

HHS Releases Draft Strategic Plan for FY 2010-2015

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released its draft strategic plan for fiscal years 2010-2015; comments on the plan were due Aug. 14. The draft plan describes the department's overarching goals over the next five years. These goals are to: transform health care; advance scientific knowledge and innovation; advance the health, safety, and well-being of the American people; increase efficiency, transparency, and accountability of HHS programs; and strengthen the nation's health and human service infrastructure and workforce. While people with disabilities are included throughout the plan, the third goal includes a specific objective to improve the accessibility and quality of supportive services for people with disabilities and older adults. Under this objective, the HHS highlights policy reforms and initiatives to promote the use of home- and community-based services, such as the Money Follows the Person demonstration program. Additionally, the HHS identifies strategies to achieve this objective, including, for example:

- Work closely with states, territories and tribes to achieve more flexibility in the Medicaid program through the Money Follows the Person Grant Program, and other grant programs and policy changes;
- Improve the coordination of long-term care services with physical and behavioral health services by fostering innovative approaches to delivering integrated care;
- Improve services for individuals with chronic conditions and functional impairments by enhancing coordination of Medicare and Medicaid, since many of these individuals are dually eligible; and
- Across the lifespan, collaborate across systems to streamline access for individuals with disabilities to a full complement of inclusive, integrated services and supports (child care, education, transitional services, health care, employment, transportation, and housing).

To access the draft plan, visit http://www.hhs.gov/open/pubcomm_draft.pdf. 

HHS Announces Funds For Teen Pregnancy Prevention

The Administration for Children and Families at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has made \$55 million in funding available to states and territories through the Personal Responsibility Education Program, established under the Affordable Care Act. The Affordable Care Act also included \$50 million for state grants to support programs to promote abstinence and these funds also were made available to states today. You may read more about these funding opportunities in the ACF press release at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/news/press/2010/teenppebeap.html>.

In addition, the Funding Opportunity Announcements are now available at: Abstinence: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/open/foa/view/HHS-2010-ACF-ACYF-AEGP-0123>

PREP: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/open/foa/view/HHS-2010-ACF-ACYF-PREP-0125> 

ACF Seeks Comment On SACWIS and NPRM on AFCARS

On July 23, the Administration for Children and Families released two requests for public comment in the *Federal Register* on the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting Systems and the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System. In January 2008, the ACF issued a notice for proposed rulemaking to amend AFCARS reporting and data collections requirements regarding children in out-of-home placements. The National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators interviewed states and submitted a joint statement to the ACF on the NPRM. NAPCWA's public comments letter noted the significant administrative burden and cost to states in implementing these new requirements.

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 makes additional changes to AFCARS and therefore, the ACF will issue a second AFCARS NPRM to hear states comments. The AFCARS *Federal Register* notice can be located at <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-18042.pdf>.

In addition, the ACF released a public comment notice regarding the proposed SACWIS redesign. In lieu of this proposed redesign, the ACF has issued comments to review current SACWIS regulations and address existing state information technology models while considering state flexibility in their design. The *Federal Register* notice on SACWIS can be found at <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-18038.pdf>

The ACF has listed several questions in the notice on both AFCARS NPRM and SACWIS. Similar to the comments letter submitted in 2008, NAPCWA will reach out to states to prepare a joint statement to the ACF. Please be advised that NAPCWA staff will contact states shortly to set up workgroups to gather information for the SACWIS and AFCARS comments letter. Comments are due to the ACF by Oct. 21, 2010. 

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