

**Agenda Item 3
March 2, 2016**

DATE: February 24, 2016

TO: Children and Families Commission of Orange County

FROM: Christina Altmayer, Executive Director 

SUBJECT: Prevention and Early Intervention

ACTION: Receive status report on the Neighborhood Resource Network/Prevention and Early Intervention Program

SUMMARY:

During Fiscal Year 2015/16 the Children and Families Commission of Orange County approved \$525,000 of round two catalytic funding to support the evaluation and implementation of the Neighborhood Resource Network program, formerly known as Prevention and Early Intervention Program. The two-year pilot program targets families with at least one child age 0-5, who had an initial Child Abuse Registry report, and based on assessment by County of Orange Social Service Agency (SSA) staff, would not receive further services. The purpose of the program is to engage eligible families into voluntary, evidence-based family strengthening services with the ultimate intent of reducing substantiated child abuse. Consistent with a Pay for Success model, the program is constructed to provide success payments to the providers for engagement of families, completion of services, and avoidance of a substantiated child abuse report within six months of service completion. The evaluation for this program was developed by USC School of Social Work, Children's Data Network and includes a randomized controlled trial design, the gold standard of research and evaluation. This staff report includes an a status report the program implementation and potential grant support.

DISCUSSION:

The Neighborhood Resource Network program, formerly known as Prevention and Early Intervention Program, is set to begin receiving referrals from the Social Service Agency (SSA) at the end of March. Children's Home Society, the administrative hub, is working closely with all partners to ensure that agreements allowing for the exchange of confidential child abuse reports have been executed. Additionally, each community service provider is completing necessary training regarding mandated child abuse reporting, confidentiality protocols, data collection and reporting and use of the family assessment tool. The North Carolina Family Assessment Survey has been selected as the validated pre and post tool to measure changes in family functioning.

Children's Home Society, in partnership with the Commission and the community service providers, has finalized a payment schedule that implements a Pay for Success structure. Success payments will be made to community service providers for successful outcomes, such as engagement of families into services, retention of families through the completion of services, and achievement of the program goal, which is to reduce substantiated reports of child abuse or maltreatment six months post service completion.

Additionally, Dr. Emily Putnam Hornstein and her team at the USC School of Social Work, Children's Data Network have completed the evaluation design funded by the Commission. Through a randomized controlled trial, Dr. Putnam Hornstein will: 1) Independently, determine the extent to which community-based services measurably reduce rates of child maltreatment; and, 2) measure the impact of specific elements of the intervention on referral rates, willingness of families to participate in services, and program completion rate. Dr. Hornstein and her team have actively participated in the community service provider trainings and have been providing technical assistance to Commission staff regarding design of the program.

Commission staff has continued to explore opportunities to fund the evaluation and expand our implementation of the Pay for Success model within this program. Commission staff has been working with a program officer from the Laura and John Arnold Foundation since July 2015 to inform them of the evaluation design. The Arnold Foundation is particularly interested in investing in low-cost randomized controlled trials that build evidence around policy research that can help drive effective social spending and invited the Commission to submit a proposal for the Neighborhood Resource Network Program evaluation. Staff completed the proposal and anticipates receiving feedback in mid March.

Additionally, staff has submitted an application to the Institute for Child Success for Pay for Success technical assistance. The Institute for Child Success is a recipient of a national grant designed to expand the use of Pay for Success financing as a means of driving government resources toward evidence-based social programs that prove effective at achieving results for the people who need them most. Commission staff has designed the Neighborhood Resource Network program using a Pay for Success structure that links payment to providers for achieving targeted outcomes. The long-term sustainability of this intervention is dependent on the ability to achieve these outcomes and refine a Pay for Success program funding model. Commission staff completed an application requesting technical assistance from the Institute of Child Success, with funding decisions anticipated in April 2016.

STRATEGIC PLAN & FISCAL SUMMARY:

The proposed project has been specifically reviewed in relation to the Strategic Plan and is consistent with the Commission Strong Families goal area. Five hundred thousand dollars has been allocated from Round 2 Catalytic Funding and unspent funding from Fiscal Year 2014/15. Additionally, \$25,000 to support the evaluation design has been allocated from unspent funds in Fiscal Year 2014/15.

PRIOR COMMISSION ACTIONS:

- October 2015 – Approved Funding for Program Implementation
- July 2015 – Approved evaluation design
- April 2015 – Program Update
- December 2014 – Approved release of the Request for Proposal
- October 2014 – Released contingency on Title 4E waiver and confirmation of prevention early intervention scope

- January 2013 – Programmatic update and funding set aside
- March 2012 – Funding Allocation as part of the Round 2 Catalytic Investment

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Receive status report on the Neighborhood Resource Network/Prevention and Early Intervention Program.

Contact: Kim Goll