

## FAMILY CARE STATEWIDE COUNCIL

### PATTY HOUGHLAND, CHAIRPERSON

**Amerisuites Orlando Airport  
Orlando, Florida  
December 14th, 2002**

#### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Patty Houghland, D1 Co-Chair  
Joy Frazier, D1 Member  
Janet Graham, D2 Chair  
Frank Carroll, D3 Chair  
Cathy Mitchell, D4 Chair  
Ann Millan, Suncoast Region 5 Co-Chair  
Charm Thometz, Suncoast Region 6 Co-Chair  
Dean Parker, D7 Co-Chair  
Donna Rauber, D7 Co-Chair  
Mary Ellen Jones, D9 Chair  
Joan Hinden, D10 Chair  
Yolanda Herrera, D11-A Interim Chair  
Pamela Wainwright, D13 Co-Chair  
Diane Ciccarelli, D15 Chair

#### **STAFF & GUESTS**

Jadene Ransdell, DD – FCSC Liaison  
Beverley DeStories, FND Guest  
David Vaughn, Guest

*To unite the Family Care Councils in the State of Florida to represent/advocate for all persons with disabilities and their families.*

### **I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Chair Patty Houghland called the Family Care Statewide Council December meeting to order. She welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for introductions of attendees. Also per a request she asked that each chair, in a minute, share with the group what their council has been doing recently. **Dean Parker, District Seven** shared that the council co-sponsored an all day forum in Kissimmee with one of the outreach organizations headed by Beatrice Schindler. She did a superb job of bringing together advocates, providers, vendors and department personnel who play an important part in our developmentally disabled community. Also, the council has put together a legislative group consisting of various advocacy groups in our district. The group attending our meeting consisted of representatives' from 12 different groups and we asked that we limit our platform to three main goals to advocate for together. The three goals decided upon are (1) Greatly minimize the waiting list; (2) Preventative Dental Services; and (3) Maintain current funding levels. Dean shared he would like to see each FCC chair involved in advocating with their districts to support the same three goals. We have hired a person to assist us who has a great deal of experience dealing with the media and with the legislators. He will be helping us with press releases, writing letters and contacting legislators. Donna Rauber, District Seven co-chair was also in attendance. **Joy Frazier, District One** shared they had their meeting a few weeks ago and are discussing finding new ways to outreach as their district covers a wide region of the state. They are looking into forums and participating in family fairs. Chair Houghland shared that Joy will be the new District One chair beginning in January. **Frank Carroll, District**

**Three** shared their primary energy has been devoted to forums all around their district. They just completed a forum on Guardianships. Another is scheduled for February in Live Oak to discuss the system redesign. They have about four or five public information forums a year. **Pamela Wainwright, District Thirteen** shared they are working on a family forum scheduled for March in addition to a disabilities expo headed up by Sally Poteete and the school district. They will be including consumers and helping them to get involved in Self-Determination movement. **Diane Ciccarelli, District Fifteen** shared they have been working for the past four or five months on a transition forum to include agencies and the school district and trying to get the resources to collaborate for transitioning. **Mary Ellen Jones, District Nine** shared that through her association with PAL and Family Care Council chair she is finally making progress with those within the district that you can't wait until the last year of school to apply for services. The district office has agreed to send a letter to all parents of special needs children advising them of how to apply and to apply now. She also convinced them to include a Family Care Council brochure in the package of information. In March they will have a disability day in one of the malls in the area. They hope for a lot of media attention. **Charm Thometz, Suncoast Region, East side** shared they are getting ready to send out a newsletter. They are having training sessions and forums. They are participating with a \_\_\_\_\_ in partnership conference in June which is in collaboration with the school district, voc rehab and will include a provider fair. She shared she is getting a huge interest in the Sarasota area and has had a few meetings there which included the med-waiver presentation. She is also working with District eight as they are starting to get organized. **Ann Millan, Suncoast Region, West side** shared they just completed sending out a newsletter. They have 14 on their board. They included in the newsletter a brochure and a postcard to complete and return. Last year they received a 20% return of the postcards. They are putting their provider's list on the website. They have had some great speakers at their meetings. **Janet Graham, District Two** shared they are continuing their efforts in the People without Guardians committee. She thinks they have finally got the department to clearly identify the number of people involved in that. The FDDC has expressed an interest in getting involved in funding some of this. She shared information about the Offices of Public Guardians which are scattered around the state. She shared they do have a representative attending the stakeholders meetings who has been very involved in the process. Actually they have two attending as the CMS representative is also on their council. She is also involved in a self-determination committee. They are forming a legislative committee for the next legislative session. She would be interested in coordinating their efforts with District Seven. **Cathy Mitchell, District Four** shared Berthy Aponte is doing a training session for them on January 9<sup>th</sup>. They did a transportation options forum from 3 different entities that hand transport in there community. No one knew anything about two of the three so she felt good about that. They are updating their resource directory. Beverley Destories from Family Network on Disabilities shared she is attending to discover, solicit to find out where she or FND can be of assistance to the Family Care Councils. Jadene shared that she would be leaving her position at the department probably sometime officially in February. All in attendance shared how much we will miss her. Chair Houghland asked Jadene if there was any chance the department will fill her position. Jadene replied she did not know. She shared the way the department is set up (which some of us don't know), there are 3 units within the state department, (1) Medicaid Budget headed by Susan Dickerson; (2) Rulemaking and institutional headed by Kerry Schoolfield; and (3) Community Development which includes support coordination, supported employment, training, choice counseling headed by Denise Arnold. Within the unit they have sections. Jadene works in the training section. Her supervisor is J.B. Black.

