

STATE OF NEVADA
Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Child and Family Services



Quality Improvement Case Reviews
State of Nevada
Baseline Reviews

Report year: 2011

Amber Howell, Acting Administrator
Division of Child and Family Services
4126 Technology Way 3rd Floor
Carson City, NV 89706
775-684-4400

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Executive Summary

As a result of the 2008 Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) the State of Nevada is currently conducting case reviews as a requirement of Nevada's Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). The PIP implementation period encompasses December 1, 2010 through November 30, 2012. The baseline data for the case reviews will be prospective and established during the first year of the PIP implementation period. Each agency is reviewed annually, Washoe and the Rural Region are reviewed once and Clark County is reviewed twice annually per PIP agreement.

Methodology

The review is designed to be both a quantitative AND qualitative review of casework currently being performed by child welfare agencies in Nevada. The specific items reviewed are in accordance with the PIP agreement made between the Administration on Children and Families (ACF) the federal administration that completes the (CFSR) and the State of Nevada. With the completion of the second Clark County review, Nevada has now completed the 2011 "baseline year". The ACF will set performance targets for reviews conducted in all Nevada child welfare agencies during future reviews based upon the 2011 baseline data.

The following 9 items are reviewed but may not be applicable for every case:

- **Item 1:** Timeliness of Investigations
- **Item 3:** Services to Prevent Removal/Re-entry
- **Item 4:** Risk and Safety Assessment
- **Item 7:** Permanency Goal
- **Item 10:** OPPLA
- **Item 17:** Needs and Services to Children, Parents and Foster Parents
- **Item 18:** Child and Family Involvement in Case-planning.
- **Item 19:** Caseworker Visits with Children
- **Item 20:** Caseworker Visits with Parents.

Review Teams

The review teams were comprised of quality assurance staff from within the Family Programs Office (FPO) and agency staff. Team members were specifically trained in the case review methodology and processes.

Results

The following data is a compilation of all Quality Improvement Case Reviews (QICR) conducted in throughout the State of Nevada in 2011. The reviews consisted of a complete case read, Unified Nevada Information Technology for Youth (UNITY) review, interview of caseworker, and when available other stake holders relevant to the case such as: Parents, Foster Parents, Children, Independent Living (IL) workers, Child Protective Services (CPS) Investigators and Supervisors.

Based upon the rating criteria set by ACF all items are rated as either “Strength”, “Area Needing Improvement” or “Not Applicable “.

The table below is a comparison of the CFSR data and the most recent QICR review.

Comparative Statewide Data		
Item	CFSR 2009	QICR 2011
Item 1: Timeliness of Investigations	86.0%	76.19%
Item 3: Services to Prevent Removal/Re-entry	78.0%	70.45%
Item 4: Risk and Safety Assessment	55%	48.39%
Item 7: Permanency Goal	62.5 %	57.14%
Item 10: OPPLA	43.0%	50.00%
Item 17: Services to Children, Parents and Foster Parents	37.0%	41.94%
Item 18: Child and Family Involvement in Planning	44.0%	44.07%
Item 19: Caseworker Visits with Children	55.0%	56.45%
Item 20: Caseworker Visits with Parents.	44.0%	45.28%

Recommendations:

Nevada is currently under a PIP for many of the current identified issues and recommendations. Over time Nevada should see improvement after implementation of many of the action steps being conducted in the PIP. It is further recommended that if improvement is not shown over time another strategy may need to be identified and implemented to improve performance.

- Consider additional training regarding case note documentation. The quality of case notes varied significantly by case worker. Some case notes were lacking in relevant detail. Some case notes included detail that was irrelevant to the case activity about which the case note was documenting.
- Permanency goals should be thoughtful and determined on a case by case basis with involvement of the child and parents. Continued collaboration with the court is essential to timely permanency for children.
- Ensure each child is being seen at least once every 30 days with additional focus on the quality of the visits between the agency and child. Ensure all workers develop/establish efficient skills for child and family engagement. Documentation of these efforts needs to illustrate that the child/families needs, progress and safety are addressed during these imperative visits. In out of home placement situations when reunification is the permanency goal, it is equally as important that regular visits between the agency and parents occur to address case plan progress and that these efforts are reflected in case documentation .
- Review and consider methods of assessing family functioning or training on the current assessment tools. The current NCFAS G+R while helpful in theory is not in practice being used to its full potential. Often the final results are incomplete and out of date. The document does not reflect who, when or how information was collected. Furthermore there is not a meaningful translation to information gleaned from assessments into the case plan itself. The NCFAS G+R is just one of several assessment tools available to the caseworker. The caseworker should consider the results of several assessments when creating case plans and making recommendations.
- Initial risk and safety assessment should include family history and applicable out of state abuse/neglect histories to accurately reflect family functioning. On in-home cases the assessment needs to encompass all the children in the home. Coordinate worker access to revised Safety Training to enhance future performance measures.

