Human Services Performance Council

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**What are we doing and why**

**Problem Statement**

_“Human Services a Problem in 15 Counties”_ ¹

The preceding is a headline we _never_ want to read again! In 2007 the Office of the Legislative Auditor issued a report to the legislature on Human Services Administration. The report had seven major findings and eight key recommendations. “Minnesota’s human services system has widespread impacts on the well-being of the state’s residents.”² The report found issues the legislature should address in terms of burdensome administrative requirements and complexity in laws and funding approaches that impact counties disproportionately. It also found that the state needed to improve training and technical assistance, provide access to timely, relevant data, and effectively supervise county performance. Yet the headline news featured the 15 “underperforming” counties and the finding that “Minnesota’s human services system has challenges and performance problems that are not being adequately addressed by the state or counties.”³ Both counties and the state agreed on the importance of a performance management system that focuses on outcomes. Counties especially stressed the critical need for a stronger partnership with the state and the recommendation that the commissioner establish better channels of communication with counties.

**Why a Performance Management System?**

Human services operate with a mixture of federal and state requirements. These requirements include complex administrative processes with multiple systems for measurement. But the set of measures that would indicate the achievement of outcomes is limited. County-specific program data is not uniformly available. Data analysis for counties is lacking and when provided is not timely for decision making at the local level.

In 2007, both the state and counties agree with the legislative auditor that performance measures were needed. In 2009, the counties sponsored legislation that required the establishment of outcomes and measures for mandated services. At the end of 2012, the Performance Steering Committee in its recommendation to the legislature recognized an expanded need. Performance measures and

² OLA Evaluation Report – Human Services Administration 2007; p.1
³ OLA Evaluation Report – Human Services Administration 2007; p.16
outcomes by current mandated programs will simply continue a system of reviewing results by service. The real question is – are we making a difference in the lives of the people we serve? To answer that the goals should be:

- to establish shared outcomes and performance measures across jurisdictions;
- to establish a more effective mechanism to hold the human service system accountable for improving outcomes for the people it serves;
- to drive continuous improvements in performance against key measures of success; and
- to provide transparency to the public.

To achieve these goals we need a performance management system that:

- views key measures against common outcomes;
- has an accountability mechanism;
- promotes continuous improvement;
- includes the voice of the people served; and
- is transparent to the public.

What are the Core Values that drive the system?

The system should:

1. Keep outcomes for people and communities at its core.
2. Include and consider the voice of the client.
3. Address racial and ethnic disparities in outcomes.
4. Reflect the needs and priorities of Minnesota’s stakeholders.
5. Be flexible and adaptable over time.
6. Support local service delivery solutions that lead to the best outcomes per dollar invested.
8. Include a common set of outcomes, metrics and standards.
9. Enable fact-based decision-making.
10. Be based on evidence-based practices, at both the system and individual program levels.

11. Recognize that continuous improvement is not the sole responsibility of one party, but is jointly owned by the state, the counties and their service delivery partners.

12. Be accountable to outcomes and use constructive methods to improve performance before negative remedies are considered.

**What outcomes do we expect for the people we serve?**

- People have access to health care and receive effective services.
- People are economically secure.
- Children have the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential.
- Children have stability in their living situation.
- Adults and children are safe and secure.
- Vulnerable adults experience a quality life.

**Purpose**

The Human Services Performance Council (the Council) is a legislatively mandated council convened to advise the commissioner on the implementation and operation of the performance management system for human services. Authorizing statute is Minn. Stat. §402A.16.

**Council Membership**

- The Council consists of fifteen members, appointed as follows:
  - Three appointees from the department of human services, appointed by the commissioner of human services;
  - Three county commissioners selected by the Association of Minnesota Counties;
  - Three directors of human services selected by the Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators;
  - Three client advocates or service providers, appointed by the commissioner of human services;
  - Three representatives from tribes and communities of color, appointed by the commissioner of human services.
Council members will be appointed for a minimum of two years, but may serve longer at the discretion of their appointing authority.

