



NETWORK ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE 2024



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

DCYF does not discriminate and provides equal access to its programs and services for all persons without regard to race, color, gender, religion, creed, marital status, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, age, sexual orientation or gender identity, veteran or military status, status as a breastfeeding mother, and the presence of any physical, sensory, or mental disability or use of a dog guide or service animal.

If you would like free copies of this publication in an alternative format or language, please contact DCYF Constituent Relations at 1-800-723-4831 or email communications@dcyf.wa.gov.

Original Date: Aug. 30, 2024 | Revised Date: January 10, 2025

Partnership, Prevention and Services Division | Approved for distribution by Vickie Ybarra, Assistant Secretary

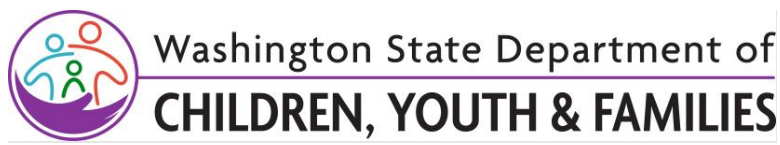


Table of Contents

Abstract..... 2

 Background..... 2

 Network Administrator Contract Renewal and Quality Improvement Efforts 3

 CQI Data..... 4

Development and Planning..... 7

 Summary 9

Abstract

In compliance with [RCW 74.13B.020](#), the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) submits this report to the DCYF Oversight Board and the Washington State Legislature to provide an update on the status of the Network Administrator (NA) procurement and implementation.

“Beginning January 1, 2019, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.[036](#), the department shall annually submit to the DCYF Oversight Board established pursuant to RCW [43.216.015](#) and the appropriate committees of the legislature a report detailing the status of the network administrator procurement and implementation process.”

As the Network Administrator is still a relatively new concept and protocol, DCYF has not completed an impact evaluation of the Network Administrator model. However, this year data produced for CQI purposes are available for Family Time and Combined in-Home Services statewide. These data are presented in this report and will help inform future impact evaluation of the Network Administrator model.

Background

In 2015, DCYF developed the inaugural procurement for a Network Administrator in direct support and response to RCW 74.13B.020, Family Support and Related Services-Performance-based Contracting. The Network Administrator is a community agency which acts as an intermediary and provides a service network to cover specified catchment areas within the State via direct employees or through sub-contracting sources. The Network Administrator should provide high quality service provision while offering oversight, support, management, monitoring, and enhancement of the contracted services.

DCYF awarded [Family Impact Network](#) (FIN) the Network Administrator contract for [Family Time Visitation Services](#) (FT) in Region 1 (Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille, Lincoln, Spokane, Whitman, Garfield, Asotin, Okanogan, Chelan, Douglas, Grant, and Adams Counties). Family Time services provide court-ordered parent/child or sibling visits for children placed in out-of-home care and in the custody of DCYF. Between 2017 and 2018, DCYF began contracting with FIN to provide Network Administrator services for both [Combined In-home Services](#) (CIHS) and FT in Region 1. CIHS helps children and caregivers involved in the child welfare system by delivering evidence-based programs, family preservation, and crisis intervention services with timely service initiation in order to prevent placements, support adoptions, achieve placement stability and/or reunification in support of DCYF’s goals to safely reduce the number of children in out-of-home care and entries/re-entries into child welfare.

In 2019, DCYF expanded the NA model to serve Region 2 (Yakima, Klickitat, Benton, Franklin, Walla Walla, Columbia, and Kittitas Counties). In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted CIHS and Family Time service lines. For a limited duration, CIHS providers paused operation while Family Time transitioned to a virtual platform. Additionally, in 2020, DCYF began

Original Date: Aug. 30, 2024 | Revised Date: January 10, 2025

Partnership, Prevention and Services Division | Approved for dist. by Vickie Ybarra, Asst Secretary

implementing HB 1194 with the intent of strengthening parent-child visitation during child welfare proceedings. In 2021, the Network Administrator introduced Emergent Family Time Service that allows a first visit to occur within 72 hours.

Network Administrator Contract Renewal and Quality Improvement Efforts

In April 2023, following procurement, DCYF again awarded FIN the Network contract for Family Time and CIHS in Regions 1 and 2. The new contract was effective as of July 1, 2023, and included enhanced oversight of network providers performance, deliverables, and building capacity identified in catchment areas. DCYF added expectations in the updated contract language around direct management of service referrals and assignments to network providers based on capacity and family match.