- Comprehensive initial and on going assessments for child and family needs throughout the life of the case must begin at the onset by engaging the mother, father, and the child (as age appropriate), and include documented safety planning as well as independent living planning. Facilitate access to suitable services and monitor access/progress through collateral contacts needs to be reflected in case documentation. If one parent is absent from the home diligent search efforts ought to be initiated to locate that parent as well as concerted efforts to engage him/her need to be reflected in the case documentation. In out of home situations assessment of the foster parents needs and suitable services must also be reflected in case documentation and successfully resolved to ensure placement stability for children.
- Solid assessment of family functioning drives the case plan objectives. Assessments and case plans should be flexible enough to allow for changes as additional information is collected through out the life of the case. The best case plans and goals consider information collected over a period of time and from a variety of different types of assessments. The caseworkers should consider the results of several assessments when creating case plans and making recommendations.
- There should be a clear relationship between the information collected in various assessments, child and family team meetings and case visits and the case plan including the permanency goals.
- Case plan objectives may be more effective and achieved when the family is actively engaged in the development of those objectives through regular Child Family Team (CFT) meetings; which are then explicitly reflected in the case file. These regularly documented CFT's also function as an effective forum to address barriers to case plan progress and monitor successes.
- Consider developing a work group aimed to identify the elements of best practice by focusing on improving the quality of case management for OPPLA and independent living referrals and collaborations.

Introduction

Annual Quality Assurance Case Reviews (QICR) is conducted with each Nevada child welfare agency to determine the quality of services provided to children and families. The statewide annual review consists of a total of 62 cases representing a selection of in-home and out-of-home cases. This report is composed from all 2011 reviews.

In 2011 FPO completed the following QICR reviews:

Rural Counties: February 2011

Washoe County: September 2011

Clark County: April and October 2011

As a result of the 2008 Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) the State of Nevada is currently conducting Case Reviews as a requirement of Nevada's Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). In conducting statewide reviews it was determined that Clark County would be reviewed twice annually during the PIP implementation period. The PIP implementation period encompasses December 1, 2010 through November 30, 2012. The baseline for the case reviews will be prospective and established during the first year of the PIP implementation period.

In total FPO reviewed 62 child welfare cases in 2011; 42 out of home cases and 20 in home cases. The case sample is a randomized, stratified pull of all eligible cases for a given period under review (PUR). Cases previously reviewed are excluded from future samples for 2 years.

Methodology

Case Review Sample

The DCFS Family Programs Office (FPO) runs a data extract that includes an in home sample, stratified out of home sample, and an additional over sample of cases that are potentially eligible for child welfare case reviews. The out of home sample and over samples closely mirror the categorical stratification methodology of the Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR). This categorical stratification ensures an adequate representation of cases in the key program areas in out of home care such as adoption and independent living. The final samples are randomized to ensure unbiased representation of the number of cases required for the reviews of each child welfare agency.

The Quality Improvement on-site Case Review Process Policy defines an in home case as any “opened for services following a determination of investigation finding (i.e. substantiated or unsubstantiated case), whether formal (court ordered custody) or informal, where no child in the family was in an out-of-home placement for 24 hours or more during the period under review”, and the case has been open for a minimum of 60 consecutive days. An out of home placement may be a shelter or foster home, and the target child has been in out of home care for 24 hours or longer during the period under review.

The 2011 review was performed on nine child welfare indicators pertaining to children’s child welfare outcomes in the domains of safety, permanency and well being. The indicators measured are those defined by the federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and are the same criteria against which Nevada was measured in the federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) in August 2009.

The targeted outcomes are:

Child Welfare Outcomes	
Safety Items	
Item 1	Timeliness of investigations of reports of child maltreatment
Item 3	Services to family to protect the child in the home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care
Item 4	Risk assessment and safety management
Permanency Items	
Item 7	Permanency Goal

Item 10	OPPLA
Well Being Items	
Item 17	Needs and services of child, parents and foster parents
Item 18	Child and family involvement in case planning
Item 19	Caseworker visits with child
Item 20	Caseworker visits with parents

Review Ratings

The Qualitative Case Review Instrument (QICR) provided Case Reviewers a series of questions for each of the performance indicators categorized under the three outcome ratings in the areas of Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being. Each performance indicator (item) was rated as a “strength,” an “area needing improvement,” (ANI) or “not applicable” (NA).