## II. Review of September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2002 Minutes

Ann makes a motion to approve the minutes. Mary Ellen seconds the motion. The motion was approved by consensus.

## III. Old Business

**By-Laws** - Frank makes a motion to accept the By-Laws. Dean seconds the motion. The motion was approved with one abstaining.

**Statewide Conference Report** - The question arose last meeting as to when we would hold another conference, whether this year or next. As Charm was not at the last meeting, Chair Houghland asked if she would give a report/summary of last conference. Charm passed out a written summary of the conference. She shared she felt the conference went very well and received a lot of positive feedback from all who attended. Ann asked about total attendance. There were 260 registrations but there were many walk-ins. Charm passed out the list of questions people wrote on the application forms. They have been submitted to the office. Once answers are obtained, they will be listed on the website. There were 13 workshops, all were successful but one. Part of the documentation included a financial overview of Statewide FCC costs. The value of the package totaled over \$60,000 compared to FCC's actual cost of \$12,000. The Advocacy Center, FDDC, FDLRS and Nova Southeastern University contributed financial support. Ann shared the importance of Governor Bush emphasizing how great it was for the Family Care Councils to be in concert with the DMS conference. Charm shared that the statewide council has been invited back in 2003. She shared there was \$1,126 left over. Ann suggested we could use the money to create a statewide brochure. **Pamela makes a motion that we create a statewide Family Care Council brochure to be given out as appropriate.** Ann seconds the motion. The motion was approved by consensus. Chair Houghland asked for a volunteer to create a draft of a brochure. Jadene suggested that she is in the process of completing the FCC orientation guide. Some of that material could be used for the brochure. Jadene volunteered to do this. Diane asked if they could use Janet's printing company. Much discussion followed regarding if, when and where statewide conferences should be held. Some shared how difficult it is for families, especially those living in rural areas, to attend conferences. Others shared the need to network with all the other disability conferences in the state by either establishing FCC booths/workshops or just having someone there to pass out brochures. Janet emphasized we need to remember we are a young organization with little financial support. Charm has done a wonderful job on our past conference and we need to take advantage of her knowledge from this experience.

Chair Houghland shared we have approximately \$7,000 in our FCSC fund. We need to purchase the brochures which could cost \$2,000. Ann suggested we establish a 1-800 phone number. Diane suggested that the statewide funds should be directed to the districts to be used for consumer needs such as respite for families on the waiting list. **Ann makes a motion that we try to make Family Care Councils visible by participating in conferences between now and June with either a booth or workshop.** Mary Ellen seconds the motion. Discussion followed which included examples of cost of such booths and whether we have enough time to gain access to participating with other conferences between now and June. The motion failed by consensus. **Joy makes a motion to create a public relations committee to pursue the development of materials to use for a Family Care Council presentation.** The motion was

