

Region 9 Social Services Directors Planning Session - May 1, 2009 - Meeting Notes

Synopsis:

Region 9 Social Services Directors held a special planning session on May 1, 2009 to begin exploring opportunities for inter-county alliances for the delivery of human services. Directors intend to build on their past experience with regional efforts. They also want to do so within the context of the Legislative decisions regarding regionalization of human services.

Potential service areas for joint efforts were identified and prioritized. Nine of 24 services were identified for the next step of assessment and preliminary planning. Directors were assigned to lead the next level of discussion for six service areas. These "Leads" are expected to report back on their progress and findings at the June 19th planning session of Region 9 Directors.

Planning Context:

The Region 9 Social Services Directors have a history of inter-county cooperation and collaboration. Directors met to develop plans for engaging in active dialog about developing additional collaborative ventures. This interest is driven by declining revenues requiring economizing in the delivery of services, county board requests for budget cuts, and the proposals under consideration at the state level for regionalizing human services delivery. In addition, at least 3 counties from Region 9 are participating in the Region 10 directors efforts to increase inter-county agreements for services delivery. These counties will need to determine if they will join the Region 10 alliances.

Lessons Learned:

Some of Region 9's past collaborations have been resulted from lack of resources, such as in the area of psych services. Others have had financial or technical support incentives that have helped create incentives and opportunities for collaborative efforts.

The lessons learned include:

- Willing partners are key.
- Voluntary cooperation works best.
- Conflicts are inevitable.
- It won't work if there is not real interest
- There is some loss of local control and authority so some counties are willing to spend more to have control over the level of services in their communities.
- It is important to keep things within a manageable scope.
- Planning cannot be allowed to go on and on.
- It is important for everyone to have some "skin in the game".
- Decision-making is easier with smaller scale projects.
- A regional structure will require structure and oversight.
- More access and better services can result from inter-county collaborations.

Framework for Planning Inter-county Alliances:

Efficiency, quality and specialization are needed, especially for low-volume services

Clients want services provided as close to home as possible.

Technology can be used to improve service delivery.

Quality and choice...something verses nothing...high touch verses low touch services.

Planning must be around the reality of our human and financial resources.

Each county wants to maintain its autonomy and identify.

Concerns:

What will the legislature do with regionalization? Will we have choices?

How do we get the leadership, time and resources to lead collaborative efforts?

How do we access technology expertise for service delivery?

Will we end up creating another layer of administration?

How can we keep this as simple as possible?

How can liabilities be shared?

What will happen to reserves?

Can collaboration be done without new money?

Can collaboration happen within the current tax levy?

Services to Consider:

- 1- Regional Child Support
- 2- LTC Eligibility
- 3- Regional Billing
- 4- Regional Collections
- 5- Regional Licensing
- 6- CD Services
- 7- Out-of-home Placements
- 8- Regional Contracting
- 9- Regional Guardianship
- 10- DD Services
- 11- Psych Services
- 12- Planning Services
- 13- MSCHO/EW Services
- 14- Family-based Services
- 15- Health Care Access Plan
- 16- Employment Services
- 17- Regional Supervision
- 18- Child Protection: Investigate/Assess
- 19- Waivered Case Management
- 20- Inter-County Client Transportation
- 21- Child Safety Seat Training
- 22- Background Checks
- 23- Minor Parent Case Management
- 24- Concurrent Permanency Planning

Options for Inter-County Alliances:

Directors observed that every service currently being provided could be considered for inter-county collaborations. Table 1 summarizes the list of services identified. Directors assessed and discussed each service area, and then nominated which services should be considered at this point in time. Table 2 has the list of the nine prioritized services and the assignments made for leading discussions and preliminary planning for six of these services. It should be noted that the examination of collaborative options for Child Support will be done on behalf of both Region 9 and Region 10 Social Services Directors.

The table on the next page summarizes the prioritized list of services and assignments made for leading the next phase of feasibility and preliminary planning.

Priority for Planning	Assigned to Lead:
Easiest to Do:	
3- Regional Billing 11- Psych Services 15- Health Care Access Plan	Bob, Rich, Warren, John Hanson Phil Joan
Most Impact or Most Savings:	
1- Regional Child Support 5- Regional Licensing 7- Out-of-Home Placement 8- Regional Contracting 12- Planning Services 20- Inter-county Transportation	Brian, Mark and Supervisors** -- No assignment made to lead Tom, Phil and Mark Marilee and Sue R. -- No assignment made to lead -- No assignment made to lead

Assignments for June 19th Meeting:

Directors are to report back on preliminary recommendations for each of the six service areas identified for inter-county collaboration. In addition:

- 1- Review the guiding principles developed by Region 10 and bring a list of key principles and values that should guide Region 9 planning.
- 2- For each of the nine services areas, be prepared to identify:
 - o What would be the ideal for your county?
 - What would you like to have have (acceptable level)?
 - What must you have or must be avoided?

Next meeting:

Friday, June 19th - Blue Earth County Social Services.