ASPE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PLANNING AND EVALUATION | OFFICE OF HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

BRIEF
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Project Update: Child Welfare and Health Infrastructure for Linking and Data Analysis of Resources, Effectiveness, and Needs Initiative

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This brief describes progress in the Child Welfare and Health Infrastructure for Linking and Data Analysis of Resources, Effectiveness, and Needs (CHILDREN) Initiative, which is in its fourth year. At this time, four jurisdictions participate in the CHILDREN Initiative: **District of Columbia, Iowa, Oklahoma, and Wyoming**. Iowa and Oklahoma are engaging in feasibility studies to determine readiness for linking data between child welfare and Medicaid for children and caregivers engaged in child welfare systems. District of Columbia and Wyoming are now developing procedures to link Medicaid and child welfare data in their data systems.

BACKGROUND ON THE CHILDREN INITIATIVE

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) launched the CHILDREN Initiative to help public child welfare and Medicaid agencies strengthen their data infrastructure to support the implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA; P.L. 115-123), which changed how states and tribes may use Title IV-E funding. The CHILDREN initiative is being implemented by Mathematica and supports public child welfare and Medicaid agencies to: (1) improve service delivery and oversight, (2) enhance monitoring of program spending, and (3) support cross-program research and evaluation. Sustainable, integrated data systems with linked child welfare and Medicaid data can also advance care coordination and oversight of Title IV-E prevention services and congregate care services.

FEASIBILITY STUDIES

Mathematica worked with all four participating jurisdictions to conduct feasibility studies to determine their readiness and assess their capacity and infrastructure to link and analyze data. This includes identifying use cases for the linked data, determining infrastructure required to effectively use linked data, as well as what is needed to develop this infrastructure. Iowa and Oklahoma are currently engaged in the feasibility study process. The District of Columbia and Wyoming completed their feasibility studies and are proceeding with the next phases of the project.

DATA LINKING

During this phase of the project, the site teams develop infrastructure to link child welfare and Medicaid data. The District of Columbia and Wyoming teams are working to develop, test, and refine procedures for linking data within their systems.

NEXT STEPS

Mathematica will support the participating jurisdictions with implementing their linked data infrastructure and creating linked datasets. Then, Mathematica will work with the jurisdictions' site teams to refine and test their analytic use cases that leverage the linked data, implement analytic models, and develop plans to support the sustainability of ongoing data linking. The jurisdictions will also contribute to a deidentified research-use data using a common data model. This dataset that will be archived and available for researchers and analysts. To stay up to date on the CHILDREN Initiative, please visit the project page here.

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