Louisiana State Child Death Review Panel

Agenda | December 9, 2015 | 10-12p

7173-A Florida Boulevard, Baton Rouge, La  
EOC Conference room – please ask for directions when signing in (\*not our usual room!)

**Attendees:** Laurel Kitto, Dr. Michael Cramer, Cynthia Gonthier, Pam Cart, Parker Rogers, Kim Gueho, Nicole Soudelier, Devin George, Drew Murray, Danita LeBlanc, Bryan Costello, Korey Harvey, Dr. Dawn Vick, Yancy Guerin, Robin Gruenfeld, Lt. David, Kolb, Sr., Madeline Carbonette, Kristy Ferguson, Tiffany Snedigar, Jan Byland, Jane Herwehe, Kelly Bankston, and Cara Bergo

**Update on revisions to R.S. 40:2019 for the 2016 legislative session**

RS 40:2019 has been revised to end prohibitions on information sharing between Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) and Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS). Language has been added to address how DCFS and CDR should work together and to clarify some of the details around information sharing.

Next steps: Revisions to RS 40:2019 will be presented for consideration during the 2016 legislative session. Drew noted that there is danger in putting the bills up as a bundle and having them shot down together. Instead he advised that we might want to separate changes into two sets so they have a better chance of passing:

1. Revisions to CDR membership to include Department of Education and Office of Behavioral Health appointments, and
2. Changes to information sharing with Department of Child and Family Services.

Drew has agreed to help shepherd the bills for the CDR. Jane will send the group the final version of those documents.

**Child Death Review data update**

Cara presented current data. Presentation was well received and attendees asked for copies of the slides.

**Follow up on to-do items from last meeting and Partner Updates**

The Region 2 CDR team recently wrote a letter to the Department of Transportation Development (DOTD) requesting a traffic safety study in response to several fatal incidents along a stretch of road in Prairieville. Bryan Costello came and reported on the status of the study on behalf of DOTD. He explained that traffic studies are required to get a project approved, and this section of road had a prior safety study. Another study is now being done on this area. The DODT is using new tools to look at crash statistics, which indicate that the section of road is a big problem. These tools are helping identify risk factors so DODT can have a more proactive approach to systemic change. Mr. Costello will keep us updated.

In other MVA news, Sonic (drive through fast food) has produced and is selling a calendar emphasizing child restraint use. The calendar includes cute monthly tips on proper child restraint, coupons, etc. All for $5, funds will go to car seat distribution for families in need.

Someone asked why some organizations do not give out car seats, and the group thought it was likely the result of fear of liability. Drew said that the Good Samaritan laws should limit liability for car seat providers.

Commission on the Elimination of Child Abuse and Neglect recently presented on their work and Drew, Jan and Jane listened in. The Commission is working to produce a report, due in early 2016, identifying ways to improve child welfare. One major shift is to look at child welfare through a public health lens. The presentation emphasized collaboration between disciplines, information sharing, and looking closely at the initial events which may bring a family to the attention of child welfare. Many kids in the system have been reported before. Child welfare is very reactive and could be more proactive by better screening families, particularly those with history of domestic abuse, and offering more upstream services such as home visiting and education for new parents. Drew approved sending out the Commission’s presentation slides to the panel.

The Office of Behavioral Health is working with DOE on a suicide prevention plan for high schools. It will include model policies and toolkits. They hope to create district wide – systemic changes. They will start with high school and hopefully move into middle schools. Jane will circle with Dr. Davis to see if State CDR can write a supportive letter or otherwise demonstrate support for this important work.

BFH and Vital Records will start the Cause of Death improvement project with coroners starting in January 2016. This is the project identified by State CDR to improve the quality of SUID data and reduce the number of sleep-related deaths listed as SIDS, SUID or undetermined on the Death Certificate.

Drew sent our information on training for educators around suicide prevention – if folks didn’t receive – speak up

Danita sent suicide prevention resources to the group - if folks didn’t receive – speak up

**Case discussion**

Lisa, Annelle and Jane presented a case from 2011 which was reviewed just this year (because BFH cannot review active investigations). It is another case where the autopsy clearly indicates child injury – consistent with shaken baby and other prior injuries - that do not match the story the father told law enforcement. There were several issues with this case.

* The autopsy took 7 months to complete.
* The autopsy stated manner of death was undetermined, yet cause was blunt force trauma and other multiple injuries which the CDR pathologist found to be consistent with prior injury over the infant’s first month of life, not just at time of death.
* The sheriff’s office could not disprove the father’s story.

The group was very alarmed by this case and felt it was important to form a committee to address recommendations for fatality investigation protocol to include timeliness of investigation, pathology, communication between coroner and law enforcement, checks and balances, etc. The subcommittee will include Dr. Vick, Yancy Guerin, Jan Byland, and Laurel Kitto. Jane will send note reminding them of charge and to support their subcommittee as needed.

**Moving forward -meeting schedule, priority case presentations, dates for next year**

State CDR Team decided to continue to meet quarterly. New meeting time is 4th Tuesday (except for Dec 2016) from 1-3 PM (now in the afternoons!), in the same location at Bon Carre (Region 2 Public Health office). There will be an option to call in if folks cannot make it in person. The group prioritized the following topics, which are well aligned with group priorities and leading causes of child death:

**Dates and Topics:**

March 22nd, 2016 – Violent Death (homicide, suicide, unintentional firearm deaths)

June 28, 2016 – SUID (Sudden Unexpected Infant Death)

Sept 27, 2016 – Motor Vehicle Accidents

Dec 6, 2016 – Drownings (this is 1st Monday due to holidays)

All times are **1:00 -3:00 PM**

**Wrap Up**

Other business: Group would like to form a drowning workgroup to review what other states are doing (especially Florida) to get some sort of community education/awareness event planned for the spring. Workgroup to include Jane Herwehe, Pam Cart, Kristy Ferguson, (Suggested Karen Ahmad)

**To dos before the March meeting:**

Jane – get slides (Cara’s data update and Commission on elimination of CAN) out to the group

Do notes and distribute

Send Outlook invitations

Send 40:2019 revisions and work with Drew on these bills.

Send reminders keeping 2 work groups on track

Follow up with Dr. Davis on support for OBH/DOE project and response to the Region 6 case

Kelly – schedule room – done! Thanks Kelly!

Dr. Vick, Yancy, Jan, Laurel – Death investigation Protocol

Jane, Kristy, Pam – plan a drowning prevention campaign for spring 2016.

**Organizing Entity:**

Office of Public Health, Bureau of Family Health

Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals

Facilitator(s): Jane Herwehe, 504-568-3532 or [jane.herwehe@la.gov](mailto:jane.herwehe@la.gov)

Robin Gruenfeld, State MCH Coordinator 504-568-2642 or [robin.gruenfeld@la.gov](mailto:robin.gruenfeld@la.gov)

**Chairperson:  Dr. Takeisha Davis**

Assistant State Health Officer

Medical Director, Office of Public Health

Director, Center for Community and Preventive Health

Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals