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## 7.0 Recommendations

### FOR THE PROVINCE OF MANITOBA

- That the Province assess the need for consequential amendments to *The Child and Family Services Act* and *The Adoption Act* to reflect the revised powers of the Director of CFS as noted in *The Child and Family Services Authorities Act*.

### FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES AND HOUSING

Recommendations are provided based on audit work conducted prior to the devolution to the CFS Authorities.

The recommendations directed to the Department regarding their monitoring of the CFS Authorities are provided for consideration as their relationship develops and evolves.

#### Strategic Planning and Outcome-oriented Goals and Objectives (Section 3.1)

- That the Department (CFS Division) complete a Strategic Plan which would include:
  - vision and mission statements;
  - strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats;
  - the goals (priorities) of the CFS Division;
  - the key result areas;
  - the objectives to meet those goals (priorities);
  - performance measurements (balanced mix of outputs and outcomes) to evaluate and assess the key result areas;
  - performance targets to measure against; and
  - a year-to-year comparison of performance.
- That the CFS Division identify outcome-oriented objectives (contained in a Strategic Plan) for the provision of services to child in care and families.
- That the CFS Division develop output/outcome measures (contained in a Strategic Plan) on which CFS Authority performance would be assessed.

#### Performance Agreements with CFS Authorities (Section 3.2)

- That the Department (CFS Division) negotiate performance agreements with all CFS Authorities in a timely manner. Provisions could include identifying program result expectations, defining the funding model, identifying the content and timing of reporting requirements, compliance to Department policies and standards, and clarifying Department access to information.

#### Monitoring of CFS Authorities (Section 3.3)

- That the Department (CFS Division) develop follow-up procedures should CFS Authorities not provide the required reports and information within established deadlines, and establish corrective action plans.

- That the Department (CFS Division) analyze CFS Authorities financial reports on a timely manner, in compliance with implemented guidelines and associated checklists.
- That the Department (CFS Division) develop guidelines for analyzing statistical information received from the CFS Authorities on the child care system and that these reviews be conducted in a timely manner.

**Quality Assurance (QA) Reviews (Section 3.5)**

- That the Department (CFS Division) update their QA Manual in a timely manner to reflect amendments to the *Policy and Procedures Manual*, the *Case Management Standards Manual*, and the *Program Standards Manual*. This would involve developing a quality assurance process to examine all key CFS Authority operations.
- That the Department (CFS Division) conduct QA reviews of CFS Authorities.

**Recommendations in the Quality Assurance Reports (Section 3.6)**

- Where the Department (CFS Division) has requested a QA review of a mandated agency, that a plan of action for each recommendation in the QA report be required from the CFS Authority.
- Where the Department (CFS Division) has requested a QA review of a mandated agency, that follow-up should be jointly coordinated with the CFS Authority.

**CFSIS Completeness and Accuracy (Section 3.7)**

- That the Department (CFS Division) in conjunction with the CFS Authorities clarify and confirm their expectations of how CFSIS is to be used by the CFS Authorities and mandated agencies.

**Billing System (Section 3.8)**

- That the Department (CFS Division) develop a standardized approach for addressing the "specialized parent" category used by various mandated agencies resulting in a provincial system that ensures equity among all foster parents.
- That the Department (CFS Division) explore the benefits of assigning unique identifying numbers to each child in care.

**Recommendations in the Chief Medical Examiner Reports (Section 3.9)**

- That the Department (CFS Division) in coordination with the CFS Authorities development guidelines as to when a review is to be conducted in response to the Chief Medical Examiner's report.

**Child Abuse Registry (Section 3.10)**

- That the Department (CFS Division) work in partnership with the Courts Branch and Public Prosecutions Branch to develop a formal system to convey information on child abuse convictions to the Child Abuse Registrar in a timely manner.



#### Funding Model (Section 4.1)

- That the Department (CFS Division), in collaboration with the CFS Authorities, determine and assess the rationale and logic for the existing funding models' assumptions, base amounts and calculations, as well as assess whether the models provide fair and equitable funding to the mandated agencies for child maintenance and services to families. If it is determined that fair and equitable funding is not being provided, that an alternative funding model be developed.
- That the Department (CFS Division) explore entering into discussions with the federal government to obtain required information on federal children in care to enable a comparison of funding levels for federal and provincial children in care. If federal funding is significantly below provincial funding levels that the province determine the impact on the CFS Authority and mandated agency's ability to meet provincial standards of care for federal children and take appropriate action.

#### Periodic Reviews of Funding Model (Section 4.2)

- That the Department (CFS Division), in collaboration with the CFS Authorities, review the funding model on a periodic basis to ensure continuing appropriateness.