withdrawn. A motion is not needed to create a committee. It was decided to form a statewide PR committee. The members of the committee will be Jadene, Mary Ellen, Diane and Yolanda. Mary Ellen agreed to be chair of the committee. Chair Houghland requests that chairs check their E-mails on a daily basis. Pamela shared that FFAST has 2 new magazines, one issued quarterly focuses on individual stories and the other is on information and services. They would like The Family Care Statewide council to have an article in each magazine. She shared the deadlines for each magazine and passed along to PR committee. She would also like to request that each district Family Care Council contribute \$25.00 to FFAST current fund raiser. It was decided that we should change the name of the PR committee to Statewide Outreach. It was asked if anyone was going to research the 1-800 number. Ann volunteered and will report her findings to the outreach committee. Charm shared that Rhonda has scheduled a booth for FCC's at the CAFÉ and was successful in having the \$600 fee waived.

**Solutions Forum** - Chair Houghland asked if any district FCC has had a solutions forum yet. Joan shared that their district will be having one on January 10<sup>th</sup>. Charm has one scheduled for March. Donna shared that District Seven has tentatively scheduled for March. Dean asked Charm if the current job description was in line with the way the original job description was presented. Chair Houghland answered it is not the original job description.

**Web Site Update** - Ann shared the committee met via phone conference. She shared that it is the district FCC responsibility to E-mail her when information has become outdated and needs to be deleted. She shared they are looking at different formats. She is posting information under breaking news as it becomes available. Ann shared the committee discussed creating a letter to be sent to organizations asking them to link to our FCC web site. **Janet makes a motion to request that Ann proceed with the development of a letter to be sent to organizations asking them to link to FCC web site.** Dean seconds the motion. The motion was approved by consensus. It's very important that all districts provide district information on their web page. It needs to be advertised especially with legislative session around the corner. Include website address on brochures, in newsletters, business cards, etc. Dave is working with Diane to make it voice activated. Diane shared that maintaining the web site is expensive and extremely time consuming. It should be done statewide rather than depending on Ann and Dave to maintain on a volunteer basis. This is a long-term project that will need constant maintenance. Everyone agreed that Ann and Dave have done an outstanding job and all are very appreciative of their efforts.

#### **IV. New Business**

Chair Houghland shared that copies of the Lucy Hadi, December 3<sup>rd</sup> memo are included in the information package. She referred to the attached memo from Susan which changes the procedure of reviewing high cost plans. Currently the high cost reviews have been approved at the Central Office Level. Effective immediately the process will be conducted at the district level. The memo explains the new procedure in detail. Discussion followed which included the significant difference in high cost plans over the \$77,000 (ICF) rate. We have some cost plans over \$400,000. All chairs received a document prepared by Mercer of scatter plots of the average monthly enrollment paid for persons who live with their families broken down by age of person with the disability as compared to individuals living in their own home or other residential setting. There are some really high cost plans but they are medically necessary. The state has moved toward giving individuals a choice of either living in the community or in ICF's.

As a result, we have to expect high costs. We were reminded that in the past year the district, Maximus and the Secretary's office have all reviewed the high cost plans. How can the district possibly find any additional monies in these cost plans to eliminate? It was shared that the whole issue amounts to developmental disabilities is not getting sufficient funding to meet the need. This is the message that we need to communicate. The way the system is set up now with DD a part of DCF we are forever going to be competing with child protection, foster care, and abuse. Developmental Disabilities should be out on their own in a Long Term Care department which would include the elderly. There needs match DD needs, put those two populations together, make them an independent department away from ACHA and DCF and physically address the funding needs. There is a moral responsibility this society has to care for these individuals who are unable to care for themselves. This way the legislature could specifically follow their needs and fund directly those needs. Also, if there is a shortfall, we will know it's a direct result of lack of DD funding rather than possible funding needed by another department within DCF. Regarding the deficit, Chair Houghland shared the memo from Susan to each district asking the district to involve the Family Care Councils with problem solving on ways of making up the deficit. Each district is looking at the process differently. Diane, Yolanda and Janet shared the ways their districts will attempt to make up their deficit. Joan shared that we need to determine where we can get this \$16 million. She shared her district has not hired anyone in over six months. People are doing 6 and 7 jobs resulting in their district losing people because they can't take the stress. They have lost 3 DD supervisors in the past six months. Others shared the same is occurring in their districts. The question about the \$10 million shortfall from last year was brought up wondering why it's included in the shortfall again this year. We need to be realistic understanding where the money is coming from and what the department is trying to do to solve these budget problems.

