

Children's Special Health Services
Report to the Developmental Disabilities Council
June 2008

Children's Special Health Services recently finished our portion of the MCH Block grant which is due July 14 and will be defended in Austin in August. Children's Special Health Services receives one third of the grant, which provides 53% federal funding with a 47% state match, and is the major source of funding for CSHS activities. The grant has a five year cycle which began in 2005. At the beginning of every cycle we conduct a statewide Needs Assessment, which, along with our National Performance Measures, is the basis for selecting State Performance Measures and CSHS activities for the next five years. At this point in time we are in the middle of our grant cycle.

CSHS is currently re-piloting our care coordination program in the CSHS clinic in Region I. The training is going well. Results of this pilot will be presented at our statewide conference in Lafayette in October, with anticipation of statewide expansion over the next two years.

Our Tigercare Clinic Care Coordination project was presented at the Louisiana Healthcare Quality Forum's Medical Home Summit on May 23 in Baton Rouge to over 100 invited policy makers. The presentation was a success, and can be viewed along with all of the other presentations, on their website at www.lhcqf.org. It is also summarized in their Spring 2008 Progress Report under local demonstration projects. Our data demonstrated how a care coordinator in a pediatric medical home can result in overwhelmingly increased satisfaction with the practice in families of children with special needs. Unfortunately, the week before the presentation the care coordinator, who was going to assume a statewide supervisory role for care coordinators, moved to Atlanta. We are hoping to fill both the care coordinator position for Tigercare and the state supervisory position soon.

Louisiana Birth Defects Monitoring Network has now expanded to cover Region IV as well, bringing the potential coverage to 70% of births in the state. A resource guide for families has been developed and will be mailed to families of infants with birth defects detected in the registry later this year. This program is still seeking state funding to expand coverage to 100% of births over the next two years, which is necessary to provide statewide statistics of the incidence of specific birth defects.

The program has also collaborated in a gastroschisis investigation in Region IV. Gastroschisis is a condition where the baby is born with the intestines outside of the body, requiring immediate surgery after birth. There were 10-15 cases in Region IV within a short period of time, but upon epidemiologic investigation, no common cause could be found for the cases and it was questioned whether this was really above the normal incidence. The incidence has been steadily increasing nationally. Having a statewide registry will facilitate detection of "clusters" of conditions such as this which can help elucidate causes which may be preventable.

Hearing, Speech and Vision provided 324 audiology/ speech visits in the first quarter of 2008 and issued 48 hearing aids to CSHS eligible children. In 2008 the program screened over 96% of infants born in Louisiana for hearing loss at birth., and hospital visits were made to 47 birthing hospitals for quality control and technical assistance purposes. Two contracted Vision Specialists trained over 333 professionals and volunteers in vision screening for pre-school and school age children in the first quarter of 2008.

The program has received notice that two federal grants that support the program, one from CDC and one from MCHB, were both approved for funding for the 2009 federal fiscal year.

Central office for all three CSHS programs was flooded on June 4 because of a sprinkler failure at 1010 Common. Water saturated the CSHS offices, other program offices on the 6th floor and three floors below us as well, requiring evacuation for a little over a week. We are still unpacking boxes and resettling after this interruption in our work.