Case Review Teams

The review teams were made of Program Specialists from the Family Programs Office with DCFS and local agency employees. Per agreement with CCDFS, the second Clark review was reviewed only by FPO staff.

Overall Performance

The results are a combination of all out of home and in home cases reviewed in 2011 in Nevada. The following table illustrates the combined results of all 2011 reviews.

Item	Nevada Performance Item Rating									
		Out of Home			In Home			Combined		
		S	ANI	NA	S	ANI	NA	S	ANI	NA
Item 1	Timeliness of initiating investigations	87.5% N=21	12.5% N=3	N=18	61.11% N=11	38.89% N=7	N=2	76.19% N=32	23.81% N=10	n=20
Item 3	Services to prevent removal	88.0% N=22	12.00% N=3	N=17	47.37% N=9	52.63% N=10	N=1	70.45% N=31	29.55% N=13	n=18
Item 4	Risk and Safety Assessment	54.76% N=23	45.24% N=19	N=0	35.00% N=7	65.00% N=13	N=0	48.39% N=30	51.61% N=32	n=0
Item 7	Permanency Goal for target child	57.14% N=24	42.86% N=18	N=0	na N=0	na N=0	N=20	57.14% N=24	42.86% N=18	n=20
Item 10	OPPLA	50.0% N=4	50.0% N=4	N=34	na N=0	na N=0	N=20	50.0% N=4	50.0% N=4	n=54
Item 17	Needs and Services of Child, Parents and Foster Parents	42.86% N=18	57.14% N=24	N=0	40.0% N=8	60.0% N=12	N=0	41.94% N=26	58.06% N=36	n=0
Item 18	Child and Family involvement in case planning	41.03% N=16	58.97% N=23	N=3	50.0% N=10	50.0% N=10	N=0	44.07% N=26	55.93% N=33	N=3
Item 19	Caseworker Visits with Child	59.52% N=25	40.48% N=17	N=0	50.0% N=10	50.0% N=10	N=0	56.45% N=35	43.55% N=27	n=0
Item 20	Caseworker Visits with Parents	36.36% N=12	63.64% N=21	N=9	60.0% N=12	40.0% N=8	N=0	45.28% N=24	54.72% N=29	n=9

Note: Performance Item Ratings: S = Strength; ANI = Area Needing Improvement; N/A = Not Applicable N= total number of applicable cases per item reviewed.

Safety Item 1

Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment

When a referral is received by an intake worker alleging possible child maltreatment, a supervisor reviews the information and makes a determination of whether the referral will become a report and what type of response the report merits. If the referral becomes a report, it is assigned to a CPS caseworker for investigation. Statewide Intake and Response Time Policy 0506 outlines the expected response time for the type of child maltreatment allegation. The timeline begins with the assignment of the referral to an intake worker. The following are child welfare agency response times that are outlined in Intake Policy/table 0506.5.1:

- **Priority 1:** within 3 hours when the identified danger is urgent or of emergency status; there is present danger; and safety factors are identified. This response type requires a face-to-face contact by CPS.
- **Priority 1 Rural:** within 6 hours when the identified danger is urgent or of emergency status; there is present danger; and safety factors are identified. This response type requires a face-to-face contact by CPS. (Rural time includes a distance factor).
- **Priority 2:** within 24 hours when the victim is under the age of 5 with any maltreatment of impending danger; safety factors identified including child fatality. This response type requires a face-to-face contact by CPS or may involve collateral contact by telephone or case review.
- **Priority 3:** within 72 hours when maltreatment is indicated, but no safety factors are identified. This response type requires a face-to-face contact by CPS or may involve collateral contact by telephone or case review. In situations where the initial contact is via telephone call, the agency must make a face to face contact with the alleged child victim within 24 hours following the telephone contact.

Referrals that do not rise to the level of an investigation may be referred to a Differential Response Program. Such programs have required response timelines in accordance with a Priority Code 3, or 72 hours.

Results:

<i>Item 1</i>	Rural	Clark	Washoe	Total	Percent
Strength	7	18	7	32	76.19%
ANI	2	8	0	10	23.81%
Total applicable	9	26	7	42	
NA	5	8	7	20	
Total cases	14	34	14	62	
Strength by site	77.78 %	69.23%	100%		

Cases are not applicable for review of this item when there are no reports of maltreatment received during the period under review. In total 20 cases were not applicable for review of item 1. There is a marked difference in the results for in home cases and out of home cases. In comparing the in home to out of home cases 21 of 24 out of home cases indicated an area of strength where as only 11 of 18 in home cases indicated an area of strength for this item.

