



Department of Public Health and Human Services

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Steve Bullock, Governor

Sheila Hogan, Director

April 20, 2017

David Munson
Early Childhood Intervention
2016 Grand Avenue
Billings, MT 59102

Re: Letter of Determination
Early Childhood Intervention Annual Performance Report for Montana Milestones/Part C Early Intervention Program (July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016)

Montana Milestones/Part C Early Intervention Program used two specific implementation drivers to review the overall quality of the Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) – Part C Early Intervention program for Federal Year 2015 in addition to ECI's self-assessment. The monitoring mechanisms capture a broad representation of compliance and results indicators.

The data gathered distinguishes practices, policies, and procedures that are well-executed and reveal quality practices and corresponding results. Additionally, particular issues identified require improvement approaches and strategies to meet compliance indicators and/or results indicators. The improvement proposals are generated by ECI to address monitoring findings and monitored by the program's Quality Improvement Specialist, Ryane Holzworth, and the Part C Coordinator, Wendy Studt. The expected outcome is increased compliance and quality measured in terms of results as well as identification of needed technical assistance to achieve improved results for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.

(1) Montana's Comprehensive Monitoring Tool reviews a randomized statistically valid sample (based upon FY 2015 Child Count Data) for the following components:

- Program Management
- Multidisciplinary Teams
- Qualified Personnel
- Evaluation and Assessment
- IFSP development
- IFSP implementation
- Outcomes quality and implementation
- Family Interview

(2) Montana's data management system, the Early Intervention (EI) Module, manages the full data lifecycle needs of Montana Milestones/Part C Early Intervention Program. The data identified during the comprehensive monitoring process is conditional upon the validity and reliability of the data as entered by ECI staff. The database is an organized collection of:

- IFSP records;
- Child Outcomes records;
- Transition records;
- Exit records
- Child Outcomes Summary data;
- Child Counts;
- Exiting Reports;
- Child Outcomes Analysis;
- IFSP status;
- Notification reports of potentially eligible children;
- Transition conferences reports;
- Part B service referrals;
- IFSP services;
- Children turning age 3 transition reports; and
- Children turning age 8 transition reports.

ECI Exemplary Practices:

- ECI identified a system to ensure both entry and exit Child Outcome Summary measurements are performed including reviewing the State's data management system monthly. FSSs maintain calendars and deadlines are entered into an internal tracking system. The percentage of children exiting ECI who were included in ECI's outcome data FY 2015: 55%.
- ECI's written Child Outcomes quality, as measured by Outcomes criterion, increased in FY 2015.
- ECI used Family Survey Results to enhance program planning by reviewing survey results with all staff to guide strategies in helping meet the needs of families.
- ECI achieved greater than 90% in meeting the standard criterion for Qualified Personnel, Assessment and Evaluation, IFSP Implementation: compliance with timely annual reviews, Family Interviews.
- 93% of ECI families interviewed expressed satisfaction with the services and supports received for their child and family.

ECI Improvement Plans and timelines:

- ECI staff will be trained in January 2017 to reinforce the need for every family to know about Montana’s System of Payments and sign consent to use public or private insurance (accepted 12/20/16). The training agenda and participant list will be provided to Ryane Holzworth, Quality Improvement Specialist, and Wendy Studt, Part C Coordinator. Monitoring data will be reviewed during the next cycle of comprehensive monitoring for FY 2016 (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017).
- ECI staff will identify, by name and role/discipline, the members of the required multi-disciplinary team developing the initial and annual IFSP (accepted 12/20/16). Monitoring data will be reviewed during the next cycle of comprehensive monitoring for FY 2016 (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017).
- ECI staff continues to monitor initial IFSPs to identify and eliminate barriers to meeting the 45-day timeline and the timeliness of six month reviews. ECI will reinforce the continued need to meet the 45-day timeline for initial IFSPs and timeliness of six month and annual reviews during training in January 2017 (accepted 12/20/16). The training agenda and participant list will be provided to Ryane Holzworth, Quality Improvement Specialist, and Wendy Studt, Part C Coordinator. The office manager will track IFSPs for monitoring and ensure documentation of late ones are documented (accepted 12/20/16). **Note:** The State’s data management system also issues upcoming timeline reminders to both the Family Support Specialist and the agency’s identified overseer of the State’s data management system. Monitoring data will be reviewed during the next cycle of comprehensive monitoring for FY 2016 (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017).
- ECI staff will be trained to write high-quality child and family outcomes in January and February 2017 (accepted 12/20/16). The training agenda(s) and participant list(s) will be provided to Ryane Holzworth, Quality Improvement Specialist, and Wendy Studt, Part C Coordinator. The director will review each completed IFSP to assure quality child and family outcomes are written and revisions are made as needed (accepted 12/20/16). Monitoring data will be reviewed during the next cycle of comprehensive monitoring for FY 2016 (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017).
- ECI staff training in January 2017 will direct staff to document correlating services with frequency and intensity indicated on the IFSPs, summaries reflecting activities related to IFSP outcomes, and efforts made to reschedule or update changed schedule of services. Staff will be directed to document and reconcile IFSP supports and services in Contact Notes or Next Steps forms (accepted 12/20/17). The training agenda and participant list will be provided to Ryane Holzworth, Quality Improvement Specialist, and Wendy Studt, Part C Coordinator. Monitoring data will be reviewed during the next cycle of comprehensive monitoring for FY 2016 (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017).

The Office of Special Education Programs Evaluation Team(s) reviewed Montana's Annual Performance Report for FY 2014 (July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015) and identified the following systems for targeted State-wide Technical Assistance in FY 2016 and 2017:

- **Child Count:** The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) will provide targeted assistance to improve Montana's state-wide efforts to serve infants (birth to one year of age) and toddlers (one year of age to 3 years of age) thus improving Montana's Section 618 Child Count. Additionally, referral sources (Child Protective Services and hospitals, clinics, and medical personnel focusing upon low birth weight babies) and their impact upon Child Count will be analyzed.
 - ECI Point in Time, Birth to 1 year of age: 16 infants
 - ECI Point in Time, Birth to 3 years of age: 145 infants and toddlers
- **Outcome Data:** OSEP will provide targeted assistance to improve the percentage of children exiting Part C that are included in outcome data.
 - The percentage of children exiting ECI who are included in ECI's outcome data: 55%.
- **Performance Indicators:** OSEP will provide targeted assistance to improve performance outcomes for infants and toddlers in the three global outcomes. ECI's outcomes/results data:
 - **SiMR - Outcome A, Summary Statement 1:** Of those children who entered or exited the program below age expectations in Outcome A, 50% substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program.
 - **Outcome A, Summary Statement 2:** 51% of the children were functioning within age expectations in Outcome A by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program.
 - **Outcome B, Summary Statement 1:** Of those children who entered or exited the program below age expectations in Outcome A, 59% substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program.
 - **Outcome B, Summary Statement 2:** 43% of the children were functioning within age expectations in Outcome A by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program.
 - **Outcome C, Summary Statement 1:** Of those children who entered or exited the program below age expectations in Outcome A, 72% substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program.

- Outcome C, Summary Statement 2: 60% of the children were functioning within age expectations in Outcome A by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program.

ECl's contract with the Montana Milestones/Part C Early Intervention Program is essential to the delivery of Part C of IDEA services in the city of Billings. Thank you for your commitment to meeting the requirements of Part C of IDEA and increasing the quality of early intervention in Montana.

Sincerely,

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