Chair Houghland suggested that we prepare a list of questions for Susan and Mercer rather than trying to solve these issues with the minimal amount of information we have before us.

**Nominating Committee** - Chair Houghland asked for volunteers to participate on a nominating committee. Joan Hinden and Yolanda Herrera volunteered. The elected offices consist of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Treasurer. Chair Houghland would like for the committee to have something to present at the next meeting.

It was decided the next meeting will take place on March 1, 2003.

## **V. Susan Dickerson and Mercer Conference Call**

Susan began by sharing that she knew we had all seen the memo that was released pertaining to the potential shortfall that the department has this year. She had telephoned some of the FCC chairs and sent an E-mail to each of the districts asking them to involve the FCC chairs in their discussions as to how they were going to address the budget deficits. She advised the department will be having conversations with district administrators and she is assuming they will be contacting FCC chairs to work with them to put together a plan.

Following are the questions and answers from the conference call.

**1. Please explain the various line items of the Allocation Plan titled “Available State Funding”?**

The dollar amounts represent only the General Revenue share in the Waiver budget category. Federal share is not shown. She explained each of the line items. Questions were raised about the \$10 million shortfall which she explained was appropriated by the legislature in anticipation of shortfall based on last years situation. Then she shared that \$19,628 million of 01-02 services were paid from 02-03 budget. The anticipated \$10 million shortfall actually amounted to \$29 million. These are last year’s services provided to persons on the waiver last year. She explained that in the waiver claims have a 12 month lifespan. They don’t always get paid right away. She was asked when they knew the \$29 million figure. She shared just before Thanksgiving. The department had problems with their data person. They hired a new person and it just took awhile to get all the data sorted out and inputted into the system. She didn’t anticipate any additional late billings but it is a potential. She was asked then it is the \$19 million of 01-02 services that is generating the \$13 million shortfall this year. It’s really not the difference in rates between the districts. Susan shared they were doing some analysis that seemed to indicate that some districts have increased rates (although districts say they have not increased rates) but when you look at per-capita costs for various services across the board the per-capita spending for each of those services is higher. She shared they have not had enough time to evaluate if this is due to rates or if it’s utilization. Some is utilization but when new providers come on board, even at the statewide average, you have potential of increasing the per-capita cost per service. She was asked since last year’s shortfall was blamed on problems within the model if by improving our modeling are we really preventing this shortfall from happening again. Susan shared she thinks the model is a good one. The problem is more based on the department being without a data person for almost 3 months. She was asked if providers are so late in getting their bills in for it to be in current fiscal year, won’t it continue to happen next year, an on-going issue. Susan is hoping with the direct provider billing, bills will be submitted by providers as well as support coordinators in a timelier manner.

**2. Where else can we get the \$16 million from besides the consumers cost plans? Are there any other areas where we can get some of these dollars?**

Not in the Developmental Disabilities budget. Susan doesn’t know of any other areas. She shared if there were any other areas that would be a decision made at a far higher level than she. She shared they have looked at any surpluses that are going to be available out of the individuals and family supports budget category this year. If any it will be shifted to room and board to cover those room and board payments for people in group homes. She was asked about the high cost consumers listed on the Mercer Individual Cost Guidelines, if the department will be looking at them. She shared it’s responsible for them to look at those individuals. Also in terms of the new rate structure it’s looking at people who are well above what is proposed in the rate structure. Obviously some downward adjustments will be made there. She stated we

all need to be mindful of and respectful of the waiting list and the need to not provide people with more than they need in order to provide more people with what they need. There are 10,000 people on a waiting list who have needs that most likely mirror the people being served. She was asked didn't Maximus already review all the high cost plans. Maximus does some of them but not all of them. We thought all cost plans over \$77,000 were reviewed. Susan shared that some people with cost plans are under \$77,000 a year may not need that. Norm Davis added there are some people who once are put into the utilization standards, may be purchasing services at a higher rate than necessary. Mercer's initial observation was that sometimes people buy high priced services and supports that people might be able to receive at a lower cost or with differently trained people. This is true particularly in behavior and nursing needs. It's looking at each case and situation one by one seeing if the supports and services can be provided offering the same quality but perhaps at a lower price. Susan shared these things don't necessarily go to Maximus. Norm shared the second strategy is that people coming from Landmark and those from the waiting list, there is a chance to apply the new standards and control their costs. It's a series of little adjustments and tinkering that he believes will correct the system and bring about the savings. Susan shared it is not their intent to go through the same horrific exercise they went through last year. She also shared that it's state law you have to live within the budget and some accommodations have to be made but she hopes they can do it in as painless a way as possible. She thinks with the redesign pieces they are looking to implement, a reasonable rate structure that levels the playing ground is one of the key pieces that will make a difference. She wants the Family Care Councils support to help the department to make sure that everyone understands this is the right thing to do. She was asked about when the new rate document would be released. Some policy decisions still need to be made. She has meetings scheduled with both agencies as well as legislative staff.

