

New York City Citizen Review Panel

Tuesday February 8, 2005.

10:00 A.M. – 12:00

Meeting Notes

Attendance

David Lansner

Eric Brettschneider

Jocelyn Brown

Sania Metzger

Marion White

OCFS Staff – Thomas Hess, OCFS Liaison

Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy Staff – Diane Mastin, Panel Coordinator

Location: Lansner & Kubitschek, New York City

Handouts: Information on the Michigan response model
AARP Legislative Update on Kinship bill signed by the Governor

Meeting was called to order at 10:00 am and began with introductions. Panel members and co-chairs expressed their enthusiasm and support for the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy (SCAA) as the new contractor to support the work of each of the three New York State panels. Once a contract is finalized and signed, the effective date of the contract will be made retroactive to February 1, 2005. The contract will run for up to five years, with yearly renewals. SCAA will do what is necessary to meet federal mandates for the panels during this transitional period but cannot devote too many resources to panel work until a contract is finalized.

Panel members discussed staffing needs, roles, and relationships concluding that:

- 1) While they do not surrender their power, they do look to SCAA staff to offer structure and advice as to how to proceed.
- 2) They do need research with data broken down by a variety of parameters so that areas of concern can be identified and suggestions made for targeted remedies.
- 3) They look to SCAA to link communications between NYS panels and to coordinate legislative efforts.

Discussion centered on a number of ideas for the panel's work during the 2005 year. Panel members agreed that 2005 meetings should focus on a few issues at most and lead to activity such as hearings that raise awareness and build towards legislative change. They are interested in long-term goals but need short-term doable projects to make progress towards those goals.

The panel asked for copies of all reports from OCFS relevant to child protective services. There was agreement that panel members should be aware of the other advisory committees and receive minutes from these meetings. Panel members may also have the ability to attend selected meetings as a guest. SCAA will work to facilitate obtaining this information.

Ideas suggested for 2005 include:

- Dual Track legislation
 - A) A focus on dual track can lead to improved quality of service, can positively impact disproportionality and can increase attention paid to prevention services. Key points:
 - Agreement that system is overbroad and disproportionate in regards to race, economic status, and other factors
 - Hearings could help address substantive issues

- System could lead to savings put into quality assessments and evaluation of the effectiveness of autonomous reporting.

B) Suggested actions:

- 1) bring in speaker who has done this well in another state,
- 2) create a piece that addresses this conceptually,
- 3) address concerns/objections that others such as Mattingly have about dual track, and/or
- 4) investigate the role money plays in moving dual track forward.

- **Anonymous reporting**

Needed are

- 1) an assessment of the quality of mandated reporting as to reliability and effectiveness
- 2) a literature review.

Their questions: Are doctors better reporters than some other groups? Which reports/reporters lead to indicated cases? How do educational neglect cases vary? Are there any racial differences as to number of medical tests ordered? How is the term “inadequate guardianship” defined?

- **Standards for home alone**

Need to define standards and to educate parents on them. Issue could lead to public hearings.

- **Disproportionality**

Suggested actions:

- 1) Encourage an application from NY to the Casey Family for an upcoming initiative to investigate the ability to eliminate race as a factor in services. Casey will be identifying 14 sites for this work. Panel members will be informed when the RFP comes out.

- 2) Encourage the work of minority agencies which have sustained loss to their infrastructure and are likely to go out of business first. There is a need for a definition as to what constitutes a minority-controlled agency followed by an investigation as to the resources are needed to support them.

- **Quality of services**

Panel is interested in practical changes that will lead to better investigations, better interviews, good assessments, and better services to children. Must reach the front line worker with education and encourage more teamwork on cases. High turnover rates are an indication of disfunctionality. Panel decided that quality issues are strongly linked to dual tract.

- **CAPTA review to maintain eligibility.** Panel is required to review every 5 years.

Conclusion: Panel members agreed to focus on Dual Track legislation as a means to pursue remedies for disproportionality, quality issues, and concerns that the system is over broad. The panel will use vehicles such as hearings to progress towards a year-end report that will propose specific suggestions to overcome concerns with the system.

Meeting closed at 12:00 noon.

Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, March 3, 2005, 10 a.m. to 12 noon at the Bronfman Center. Members will be surveyed to see if an earlier start time is possible.