Responsibilities
The overall duties of the Council are to:

- Hold meetings at least quarterly that are in compliance with Minnesota’s Open Meeting Law under chapter 13D;
- Annually review the annual performance data submitted by counties or service delivery authorities;
- Review and advise the commissioner on department procedures related to the implementation of the performance management system and system process requirements and on barriers to process improvement in human services delivery;
- Advise the commissioner on the training and technical assistance needs of county or service delivery authority and department personnel;
- Review instances in which a county or service delivery authority has not made adequate progress on a performance improvement plan and make recommendations to the commissioner under section 402A.18;
- Consider appeals from counties or service delivery authorities that are in the remedies process and make recommendations to the commissioner on resolving the issue;
- Convene working groups to update and develop outcomes, measures, and performance standards for the performance management system and, on an annual basis, present these recommendations to the commissioner, including recommendations on when a particular essential human service program has a balanced set of program measures in place;
- Make recommendations on human services administrative rules or statutes that could be repealed in order to improve service delivery;
- Provide information to stakeholders on the council’s role and regularly collect stakeholder input on performance management system performance; and
- Submit an annual report to the legislature and the commissioner, which includes:
o A comprehensive report on the performance of individual counties or service delivery authorities as it relates to system measures;

o A list of counties or service delivery authorities that have been required to create performance improvement plans and the areas identified for improvement as a part of the remedies process;

o A summary of performance improvement training and technical assistance activities offered to the county personnel by the department;

o Recommendations on administrative rules or state statutes that could be repealed in order to improve service delivery;

o Recommendations for system improvements, including updates to system outcomes, measures, and standards; and

o A response from the commissioner.

The overall responsibilities of the Council co-chairs are to:

- Lead Council meetings and ensure decisions are noted for the record; and
- Develop meeting agendas with input from council members.

Each Council member is responsible to:

- Attend scheduled meetings (alternates are not allowed) and review meeting minutes after they have been published;
- Review and provide feedback on the work schedule and materials that come before the council;
- Identify and communicate issues and risks that could impact the timely completion of the deliverables;
- Maintain open communication channels with respective constituencies; and
- Participate in workgroups convened by the Council.

**Governance and Decision-Making Guidelines**

- The Council will strive to make decisions on a consensus basis.
• Where consensus is not possible, a vote of a majority of members present will determine decisions, with minority voice and opinion noted in the minutes.
• A motion-second-pass/fail process will be utilized to memorialize all decisions.
• Decisions that are required to approve council deliverables will be noted in advance on the meeting agenda.
• Decisions and votes will be reflected in the meeting minutes.

Meeting Schedule
The Council will meet as necessary:
• Minimum of quarterly as required by legislation, although the work of the first year will require more frequent meetings.
• At the call of the chair(s); meeting schedule will attempt to parallel the MACSSA general meeting schedule.

Meetings will be conducted as follows:
• A quorum is established with a majority (>50%) of the members present.
• Co-chairs will establish a rotation for convening the meetings.
• The agenda and meeting materials, including meeting minutes, will be sent to committee members a minimum of three days prior to scheduled meetings.
• Members may participate in meetings electronically.

Distribution of Materials
• Quarterly updates of council progress and the work schedule will be reported on the DHS website.
• Agendas, approved minutes and adopted council documents will be published on the DHS website.

Deliverables
What will these efforts achieve?

Minnesota will have a performance management system for human services that includes:
• Fully engaged leaders from the state, counties, tribes, and community partners;
• Understanding of client needs and community expectations;
• Relevant measures and analysis;
• Collaborative action and governance;
• Commitment to continuous improvement;
• Aligned resources; and
• Public transparency.

**How will this be accomplished?**

• Convene workgroups to update and develop outcomes, measures, and performance standards.
• Review and advise commissioner on implementation of performance management system.
• Advise commissioner on training and technical assistance needs of counties.
• Review annual performance data of counties.
• Review performance improvement plan progress.
• Consider appeals of counties in remedies process and make recommendations to commissioner on resolving appeal issues.
• Make recommendations on rules and statutes that could be repealed to improve service delivery (concentration on outcomes not process).
• Provide information to stakeholders and collect stakeholder input.
• Submit an annual report to the legislature and commissioner.