Susan was asked about the consumers at Landmark who are being moved into group homes. Many of them don't have parents or guardians but they still need to be provided with good quality group homes. Susan shared there is a different funding level set aside for the Landmark residents which is a little bit higher. They are now getting to the residents who require more intense levels of services. They will also be providing these residents the assessment tool that should give them a better feel for whether or not the money set aside is enough. They will have to address that. Norm shared the average the department is spending per individual is \$22,000 - \$24,000 per year a person as compared to \$80,000 per year for landmark residents.

Susan was asked about the supported employment program which to date has been unsuccessful in our state. The implementation of this program needs to be done through natural supports. How is the department going to provide the natural supports in the new budget guidelines? Norm was unable to answer the question but shared that they did not put in a factor for natural supports. Supported Employment is based upon what it costs for fully paid staff people and coaching that provide the model. Joan shared that natural supports work better than outside employment coaches, therefore, if you provide incentives in the natural supports it becomes a much more successful working experience and less expensive in the long run. Susan asked for examples. Joan hasn't figured that out as yet but she's passing along the

information. The department might want to consult with the organization doing the training. Also might want to meet with The Family Support Network in Portland, Oregon which is providing these natural supports and giving the person doing the natural support stipends. Norm is familiar with the program. That program is not being funded through the rates Mercer is building. It's being funded through family support or community support grants. Susan shared this is something separate and the department would have to approach the legislature for funding.

- 3. Paragraph 4 of Lucy's memorandum asks the districts to review rates provided and renegotiate rates as needed to provide services within available funding. If current providers refuse to accept a renegotiated rate, the district will need to recruit providers that will provide services in accordance with district rates. Frank asks: Where is my choice for my son?**

Susan answered the department will have an approved rate schedule which states the department will pay this much for this service. They have allowed for some geographic variation representing the value of the dollar in various parts of the state. Some providers may say they will not accept the rate. If that be the case they may have to make some adjustments and possibly recruit new providers. The choice is among enrolled providers who choose to participate. Frank is questioning not so much the provider's side but his side of the issue. Does he have a say at all if the dept. comes to him stating that a current provider for whatever reason will not continue the service under current plan and a new provider will have to be found. Where does his choice begin? He lives in a rural area where only one provider may provide services. Susan shared the department would do whatever possible if those situations occur to recruit good, qualified providers who will do the work for the rate they can pay. Frank questioned how she could say that when the dept. can hardly do it now. Susan shared that not having any rate structure has created a problem that they cannot live with any longer.

- 4. Has Maximus RFP gone out? Who is responsible for reviewing the RFP? Do FCC chairs have input into the process for the next organization that will review the cost plans?**

Susan shared the RFP has gone out. The deadline has passed. They had two bidders, one was Maximus, one another company. Maximus was awarded the bid but the other company filed a protest. At this point they are in a legal situation. The company filing the protest has the window to take the department to court to resolve the matter.

Diane wants clarification regarding data sent to her. If a cost plan is denied the figure in the data but consumers/support coordinators are given the opportunity to supply additional information to have re-evaluated. There is no where on the list that shows if that support plan was re-submitted and if that service was then provided to fund that service. Susan shared that Maximus said they included the ones where they asked for additional information, if they got the information and it was approved it goes into the overall approved group. If not approved, it goes into the overall denied group. Diane asks if she has given that information to FCC chairs? Susan said she