#### Communication of Determination of Funding (Section 4.3)

- That the Department (CFS Division) include with the funding letters an attachment that details how the CFS Authorities funding is determined.

#### Standardized Needs Assessment Tool (Section 5.3)

- That the Department (CFS Division), in conjunction with the CFS Authorities, review the existing needs assessment scoring tools for fee-for-service to understand the different approaches in place and from this, develop a standardized scoring tool that would be used province-wide.
- That the Department (CFS Division) and the CFS Authorities approve a daily rate to be applied to the fee-for-service that is sensitive to the current local conditions and is established and reviewed annually for each mandated agency.

#### Special Needs Committee's Review of Special Needs of the Child (Section 5.4)

- That the Department (CFS Division) assess the continuing appropriateness of their *Agencies Funding Guidelines* that requires mandated agency SNCs review child assessment needs every six months. If the CFS Division confirms the continuing appropriateness of those guidelines, that the CFS Division ensure the CFS Authority and the mandated agency funding models appropriately reflect the resources required to meet this standard. If a different standard is deemed to be appropriate, that the policy be revised and communicated to the mandated agencies.

**Care Plans (Section 5.5)**

- That the Department (CFS Division) in collaboration with the CFS Authorities clarify the standard for the minimum frequency for updating child care plans.

**Mandated Agency Supervisory Reviews (Section 5.6)**

- That the Department (CFS Division) assist the CFS Authorities in developing a standard supervisory review process and form.

**Criminal, Child Abuse, Prior Contact and Medical Record Checks (Section 5.8)**

- That the regulations be amended to require that criminal record, child abuse registry, prior contact and medical record checks be updated periodically for foster parents and other adults with unsupervised access to foster children.

**Administration (Section 5.10)**

- That the Department (CFS Division) ensure that the CFS Authorities and their mandated agencies comply with *The Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Act*.

**FOR THE CFS AUTHORITIES**

The recommendations directed to the CFS Authorities are also provided for consideration given the findings of weaknesses that existed when mandated agencies reported directly to the Department.

The Department and the CFS Authorities are involved in discussions around funding capacity and resource issues that have a significant impact on the pace of change in addressing long-standing systemic problems or issues. It is also appreciated that competing demands present challenges in addressing recommendations and that they must be assessed and prioritized in the context of all changes being addressed in the area of child and family services.

**Strategic Planning and Outcome-Oriented Goals and Objectives (Section 3.1 and Section 6.2)**

- That the CFS Authorities complete their Strategic Plan ensuring consistency with the strategic direction of the Department (CFS Division). The CFS Authority Strategic Plan could include:
  - vision and mission statements;
  - strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats;
  - the goals (priorities) of the CFS Authorities;
  - the key result areas;
  - the objectives to meet those goals (priorities);
  - performance measurements (balanced mix of outputs and outcomes) to evaluate and assess the key result areas;
  - performance targets to measure against; and
  - a year-to-year comparison of performance.
- That the CFS Authorities identify outcome-oriented objectives and priorities for the provision of services to child in care and families consistent with Department (CFS Division) objectives and priorities.



- That the CFS Authorities develop output/outcome measures on which mandated agency performance would be assessed.
- That the CFS Authorities include a strategic plan as part of the mandated agency reporting requirements, and develop content and format expectations. These expectations would include the need to incorporate in their planning process the output and outcome measures developed by the Department (CFS Division) or the CFS Authorities to measure mandated agency performance.

**Service Purchase Agreement (Section 3.2)**

- That CFS Authorities negotiate SPAs with all mandated agencies in a timely manner.
- That the format for SPAs include provisions that clearly identify program result expectations, define the funding model, and identify the content, timing and format of serious occurrence reports.

**Monitoring of Mandated Agencies (Section 3.3)**

- That the CFS Authorities develop follow-up procedures when mandated agencies fail to provide the required reports and information within established deadlines and establish corrective action plans.
- That the CFS Authorities require mandated agencies to prepare financial statements in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.
- That the CFS Authorities implement guidelines and associated checklists for analyzing mandated agency financial reports and conduct these reviews in a timely manner.
- That the CFS Authorities develop guidelines for analyzing statistical information and that these reviews be conducted in a timely manner.

**QA Reviews (Section 3.5 and Section 5.9)**

- That the CFS Authorities develop a risk-based QA review plan that schedules mandated and other agency reviews on a regular cycle.
- That the CFS Authorities update their QA manual in a timely manner when departmental standards and policies are amended.
- That the CFS Authorities QA reviews include an assessment of the appropriateness of the SNC approved rates.
- That the CFS Authorities clearly identify the sample selection approach in the QA reports.
- That the CFS Authorities include a review of mandated agency expenditure governance as part of their mandated agency's QA review process.