Safety Item 3

Services to family to protect child in the home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care

Safety Item 3 evaluates if in investigating allegations of maltreatment, services to prevent entry into foster care were provided prior to removal or prior to returning the child to the care of their parents (trial home placements are considered returned to parents' care for this item). The review takes into consideration particularly egregious situations. In those circumstances it is reasonable to assume that preventative services may not be provided in order to ensure immediate safety of the children. For example: in cases of serious physical abuse where the children require immediate medical attention it is reasonable to assume that rather than providing prevention services, the

agency would take custody of the children to ensure emergency medical treatment is provided and to protect the children from further harm.

Results

<i>Item 3</i>	Rural	Clark	Washoe	Total	Percent
Strength	5	22	4	31	70.45%
ANI	4	5	4	13	29.55%
Total applicable	9	27	8	44	
NA	5	7	6	18	
Total cases	14	34	14	62	
Strength by site	55.56%	81.48%	50.00%		

Assessment of item 3 was applicable in 44 of 62 cases; 31 out of home and 13 in home cases. There were 18 cases excluded from review of this item. A case is not applicable for review of item 3 if the target child entered foster care prior to the period under review, and no child remained in the home or if there were no substantiated reports or indications of maltreatment during the period under review.

Safety Item 4

Risk Assessment and Safety Management

Initial and ongoing risk assessment is necessary to ensure that risk factors have not increased to a level requiring a safety response (NAC 432B.155) for the child whether he is in his home or in a foster home. Ongoing formal or informal risk assessments are documented in case notes and in the case file.

A safety assessment is an ongoing review of safety factors that occur at case milestones, whenever a child experiences a move (reunification or placement change) or when a planned risky event will occur (over night home

visits with offending parents etc). Safety plans are developed to ensure the immediate protection of the child while the safety threats are being addressed. This document can be found in the case file or in the event of an informal plan – all relevant child and family team members are aware of the safety plan, and their responsibilities.

Results

Item 4	Rural	Clark	Washoe	Total	Percent
strength	5	17	8	30	48.39%
ANI	9	17	6	32	51.61%
total applicable	14	34	14	62	
NA	0	0	0	0	
total cases	14	34	14	62	
strength by site	35.71%	50.00%	57.14%		

All 62 cases are applicable for review of this item. In reviewing this item, reviewers determine if the agency is currently and/or has in the past adequately assessed the safety and risk of harm to all children involved in each case. After reviewing this item and analyzing the results, the reviewers noted a significant difference in the ratings of in home versus out of in home cases. For the in home cases the review indicated that only 35% of cases indicated an area of strength (7 of 20) this is in contrast to the 55% of out of in home cases that indicated an area of strength for this item (23 of 42 cases).

Permanency Item 7

Permanency Goal for the Target Child

Item 7 evaluates the agency's establishment of appropriate and timely permanency goals for the target child. The most current permanency goal in regards to the target child is evaluated against Adoption and Safe Family's Act 1997 (ASFA) guidelines. Permanency planning must be in compliance with ASFA timeframes. This item also reviews the appropriateness and timeliness of initiating termination of parental rights proceedings (where applicable).

Results

<i>Item 7</i>	Rural	Clark	Washoe	Total	Percent
Strength	3	15	6	24	57.14%
ANI	6	9	3	18	42.86%
Total applicable	9	24	9	42	
NA	5	10	5	20	
Total cases	14	34	14	62	
Strength by site	33.33%	62.50%	66.67%		

All 42 of the out of home cases were eligible for review of this item. In home cases are excluded from review of item 7.

Permanency Item 10

Other planned permanent living arrangement (OPPLA)

This item evaluates whether the agency made diligent efforts and achieved positive outcomes to help the target child achieve the goals related to independence when the permanency goal for the target child is *Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (OPPLA)*. This may include referrals to the Independent Living (IL) program and assisting the target child in placement in a permanent living situation.

Results

<i>Item 10</i>	Rural	Clark	Washoe	Total	Percent
Strength	0	1	3	4	50.0%
ANI	1	3	0	4	50.0%
Total applicable	1	4	3	8	
NA	13	30	11	54	
Total cases	14	34	14	62	
Strength by site	0.00%	25.00%	100.0%		

The sample yielded 8 cases that were eligible for review of this item, all agencies were represented in review of this item.

Well Being Item 17

Needs and Services for Target Child, Parent and Foster Parents

Proper identification of need and linking services aimed to meet the needs of child clients, the parent's/care takers and the foster parents (when applicable) is critical to the later successes of the family. Families and children who are properly assessed and quickly provided with intervention/ preventative services are more likely to have positive outcomes and are less likely to be associated with extensive durations in care, multiple placement changes and non-compliance of case plan objectives.