could and would get out to us next week. Diane also wants to know why are cost plans submitted with such a great discrepancy in approval of services? Is it a training issue? Is it a district issue? Is the department tracking this to determine where the discrepancy exists. Susan shared this is part of data the department has been looking at. She referred to the data sheets attached to the Lucy memo. This information has been broken down into districts. There is almost \$1,000 difference per month between district 1 and district 23. She thinks part of it is interpretation and lack of training of staff. They have spent time recently going over the new handbook with district staff trying to make sure all were doing uniform application of the criteria in the handbook. What you're seeing here is living proof there is disparity in interpretation across the state. Diane thought this was the whole purpose of Maximus. Maximus doesn't do that kind of analysis. They look at only the high cost reviews that exceed the average ICF/DD amount and certain select service requests. It's not to make the whole state fall on the same page. That is beyond the scope of the Maximus contract. Maximus is just targeting services in the overall cost plans. Susan shared to keep in mind the redesign will change this. She will try to provide us with whatever information they do.

**5. Has it been determined who will do the administration of the assessment tool?**

The support coordinators will be responsible for administering the assessment tool. Is the assessment tool finalized? It should be finalized the week of the 17<sup>th</sup>. Who will be training the support coordinators? Susan shared the initial plan was for Mercer to do train the trainer for the dept. because they were not sure who should do the training. Mercer made some recommendations. Mercer was asked to provide the dept. with a proposal of the cost for them to train the support coordinators. Mercer would then do the initial reliability check on that to insure that people were conducting the assessment appropriately. It was then suggested to Susan that Family Care Councils be involved in the training process with the support coordinators. Susan thought this would be a good idea. How many consumers were in the validation of this instrument? They pooled 700, they have 400 responses. Is that about normal? Yes, they went with 700 because the hope was to receive 400. This was throughout the state. Chair Houghland wanted to clarify that somehow information will be shared with Family Care Councils so they can attend the training along with the support coordinators. We will need some kind of communication from the dept. Also, she is requesting the FCC's receive a copy of the final tool prior to the training session so they will have time to study it. The intent is to put it on the Mercer website. Norm was asked if the tool dated November 19<sup>th</sup> is the final. Yes, except for some fine tuning that still needs to be done to make it more user friendly. What changes needing to be made relate to format within the software, not content. Norm was asked if the questions are the same, how have the adjustments been made with regards to the difference in cost plans between \$18,000 and \$94,000? Those are the formulas behind the questions which have changed significantly. Donna asked if the assessment tool is specifically for med-waiver consumers. The answer is yes. What about ICF/DD residents and GR funded ineligible for med-waiver? It has no bearing on the ICF/DD residents unless they move out into the community. No plans for GR funded as the direction from the legislature was solely for the waiver.

**6. What is the status of the Independence Plus program? How do we access information about it?**

The status is that it has been submitted to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid by ACHA. She advised she could ask Shelly to send us some information on it. It's similar to the consumer directed care but it takes some of the learning through that process and makes some adjustments to the whole system. This is an 1115 waiver which is different from our traditional home and community based waiver. She was asked what happens to the consumer directed care program when it expires if the Independence Plus program has not been approved yet? Susan shared that due to the popularity of the CDC program she feels certain if that be the case the program would be extended. Janet asked that if you are participating in the Independence Plus waiver then all of the information related to the redesign doesn't apply to you. It's a totally separate waiver. Susan shared the redesign will apply in that the assessment and rate structure will be the same. What about the people who were part of the Choice and Control Project? Cathy shared that in her district people are still in limbo as they are being told they have to wait for federal approval. Susan said that is true. Medicaid has asked to expand the CDC program to include the Choice and Control Pilot recipients. They are still waiting for approval. Chair Houghland shared that about a month ago her district advised they had federal approval. Susan said she would check on it.

**7. Currently the Waiver Support Coordinators are being charged \$20.00 per month to bill. If everyone is doing their own Medicaid billing, the only reason anyone should need to access the ABC system is to update the department records. According the Core Assurances this is a negotiated fee. Too date the \$20 fee has not been negotiated with WSC's. Why should WSC's have to pay this fee?**

Susan shared this is not up to the department, it's the Department of Management services that sets up the criteria for access to all systems. Susan shared yes it is very important for the ABC system to have updated information. Its demographic data the department must have. Why then can't WSC's have access to the ABC system within their district offices to update the screens instead of charging them a \$20 monthly fee? Susan advised they would check on this.

When direct billing begins, are support coordinators going to get a copy of the bills for their record keeping for quality assurance. They are supposed to get a copy of the documentation used to bill. She asked Jadene to check with Denise and Terry for an update.