**CFSIS Completeness and Accuracy (Section 3.7)**

- That the CFS Authorities collaborate with the Department (CFS Division) on determining the future use of CFSIS, or the potential for the development of a new case management system.

**Validity and Accuracy of Mandated Agency Child Maintenance Billings (Section 3.8)**

- That the CFS Authorities ensure that the billing form includes information on the SNC's approved rate, and the date it was approved.
- That the CFS Authorities prepare a manual on how to properly complete their billing form, in particular how to bill for respite, therapy, travel and other special needs services, and on what constitutes allowable expenditures.
- That the CFS Authorities ensure that their billing review procedures include:
  - reviewing significant increases to special needs rates;
  - agreeing a random selection of rates billed for specific children to the SNC approved rate calculation form; and
  - ensuring all children on all agency monthly billings are listed as active for that agency on CFSIS.

**Funding Model (Section 4.1)**

- That the CFS Authorities in collaboration with the Department (CFS Division), determine and assess the rationale and logic for the existing funding models' assumptions, base amounts and calculations, as well as assess whether the models provide fair and equitable funding to the mandated agencies. If it is determined that fair and equitable funding is not being provided, that an alternative funding model be developed.

**Periodic Reviews of Funding Model (Section 4.2)**

- That the CFS Authorities in collaboration with the Department (CFS Division), review the funding model on a periodic basis to ensure continuing appropriateness.

**Communication of Determination of Funding (Section 4.3)**

- That the CFS Authorities include with their funding letters to mandated agencies an attachment that details how their funding is determined.

**Standardized Needs Assessment Tool (Section 5.3)**

- That the CFS Authorities, in collaboration with the Department (CFS Division), and their mandated agencies review the existing needs assessment scoring tools for fee-for-service to understand the different approaches in place and from this, develop a standardized scoring tool that would be used province-wide.
- That the CFS Authorities, in conjunction with the Department (CFS Division) approve a daily rate to be applied to the fee-for-service that is sensitive to the current local conditions and is established and reviewed annually for each mandated agency.
- That all CFS Authorities conduct needs assessments for all children in care affected by the rate freeze to determine whether the rate freeze has impacted the ability of foster parents to meet the needs of children in their care.



**Care Plans (Section 5.5)**

- That the CFS Authorities, in coordination with Department (CFS Division) clarify the standard for the minimum frequency for updating child care plans. Plans could also be reviewed from a long-term outcome perspective and to see if the child is benefiting from the assessment conducted.
- That the CFS Authorities ensure that the mandated agencies comply with the standard for the minimum frequency for updating child care plans.

**Mandated Agency Supervisory Reviews (Section 5.6)**

- That the CFS Authorities, in coordination with the Department (CFS Division), develop a standard supervisory review process.

**Mandated Agency Foster Home Re-licensing (Section 5.7)**

- That the CFS Authorities actively monitor the foster home licensing process at its mandated agencies to ensure the foster homes are appropriately reviewed and, where warranted the license is renewed prior to expiry.
- That CFS Authorities ensure, on a priority basis that expired foster home licenses are reviewed and, where warranted re-licensed and that the CFS Authorities work with the mandated agencies to ensure there are systems in place to ensure that timely review and licensing/re-licensing practices are in place.

**Administration (Section 5.10)**

- That the CFS Authorities and their mandated agencies comply with *The Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Act*.
- That the CFS Authorities establish appropriate mileage rates for foster care and ensure that mandated agencies comply with the relevant guidelines that are established.
- That the CFS Authorities amend the declaration of confidentiality to include a reference to personal health information and require that the declaration be signed by all CFS Authority and mandated agency staff, foster home parents and respite workers.
- That the CFS Authorities require their mandated agencies to record mandated agency allowance transaction in a separate reserve account and require the mandated agencies to provide a summarized report on how mandated agency allowance funds were utilized.
- That the CFS Authorities develop policies regarding the use of agency allowance funds to ensure that these funds are used for children in care to achieve the intended outcomes.

**CFS Authority Boards of Directors (Section 6.0)**

- That the CFS Authorities' Boards of Directors develop monitoring processes that ensure rigorous oversight of their Authority's operations, financial management, and compliance with the Act.



