

California Part C On-Site Visit

June 13-15, 2017

DMS Area: Results/SSIP

DMS Designation: Intensive

Background:

On October 31, 2016, OSEP issued the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) a Differentiated Monitoring and Support (DMS) document that specified engagement activities that OSEP would conduct with the State across five areas: results, compliance, State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), child find, and fiscal. Under Results, OSEP gave CA a designation of intensive engagement for performance outcomes for infants and toddlers in the areas of positive social relationships, knowledge and skill and actions to meet needs based on the FFY 2014 data reported in the State's Annual Performance Report (APR). A designation of intensive was given for the SSIP based on a late submission of the Phase II plan, missing FFY 2014 data for the State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR), as well as missing or incomplete information in the plan for the requirement components of evidence-based practices, evaluation and stakeholder engagement. In March 2017, OSEP reviewed a draft of the Phase III, Year 1 SSIP submission, due on April 3, 2017 and provided feedback to CA Part C staff on some of the content and level of detail included in the report. OSEP leadership determined that an on-site visit would be an effective engagement activity to support the efforts of the early intervention program to improve child outcomes for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. The final site visit agenda included a focus on the SSIP.

Visit Summary

OSEP engaged with representatives of CA Part C's leadership to discuss the strategies and activities of the Part C program to implement and evaluate the SSIP and agree on next steps specific to the three child outcomes for results. The CA officials that provided information and responded to questions from OSEP included staff from DDS. Also participating in the discussion were staff from two technical assistance (TA) centers: the National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI), and a TA provider that works closely with the State.

Data Reviewed

Child outcomes data submitted for FFY 2015 could not be discussed during the site visit because the SPP/APR was under review by OSEP staff. The Part C coordinator and data manager indicated that the data for child outcomes has improved since the FFY 2014 SPP/APR. The Part C data manager has been working to improve the State's data collection and analysis process and indicated she would like to follow-up with OSEP once determination letters are issued to discuss this work. The State's Phase III, Year 1 SSIP submitted on April 3, 2017 was the primary focus of the results and SSIP discussion.

Topics Discussed:

SSIP- Phase III, Year 1 Report

The Phase III SSIP submission was reviewed by OSEP staff prior to the site visit and feedback provided during the monitoring and support activity. During Phase III, Year 1 CA developed resources such as training modules and provider checklists consistent with the Phase II plan and implemented most of the intended activities. The SSIP included a report of activities and corresponding outputs for each of the three strands that comprise the SSIP logic model and align with its theory of action. Although milestones identified in the logic model were not met, CA began implementation of planned activities in

Cohort 1 and collected data to inform the implementation of activities in Cohort 2 in Phase III, Year 2. There were references to stakeholder groups and the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders during the first year of SSIP implementation. The data collected during Phase III, Year 1 was typically obtained via staff and family surveys or program record review. CA described the formation of implementation teams and an intention to align the SSIP with other state initiatives to support the professional development activities specific to social-emotional outcomes which is the SiMR focus for the SSIP.

Challenges and Barriers

CA's intensive designation for the SSIP was the result of two factors. First, the SSIP, due on April 1, 2016, was not submitted until April, 25, 2016. Second, the SSIP did not include FFY 2014 data for the SiMR, as required. The State reported that steps have been identified and implemented to ensure future submissions are submitted on-time. The Phase III submission was received on-time in April, 2017 and FFY 2015 data for the SiMR was included. The SSIP report for Phase III, Year 1 reflected delays implementing the timelines for SSIP activities that impacted the State's collection and analysis of data for most activities. The SSIP included information on the trainings that were held throughout the State. However, the SSIP did not include data on how training participants used new knowledge or skills in early intervention programs. Nor did the SSIP include information specific to fidelity assessment for the selected evidence-based practices. It was unclear as to what data will be collected on provider and parent behaviors or practices that are intended to impact social-emotional outcomes. A concern is that data for parent and provider practices will not be collected until Phase III, Year 2 and not allow for adjustments or supports before Phase III, Year 4 when the final SiMR target will need to be met. The CA Part C office discussed challenges with data collection due to strong local control of regional centers and different procedures that occur at the local level. Additional barriers identified by the State included limited funding for providers to attend trainings, limited provider participation in trainings due to large or remote catchment areas, and challenges communicating SSIP expectations and requirements between the state office and the local implementation sites.

Outcome of Engagement Activity

The FFY 2015 SPP/APR determination letter was issued after OSEP's on-site visit, allowing OSEP to discuss the most recent data. OSEP has begun discussions with CA around follow-up activities specific to improving child outcomes and performance for positive social relationships, knowledge and skills, and the ability to meet needs. The SSIP Phase III, Year 2 activities are underway. OSEP staff encouraged the Part C coordinator and TA center representatives to collect and report relevant data on the professional development activities and efforts to assess provider knowledge and use of the training content. Two requirements in the measurement language for the indicator are to report progress implementing the SSIP's activities and coherent improvement strategies and progress toward meeting the SiMR. The TA providers working closely with CA reported that data is available for analysis and reporting for the professional development activities implemented by the State that would be indicative of progress implementing the SSIP that would lead to changes in the SiMR. They will work with the CA office as Phase III, Year 2 activities are implemented to identify appropriate data sources and communicate the results of data analysis in next year's SSIP submission. OSEP staff including the state lead, Kate Moran, and performance accountability representative, Leslie Fox, agreed to have on-going conversations throughout the year and review drafts of the SSIP as it is developed for Phase III, Year 2.

Use of Technical Assistance and Professional Development Resources

NCSI and State TA providers work regularly with the Part C program to support CA's data quality improvement efforts, analyze and report data, and improve the Part C progress assessment process and procedures.

Next Steps

During FFY 2016, OSEP and CA will continue to use regular TA calls to discuss resources for improving child and family outcomes and support CA's infrastructure improvement strategies and evidence-based practices implemented for the SSIP. In addition, OSEP will share TA resources and materials with CA that may be most helpful for addressing data quality and data completeness for the APR and evaluation of the system improvement efforts outlined in the SSIP.