Monthly steering committee meetings occur with FIN and DCYF to review deliverables, communicate issues or barriers, and collaborate on solutions between agencies. In July 2024, the Network Administrator contract was renewed after considerable negotiations and updates to clarify the Network Administrator's requirements for oversight and monitoring of their service network of CIHS and Family Time providers.

In Fall 2023, DCYF requested the Network Administrator to provide data on CIHS capacity, expansion, and recruitment strategies while emphasizing the need for alternatives for recruitment in rural and/or remote areas where DCYF experiences service shortages. The Network Administrator provided a collection of historical and current activities attempted and in practice for CIHS recruitment as well as a variety of expanded plans for the recruitment of new subcontracted providers. Although the Network Administrator has been deploying additional recruitment strategies for CIHS, they face similar challenges that are experienced statewide, such as finding qualified individuals and agencies that are willing to accept DCYF's reimbursement rate, and the challenge of employing staff in areas of the state where providers may not receive sufficient referrals to support a full FTE. Recruitment success in rural areas across the state has proven especially challenging and the Network Administrator recruitment has not shown an obvious benefit or recruitment increase in these areas of need.

DCYF requested the Network Administrator to provide their Quality Assurance (QA) and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) strategies in Fall 2023. In April 2024, the Network Administrator provided their training plan and Quarter 1 QA report. The information was limited to what training(s) occurred and who participated and a QA overview. The Network Administrator regularly provides DCYF program staff CIHS capacity data and information on referrals. There are ongoing service gaps that are primarily highlighted in the more rural areas of Regions 1 and 2. This is an issue in rural areas statewide. Tracking service utilization data has been limited due to platform and technology barriers within DCYF.

The Network Administrator has achieved some success in collecting and providing data on service utilization in its catchment areas in comparison to providers in Western Washington. Moving

Original Date: Aug. 30, 2024 | Revised Date: January 10, 2025

Partnership, Prevention and Services Division | Approved for dist. by Vickie Ybarra, Asst Secretary

through 2024, the CIHS QA/CQI contractual standards outline a requirement for quarterly data reporting in a format designed by DCYF. This will be completed by all providers statewide allowing DCYF access to consistent data. This will be utilized in conjunction with other data sets provided by the Network Administrator as well as internal DCYF data for ongoing assessment of service delivery, service referrals, and network management.

CQI Data

DCYF's Office of Innovation Alignment and Accountability ([OIAA](#)) currently receives Family Time and CIHS data from the [Sprout](#) portal. These data are being used to inform CQI efforts and develop [Performance Based Contracting \(PBC\)](#) data dashboards for both the Family Time and CIHS service lines. DCYF's agency-wide PBC initiative is based on requirements in the agency's founding legislation (HB 1661, 2017). As a part of this initiative, each contracted client service line in DCYF has developed/is developing service, quality, and outcome metrics that are used as a basis for CQI requirements, as well as the development of PBC data dashboards. Additionally, OIAA is working to develop a CIHS service take-up report that will include data to include service referral utilization that will support analysis of CIHS.

For CY 2023, OIAA collected and analyzed statewide CQI data on quality indicators for Family Time and CIHS contracted services and outcomes. The data were broken down by region and provide a comparison of metrics between the Network Administrator model in Eastern Washington (Regions 1 and 2) and Western Washington (Regions 3-6) where individual contractors provide client services along with DCYF programmatic oversight and involvement.

This analysis of CQI data for services provided in CY 2023 found that the service and quality metrics for Family Time were similar in Western- and Eastern-Washington (see Table A). There are two metrics for referral acceptance:

- Initial Provider Acceptance: Percentage of initial referral acceptance by the Network Administrator Providers (Eastern Washington 61.8%) and individual contracted service providers (Western Washington 77.6%).
- Overall Provider Acceptance: Percentage of all referrals ultimately accepted by Network Administrator Network Providers (Eastern Washington 88.1%) and Contracted Service Providers (Western Washington 90.7%). The lower acceptance percentage for the Network Administrator does not seem to impact the time it takes for the first visit to occur compared to the Western Washington regions.

The percentage of missed visits among those scheduled were slightly more in Eastern Washington (33.2%) than in Western Washington, (30.9%). The percentage of all referrals that did not receive a visit, substantially more in Eastern Washington (33.1%) compared with Western Washington (23.5%).

Original Date: Aug. 30, 2024 | Revised Date: January 10, 2025

Partnership, Prevention and Services Division | Approved for dist. by Vickie Ybarra, Asst Secretary

The average duration of time for a family to receive the first visit was essentially identical for 72-hour emergent visits (1.7 days) and ongoing visits (7.5 days for Eastern Washington compared with 7.6 days for Western Washington).