- That the CFS Authorities' Boards of Directors ensure that the functions of an audit committee (with a mandate that reflects leading practices in good governance), are fulfilled.
- That the CFS Authorities' Boards of Directors conduct periodic CEO evaluations and ensure a process is in place to review and approve CEO expenses.
- That the CFS Authorities' Boards of Directors conduct periodic Board evaluations to enable them to continuously reflect on their governance practices and make enhancements as their processes mature.

## **FOR THE MANDATED AGENCIES**

Our audit focused on four mandated agencies. Specific recommendations were provided to each of these mandated agencies, who prepared their mandated agency specific action plans. Our recommendations below are based on this work. We believe that all mandated agencies can benefit from reviewing these recommendations to determine if they are applicable to them, and whether actions are needed to implement such changes in their organizations.

CFS Authorities have indicated that mandated agencies may have funding capacity and resource issues that have a significant impact on the pace of change in addressing long-standing systemic problems or issues. It is also appreciated that competing demands present challenges in addressing recommendations and that they must be assessed and prioritized in the context of all changes being addressed in the area of child and family services.

### **Monitoring of Mandated Agencies (Section 3.3)**

- That the mandated agencies provide the required reports and information within deadlines established by their CFS Authorities.

### **CFSIS Completeness and Accuracy (Section 3.7)**

- That the mandated agencies develop appropriate systems to ensure statistical information from the mandated agency's own case management system reconciles to that recorded in CFSIS.

### **Strategic Planning and Outcome-Oriented Goals and Objectives (Section 5.1)**

- That the mandated agencies complete their Strategic Plan ensuring consistency with the strategic direction of their CFS Authority. Each mandated agency's Strategic Plan could include:
  - vision and mission statements;
  - strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats;
  - the goals (priorities) of the mandated agency;
  - the key result areas;
  - the objectives to meet those goals (priorities);
  - performance measurements (balanced mix of outputs and outcomes) to evaluate and assess the key result areas;
  - performance targets to measure against; and
  - a year-to-year comparison of performance.

- That the mandated agencies identify outcome-oriented objectives for the provision of services to child in care and families linked to CFS Authorities objectives.
- That the mandated agencies utilize the output/outcome measures provided by the CFS Authorities, on which their performance would be assessed.

**Mandated Agency Board Monitoring of Financial Performance (Section 5.2)**

- That mandated agency boards ensure financial performance is fully monitored.

**Needs Assessment Tools (Section 5.3)**

- That the mandated agencies cooperate with the CFS Authorities in reviewing the needs assessment tools in place with a view to the utilization of a standard needs assessment tool.

**SNC Review of Special Needs Child Maintenance Rates (Section 5.4)**

- That the mandated agencies SNCs adhere to provincial standards by conducting a review of each child's special needs funding every six months, or as communicated by the CFS Authority.
- That the mandated agencies in collaboration with their respective CFS Authorities conduct needs assessments for all children in care affected by the rate freeze to determine whether the rate freeze has impacted the ability of foster parents to meet the needs of children in their care.

**Care Plans (Section 5.5)**

- That the mandated agencies update care plans as required by the CFS Authorities.

**Mandated Agency Supervisory Reviews (Section 5.6)**

- That the mandated agencies conduct and document their quarterly supervisory reviews of all open child care cases, as required by the case management standards of the Department.

**Mandated Agency Foster Home Re-licensing (Section 5.7)**

- That mandated agencies review, on a priority basis, all expired licenses and renew the license, or close the foster home as appropriate and that the mandated agencies work with the CFS Authorities to ensure there are systems to ensuring timely review and licensing/re-licensing practices are in place.
- That in the future, mandated agencies schedule and conduct licensed foster home reviews prior to license expiry dates.

**Validity and Accuracy of Mandated Agency Child Maintenance Billings (Section 5.9)**

- That the mandated agencies follow the CFS Authorities manual (to be developed) on how to properly complete their billing form, and in particular how to bill for respite, therapy, travel and other special needs services, and follow the manual in assessing the appropriateness of expenditures.

**AUDIT OF THE CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES DIVISION  
PRE-DEVOLUTION CHILD IN CARE PROCESSES AND PRACTICES**

- That the mandated agencies ensure that the SNC approved rates are used for billing purposes.

**Administration (Section 5.10)**

- That the mandated agencies comply with The Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Act.
- That mandated agencies review child care related mileage claims with significant driver only distances to assess the reasonableness of the claims, and to identify opportunities to use more cost effective service providers.
- That mandated agencies ensure that agency allowance funding is used as intended for children in care. This would be assessed for compliance to the policy to be developed by the CFS Authorities.
- That mandated agencies ensure that foster home parents, and other outside workers complete the confidentiality declarations as required by Section 76(3) of The CFS Act.