analysis done as part of the Redesign effort. Interagency partners are willing to participate by agreement.

Q. In order to accommodate staff and spring break, can the forms and instructions be sent sooner, perhaps the last week in March?

A. Karleen will work individually with the larger counties to strengthen the voice; in addition they can use a 4-week window rather than a 5-week window. Currently, the letter, instructions and specific forms are expected to be mailed around April 15.

Q. A suggestion was made to look at information that a service coordinator may already have, and not waste time during the family interview. An example given was income level. If families qualify for Medicaid, information is known regarding their income and it would not need to be gathered twice.

A. Yes, this would be fine. Karleen will incorporate this into the instructions.

Q. One participant shared that her service area has great partnerships with the Health Department, ISD, and others. Appreciating how over extended they are, the question was asked how to best utilize their precious time without putting too much pressure on them.

A concerned was raised about power point slide 11, the following bullet:

- o Captures the full range of services provided to the child across practitioners.

A. Karleen believes there won't be more than 5-8 children seen on a one to one basis per day. The encounter log is done by day. There will be a minimal record for children not

enrolled in *Early On*. The encounter log will also account for driving time, administrative (paperwork) time, as well as face to face time with children and families.

Q. If a contracted OT sees just one child enrolled in *Early On* in one week, asking them to document all the other contacts they have for the week seems unnecessary. A suggestion was made to only focus on the child in *Early On* and the services that child receives.

A. Karleen is mostly concerned about their contracted time with the ISD, but she would like some sense of how *Early On* time is related to total compensated time. She is interested in the total picture of the clinician. Karleen will work more on the wording of this piece and provide clear instructions so it's not so burdensome. A follow up conference call or letter will be sent.

Q. One participant asked for an explanation of how service providers would be selected and how it relates to the 20% of the children selected.

A. Once 20% of the children are selected, everything done will be based on that group of children, which means the service providers who serve those children, will be asked to fill out encounter logs.

Q. Will the time spent attending trainings, revising documents, and doing behind the scenes work be reflected?

A. Yes, this information will be captured in the cost survey.

Q. Many of the *Early On* Coordinators have concerns about the forms and would like to offer input; can they get the forms and convene another conf call after they have looked at them?

A. Yes, Karleen has the draft forms now and *Early On* Coordinators can contact her directly, via e-mail, if they'd like them sooner. Participants on the call said this would be very helpful.

Q. When will the 30 ISD's be selected and will some ISD's be exempt due to staffing issues?

A. Yes, requests will be considered.

Q. Referral costs are sky-rocketing; will costs for referral be documented?

A. Yes, referral costs will be accounted for and recognized as an early intervention cost.

Mischele McManus from the Michigan Department of Education shared that DHS and DCH will be sending the same fiscal letter to their local counterparts, asking them to participate as well.

Additional Questions/Clarification from 3/20/06 Conference call:

Q. Is there a process in place for obtaining family release of the information?

A. This issue was discussed by the Fiscal Task Force. It was agreed that if the child has a current information release, it will cover this study. However, a short description of the study could be drafted for sharing with families. While service areas could choose to ask parents to sign an additional release, it is not necessary. Karleen does need to collect information based on child name so that she can match information from different sources. None of the child specific data will go past Solutions.

Q. Would a practioner from another agency without a contract be asked to complete an encounter log if the service were on the IFSP?

A. Yes, the Department of Community Health and the Department of Social Services are each sending out letters to their locals to ask for their participation in the Cost/Utilization Study.

Q. Who's responsibility will it be to get the data from the other agencies?

A. Solutions is looking for different methods for contacting them for data because it would not be fair to ask *Early On* Coordinators or Service Coordinators to do it.

Q. The sample size of 20% of current IFSPs seems higher than what would be minimally statistically relevant. Why?

A. Karleen wants to make sure that she gets a large enough sample the first time she collects data. She does not want to have to come back and ask for additional data. She feels that 10% is too low, especially for small ISDs and that 20% is large enough to give most ISDs a good picture of what is happening for them locally. However, Karleen would consider adjusting the sample size for very large ISDs.

Q. Will the forms necessary for the Utilization Study be available electronically?

A. Yes, the forms will be available to download and print or to use in Excel to enter data. However, there will be no ability to enter data on a website.

Q. What will happen with the files when the study is completed?

A. Solutions will keep the files as long as is required by law and will be destroyed after 7 years.

Q. Could we have the website to look at the draft forms?

A. Yes, it is www.solutionsofmaine.com. Go to Customer Links. User name is Michigan and password is Petoskey. Once finalized the forms will be available on the *Early On* Redesign website, www.earlyonredesign.com.

Q. Will the Study include a look at in-kind provided by partners?

A. Yes.

Q. When will we be notified of participation in the Cost Study?

A. You can let me know now if you are or are not willing to participate. Karleen will take preference into account to get a bigger sample size. She will have the sample completed within 10 days. She will over-select to ensure enough participants. She will notify ISDs by the first of April if they have been selected.

Q. I am requesting that you look at costs besides just for direct service, including state level costs and the cost of evaluating children who do not become eligible for *Early On*. It seems like in the past few years those at the local level have been forced to spend more time on training and forms than ever before.

A. Karleen believes that we will get to those costs. On the *Early On* Redesign website there is a PowerPoint that Karleen presented to the Fiscal Study Task Force on August 22. It includes a pyramid of costs that will be looked at through the Study.

Q. How will the Study account for family no-shows and time spent trying to track down referred families who do not want to see you?

A. Because we are not doing the 15-minute interval time study, we will only be able to tell the face to face time, paperwork, and travel time versus total time.