Finally, the analysis also examined the reasons for missed visits, to help inform improvement efforts. In both Eastern and Western Washington the most common reason for missed visits was cancellation with less than 24 hour notice (53.9% and 49.5% respectively).

Table A. Comparison CQI Metrics for Family Time, CY 2023

Metric	Eastern WA	Western WA
Initial Provider Acceptance Rate %	61.8	77.6
Overall Provider Acceptance Rate %	88.1	90.7
% Missed Visits	33.2	30.9
% Referrals w/No Visits	33.1	23.5
Time to First Visit (avg days)		
72-hour	1.7	1.7
Ongoing	7.5	7.6
% Missed Reason		
Cancelled (<24 hrs.)	53.9	49.5
Cancelled (>24 hrs.)	19	19
No Show	27.1	31.5

The DCYF OIAA analysis of CY 2023 CIHS data showed similar results (see Table B). The percentage of completed Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment [CANS](#)¹ was higher in Eastern Washington (85.2%) than in Western Washington (76.7%). The identified proximal client outcomes for CIHS PBC logic model are placement prevention, placement stability, and reunification. Data to measure these indicators are also included in Table B below. Reunification within six months after services among families served with children in out-of-home care was slightly higher in Western Washington (21%) compared with Eastern Washington (19%). The absence of child removal within six months after services was essentially the same in Eastern and Western Washington (90% and 90.6% respectively). Finally, the absence of an intake within six months after services was higher in Eastern Washington (69%) compared with Western Washington (65.3%).

¹ For more information, see: ["WACANSFumber20152322.pdf"](#)

Table B. Comparison CQI Metrics for Combined In-Home Services, CY 2023

Metric	Eastern WA	Western WA
CANS-F Completion	85.2	76.7
Reunification within 6 months %		
Yes	19	21
No	81	79
No Removal within 6 months %		
Yes	90	90.6
No	10	9.4
No Intake within 6 months %		
Yes	69	65.3
No	31	34.7

It should be noted that the CQI data above represent the first ever reporting of CQI data for Family Time and CIHS programs. As always, CQI data are produced for the purpose of performance improvement and not for the purpose of impact evaluation. Given there are no comparable baseline data available from prior to CY 2023, caution should be taken in attributing causation to the apparent lack of large differences between Eastern and Western Washington providers. DCYF staff and contractors have already undertaken improvement efforts based on these data, and we anticipate that CY 2024 data will show some improvement in some indicators. 2024 data will be reported in DCYF’s 2025 report.

Finally, to better understand Family Time and CIHS satisfaction with services across the regions, DCYF program staff conducted a survey of DCYF caseworkers and the Network Administrator sub-contracted service providers. The satisfaction survey asked specific questions, scoring by a 0-5 range (with 0=no satisfaction and 5=greatly satisfied). Scored responses showed essentially a bell-shaped curve, the majority occurring in the “3” range. The average total score for all questions answered by DCYF caseworkers was (2.93) for Family Time visit contractor performance and (2.97) for CIHS contractor performance. The Network Administrator network of contracted providers has an overall average score for Family Time visits (2.3) and was CIHS (2.8). On Sept. 3, 2024, the data comparisons and satisfaction survey were communicated and discussed with the Network Administrator.

When looking at the number of sub-contractors the Network Administrator maintains by the regions covered compared to DCYF for the rest of the state, the counts are not substantially different. Many contractors serve multiple regions therefore, the individual regional counts are much higher than the unduplicated count. There are 59 unduplicated Family Time contracted providers for visitation services for regions 1-6. There are 23 Network Administrator Family Time

contractors for Region 1 and 2, only two of those contractors also have contracts with DCYF for Family Time in other regions. There are 59 unduplicated CIHS contracted providers for Regions 1-6. There are 29 Network Administrator CIHS contractors for Regions 1 and 2, with three of those contractors also contracting with DCYF in Western Washington.

Table C. Number of Family Time Contractors by Region

Region	Contractors
1	14 (Network Administrator subcontractors)
2	9 (Network Administrator subcontractors)
3	24
4	27
5	19
6	15

Table D. Number of CIHS Contractors by Region

Region	Contractors
1	16 (Network Administrator subcontractors)
2	13 (Network Administrator subcontractors)
3	6
4	6
5	6
6	12

Development and Planning

The Network Administrator CIHS Providers complete an annual QA plan to address the following QA elements:

- Cultural humility approach to serving families
- Family assessment and use of family voice in the intervention,
- Engagement and motivation of families served, as measured by the number of families that successfully engage in the Family Plan for Change
- Timeliness of service delivery and reports submitted to DCYF Social Service Specialists. P

Providers statewide have shared that the QA plan should be revisited for updates and improvements. DCYF is currently planning to host a series of workgroups to identify potential updates and improvements. The Network Administrator will be responsible for implementing and overseeing their subcontractors' performance on the QA plan(s) and activities and will report findings to DCYF.