**8. Did the department get all the data they requested regarding the success of the CDC program in Florida?**

Susan advised it was her understanding that was the case. Ann shared it would be nice if the Family Care Councils could see that. Who received the data? Mathematica was the statistician group. Susan will check on this as she is not sure if a report has been done.

**9. The 1-800 number to the Tallahassee DD office has been disconnected. Are you planning on re-instating it?**

Susan advised the number was coming out of their expense budget and with the travel they've had to do this year with the redesign, they did not have the money to maintain the line. It was costing the department \$600 a month. Charm shared she is really disappointed because now families will have to absorb the cost when we're trying to work with the department. We're all disappointed because it looks like a closed door to us.

**10. Every district seems to have different policies regarding accessing the data base for consumer's names and addresses. Is it a confidentiality issue for Family Care Councils to have names and addresses of consumers in their district?**

Susan asked Jadene if the dept. ever got a legal opinion regarding this. Jadene advised yes. The answer is yes. It is confidential information. For council mailings the legal way is the district staff must put the labels on the materials and mail. Some districts are providing labels to the Family Care Councils to put on mailings. If this be the case, they are breaching confidentiality.

**11. Chair Houghland asked Susan about the respite letter we sent to Secretary Regier, if he referred the letter to her for follow-up?**

To date Susan had not seen it. Chair Houghland read the Florida Statute 393.503 which states "the department shall determine the amount of expenditures per fiscal year for the respite and family care subsidy to families and individuals with developmental disabilities living in their own homes". Is this still happening and the FCC's are just not are hearing about it? Where's the money for this? Susan shared the money is part of individual and family supports category. This is part of the district allocation. The districts are supposed to be sharing this information with FCC's. If not, please alert her. She will see that the problem is remedied.

**12. Are the results of Delmarva's auditing going to be posted on their web site?**

Susan shared they just completed a report. Beverley shared at the time of the IQC meeting in November the report was just a preliminary one. The final had not been issued yet. Susan advised she would check on this and get back to us.

**13. Chair Houghland asked when is the district plan on how they are going to cut costs due at state office?**

Susan answered on Monday. Chair Houghland stated the districts never talked to the FCC's. Susan shared she would be talking to the DA's tomorrow. She thinks due to the new direction this administration is going, the DA's will be in touch with FCC's. Chair Houghland asked if the districts have a chance to amend the plan. Susan advised, absolutely. Susan mentioned they would remind the DA's on Monday they are to work with FCC's. Janet questioned what Susan meant when she indicated the department was taking a new direction. What is she referring to? Susan shared

Secretary Regier is focusing on a more participatory decision making process. She feels he will want to have FCC's involved.

**14. Where are the monies built into the budget concerning annualization of new people coming into the system?**

Susan replied that is in the budget request for next fiscal year 2003-2004. She said this is how budgeting always works. You do the first year with a phase in, then they know what the price tag for the annualization is. Obviously it will probably have to be adjusted because of current situation. It has already been submitted identifying the funds needed to continue services for people brought on this year.

Ann shared as a result of an E-mail she received recently that with this \$16,000 million shortfall coming down that parents are feeling very insecure about the life of their loved one when they are no longer here to care for them. Susan advised that she respects and appreciates that. She shared the intent of the department is to do no harm. She thinks they can make smart decisions without harming people and that certainly is their intent.

Chair Houghland shared that we all appreciate her taking the time to talk with us. Also, we appreciate Norm's time as well.

Concern arose that the FCC's have to ask for the Delmarva report. The department is supposed to be keeping us informed and sharing this kind of information with us. Also of concern is the CDC report will be released without our knowledge. The results of this report might be something we want to advocate for to the legislature this next session.

What are we doing about the legislative platform? Several chairs indicated they wanted to participate with District Seven's platform. Donna shared with Joan and Yolanda (who missed Dean's presentation) the three main goals. Joan shared she would really like for us to advocate for funding to do research in finding out what can be done to increase employment opportunities in our state. Ann shared that Ticket to Work had this in their legislation but were not funded last year. Ann shared she would like to see each FCC go back to their councils and see if they can support these same three goals. She is very impressed with the PR district seven is doing.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the council, Chair Houghland officially adjourned the meeting at 3:45.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,**

**DONNA RAUBER**