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Continued on page 3...

Continued on page 4...
New SDM Jurisdictions

CRC is currently working with the New Mexico Protective Service Division (PSD) staff to (1) design screening and response priority tools for use by the central intake staff, (2) design and review formats for SDM management reports, and (3) complete a risk validation study. In addition to these tasks, PSD, in partnership with CRC, has provided all of its staff with one day of training on the SDM model via a video conference set up. Supervisory training was also given to PSD staff with one day of training on the SDM model via a video conference set up. Supervisory training was also given to PSD supervisors in both the investigation and ongoing units. New Mexico’s PSD has been using SDM since the Fall of 1997.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (MDHS) is implementing SDM statewide. In 1999, the SDM system was developed by seven metro counties with CRC’s assistance. Earlier this year, CRC consulted with a statewide advisory committee to convert the metro county SDM model into a statewide model and training was held for line staff and supervisors. CRC will provide a one-year follow-up to revise the SDM system based upon MDHS’s experience over the year.

Cuyahoga County Refresher Training Popular with Staff

Since implementing SDM in the Spring of 2000, the Cuyahoga County (Cleveland) Ohio Department of Family and Children’s Services has been conducting annual “refresher” SDM training for all supervisors and staff. The small group sessions (typically involving three or four supervisory units) have covered the impact of recent policy changes on SDM, clarified SDM issues identified by staff and provided re-training on selected SDM assessment tools. The sessions have been conducted by members of the SDM Steering Committee and feedback from staff has been uniformly positive. Several supervisors have even requested that the sessions be held every six months. Says Nancy Simon, chair of the Steering Committee: “It gives everybody an opportunity to work out new (and old) wrinkles in the system and helps us make sure everybody is doing things the same way. But the discussions also help re-enforce the big picture about why we’re using SDM and what we want to accomplish. People seem to really get a lot out of it and we’re going to keep on doing it.”

The Children’s Research Center

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Children’s Research Center Structured Decision Making Systems

SDM News November 2002 P3

SDM Conference a Hit continued

the Balanced Scorecard model presented jointly by professionals from Santa Cruz, California and the State of Washington.

Strategic planning’s applicability to the current Federal Child and Family Service Reviews (CFSR) was a key feature of the day. As Elaine Squadrito, who assisted in the implementation of the CFSRs in the first 17 states, said “Having a strategic plan is like having an answer key,” i.e., you can get to where you need to be faster and with less effort if you know where you are going.

CRC’s Next SDM conference will be held in New Hampshire, Spring 2004

Each strategic planning model presented had elements of inclusion and deliberateness. They were mission driven, data driven, and comprehensive. Each presenter urged strategic planners to keep the strategic plan simple and to disseminate it to all stakeholders. The dynamic nature of good strategic plans was emphasized with the importance of revisiting and updating plans based upon ongoing analysis of data collected.

Day Two of the conference was devoted to topics specific to the SDM model in CPS. This was an opportunity for participants from old, new, and prospective SDM jurisdictions to learn more about SDM. Initial sessions included information on new developments and research updates. Janice Ereth pointed out new SDM sites in Minnesota, Vermont, Missouri, Riverside County, and Los Angeles County in California. Ereth also spoke of possible opportunities to work with CWLA and OJJDP to link SDM concepts and approaches across multiple systems.

Breakout session topics included the use of SDM data in budget preparations, ideas for implementation of SDM, the use of SDM in alternative response systems, and the relationship of administrative leadership (including active case reading by supervisors) to the successful implementation and ongoing use of SDM.

Of special interest to those working in foster care systems, was a report on New Mexico research which resulted in the first actuarial, objective risk assessment procedure that classifies foster home families into categories of low, moderate, or high risk of disruption of foster care placements. Disruptions included department disapproval of placement or license revocation and alleged child maltreatment. This tool, applied to a case prior to placement of a child in the foster home, guides the level of support that needs to be provided to a caregiver to increase the likelihood of stability for the child placed in that home.

As a follow-up to Day One, the applicability of SDM to Federal CFSRs was thoroughly discussed. Participants received an analysis of the outcomes that are the focus of the federal on-site reviews, the performance indicators, and the SDM procedure(s) that relate specifically to each outcome.

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Supervisors begin by viewing a menu of reports customized for their state. Each report represents a state audit requirement, a federal standard, or other key case management function. For example, there are reports that

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show how many days currently open investigations have been open; whether children in foster care have received required physical examinations; or which cases have received required contacts in the current month.

When the supervisor selects a report, that report is displayed graphically. The display typically provides trend data as well.

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Counties implementing SafeMeasures™ have demonstrated substantial strengthening of their compliance on key measures. For example, one county dramatically increased the percentage of cases that had an approved case plan completed on time.

As of last observation date: 11/9/2002

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<th>Case Plan Status</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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SafeMeasures™ introduced continued

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