Original Date: Aug. 30, 2024 | Revised Date: January 10, 2025

Partnership, Prevention and Services Division | Approved for dist. by Vickie Ybarra, Asst Secretary

Since the initial contract with DCYF, the Network Administrator has maintained a data dashboard (using data from their Agiloft system) for a level of QA/CQI monitoring and currently distributes provider and referral data to DCYF programmatic staff. The dashboard provides ongoing reports on Region 1 and Region 2 Family Time and CIHS data metrics, including number of referrals received, denial rate, denial reason, and re-referrals. However, this data only allows the Network Administrator to compare their network of providers to the Network Administrator overall data (Region and 1 and 2). The dashboard assists in ensuring financial responsibility with CIHS referrals and services while monitoring the number of referrals for a family, prior to adding simultaneous and multiple/additional CIHS services in a home.

DCYF is working with Sprout Developers to implement a data dashboard for FT visitation services. Sprout is the system of record specified in contracts for both Family Time and CIHS. Sprout will provide and maintain outcome data for individual contracted agencies. The anticipated data produced can be shared with individual contracted providers, DCYF, and the Network Administrator supporting ongoing QA/CQI efforts for each contractor. DCYF will have access to the same data metrics by contractor, regionally, or statewide allowing comparisons, improving both the Network Administrator and DCYF's ability to review data for QA/CQI, and support performance improvement efforts. Potentially, the Network Administrator could gather the same type of data for their network of providers for CQI/QA purposes. Improving the performance of contracted services while supporting DCYF with CQI/QA efforts to better position future recommendations for service expansion is an overarching goal. The data measured by this dashboard aligns with DCYF PBC metrics.

The 2024 Network Administrator Scope of Work was amended to further increase the QA/CQI requirements specific to Family Time. This builds upon the previous year (2023) additional QA/CQI requirements to the Network Administrator contract and was part of the procurement. These changes added more responsibility for the Network Administrator to hold their network of service providers accountable for QA/CQI. DCYF further clarified for the Network Administrator the metrics they needed to review with their network. This included the PBC quantitative data and the qualitative information to improve the Family Time providers visitation services. The Network Administrator reviews visit reports, for quality of service and as a check and balance with service billing. The Network Administrator also monitors service providers supervision of employees or contracted service workers. This enables the Network Administrator to have more oversight into each networks agency's own QA/CQI efforts and move toward more consistent service provision.

Through 2024, DCYF CIHS and OIAA staff continue to work together to build a PBC dashboard utilizing PBC service, quality and outcome metrics. PBC dashboards are a tool for internal DCYF program staff and contract service providers to review data, progress to targets and drive high quality services. The creation of the PBC CIHS dashboard will allow contracted service providers

Original Date: Aug. 30, 2024 | Revised Date: January 10, 2025

Partnership, Prevention and Services Division | Approved for dist. by Vickie Ybarra, Asst Secretary

to work towards achieving performance based contracting results while focusing on continuous improvement together.

Summary

DCYF will continue to enhance the comparison of CQI data and review over the past year and will continue to collaborate with the Network Administrator to enhance the model with the implementation of new dashboards. DCYF hopes to build on the CQI data over time to help inform a more comprehensive impact evaluation in future. CY 2023 CQI data show that performance on quality and outcome metrics is substantially similar between Eastern and Western Washington. DCYF will continue to focus on the QA/CQI efforts for the Network Administrator and link these efforts to quality outcomes to inform statewide service delivery. The increased QA/CQI requirements in the Network Administrator contract will help inform DCYF of the Network Administrator model effectiveness and potential future iterations of the model as well as future Agency Request Legislation that may be needed to RCW 74.13B.020.

Currently, DCYF receives \$2.4 million annually under proviso for the administrative functioning of the Network Administrator model. This administrative funding is in addition to the CIHS and FT expenditures for service delivery in Eastern Washington. In Western Washington, this work is delivered by state staff who conduct service referral and coordination as part of other duties, making a cost comparison difficult. As DCYF continues to review enhancement of the QA/CQI efforts and Network Administrator model effectiveness, we will continue to attempt to evaluate statewide costs and administrative functions. DCYF continues to hold children, youth, and families at the center of service delivery and future adjustments will be made with client outcomes as the driving force.