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JOINT COMMITTEE ON CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM OVERSIGHT
Update: Behavioral Intervention Program, TFFH grant
SEPTEMBER 11, 2024

Chair Concannon, Vice Chair Gossage, Ranking Minority Member Ousley and Members of the Committee, my name is Kristalle Hedrick. I serve as the Vice President of Kansas Programs with FosterAdopt Connect (FAC). FAC is a non-profit social service agency developed by foster parents and others with lived experience to focus exclusively on filling gaps in the child welfare system. Our objective is to assure positive outcomes for kids who have experienced abuse or neglect, and the families caring for them.

FAC currently offers the Behavioral Interventionist program in the Kansas City metro area, as well as Pittsburg and Lawrence. The expansion to the Pittsburg and Lawrence areas was made possible through DCF grant funding intended to reduce the need for foster care and, for those in foster care, to increase placement stability and reduce their length of stay in foster care.

The Pittsburg team began providing services for Bourbon, Crawford, Cherokee, Labette and Neosho counties in March and has received 22 referrals. The Lawrence team began providing services for Jackson, Jefferson, and Douglas counties in July and has received 5 referrals.

Hiring qualified professionals able to provide the level of care needed for this population continues to be a challenge. 20% of job applicants thus far have not responded to any form of communication after their initial application. FAC has secured Service Coordinators for each location as well as 10 Behavioral Interventionists; three in Lawrence and seven in Pittsburg.

FAC's program proposal and corresponding budget for this expansion was designed to provide six months of seed money for each location. After six months, the program was projected to be sustainable through timely Medicaid reimbursement. Despite a dedicated billing specialist and investing in a new software system to streamline processes, we have over \$60,000 in unpaid claims specific to the BI program.

FAC would ask for this committee's support by adopting the following recommendations:

- The state agency and MCO's ensure BI codes are reimbursed in a timely manner.
- The state agency reconvenes a recurring Foster Care and KanCare Collaboration meeting, with a standing agenda item to address challenges related to Medicaid reimbursement.

Thank you for the opportunity to be before the committee today. I am happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.

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