This item is reviewed in three sub parts. Item 17A evaluates how effectively the agency identified the needs of the target child, and linked the target child with services to meet those needs. The reviewers consider if all relevant needs were identified and if services were provided regardless of availability in the community. Medical, Educational, and Mental Health/Psychological needs are covered in a separate item not currently under review and are thus omitted from consideration. Sub-parts 17B (needs and services for parents) and 17C (needs and services for foster parents) are evaluated in the same manner as 17A however medical, educational and mental health needs are applicable for sub part 17B and 17C.

Results

In order for this item to achieve an *overall rating* of STRENGTH all sub parts, (items 17A, 17B and 17C) must be rated as either STRENGTH or NA. A single subpart earning an ANI will cause the overall rating to be ANI. In total 62 cases were reviewed for this item, and 42 cases were out of home and 20 cases were in home. Sub item 17C is NA for in home cases.

<i>Item 17 (combined)</i>	Rural	Clark	Washoe	Total	Percent
Strength	4	15	7	26	41.94%
ANI	10	19	7	36	58.06%
Total applicable	14	34	14	62	
NA	0	0	0	0	
Total cases	14	34	14	62	
Strength by site	28.57%	44.12%	50.0%		

The following table is a break down of ratings by each subpart to Item 17 and categorized by jurisdiction.

<i>Item 17 A</i>	Rural	Clark	Washoe	Total	Percent
Strength	10	22	10	42	67.75%
ANI	4	12	4	20	32.25%
Total applicable	14	34	14	62	
NA	0	0	0	0	
Total cases	14	34	14	62	
Strength by site	71.42%	64.70%	71.42%		

<i>Item 17 B</i>	Rural	Clark	Washoe	Total	Percent
Strength	5	16	8	29	50.87%
ANI	9	15	4	28	49.13%
Total applicable	14	31	12	57	
NA	0	3	2	5	
Total cases	14	34	14	62	
Strength by site	35.71%	51.61%	66.67%		

<i>Item 17 C</i>	Rural	Clark	Washoe	Total	Percent
Strength	7	17	6	30	75.00%
ANI	2	7	1	10	25.00%
Total applicable	9	24	7	40	
NA	5	10	7	22	
Total cases	14	34	14	62	
Strength by site	77.77%	70.83%	85.71%		

Well Being Item 18

Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning

This item evaluates the agency's inclusion of the child, mother and father in case planning. The target child, mother and father are rated separately, however as in item 17 the mother, father and child must be evaluated as a YES or NA for the total scoring to be a STRENGTH. In circumstances when it is not realistic to include the child or parent for example: the target child is non-verbal; or father is unknown, the evaluation tool rates their inclusion as "NA" which does not negatively affect the scoring of this item.

Parental incarceration is not grounds to exclude him/her from the planning processes. Until the agency has been legally absolved from providing services to the parents, it is expected that the parents are involved in case planning.

Results

<i>Item 18</i>	Rural	Clark	Washoe	Total	Percent
Strength	2	15	9	26	44.07%
ANI	12	17	4	33	55.93%
Total applicable	14	32	13	59	
NA	0	2	1	3	
Total cases	14	34	14	62	
Strength by site	14.29%	46.88%	69.23%		

All 62 cases in the sample were reviewed for this item. In reviewing this item it should be noted that there is a significant difference in the ratings of in home versus out of home cases. In home cases reviewed indicated 50% of cases (10 of 20 applicable) were strengths while 41.03% of out of home cases (16 of 39) indicated strength.

Well Being Item 19

Caseworker Visits with the Child

This item evaluates both the quantity AND the quality of the visits with the target child. In Nevada the reviewers determine if the frequency and duration of the visits with the caseworker were sufficient to evaluate for risk, safety, need and progress of the target child not just if the visits meet policy requirements.

Results

<i>Item 19</i>	Rural	Clark	Washoe	Total	Percent
Strength	10	20	5	35	56.45%
ANI	4	14	9	27	43.55%
Total applicable	14	34	14	62	
NA	0	0	0	0	
Total cases	14	34	14	62	
Strength by site	71.43%	58.82%	35.71%		

In reviewing this item the reviewers noted a significant difference between in home cases and out of home cases that is not represented in the above table. In home cases – 10 of 20 applicable cases (50%) were rated as Strength while 25 of 42 (approximately 60%) out of in home cases indicated strength.

Well Being Item 20

Caseworker Visits with the Parents

Item 20 is similar to item 19 in that it is both a qualitative and a quantitative evaluation of caseworker interaction with the parents. It is expected per policy that the agency will visit with the parent monthly, until termination of parental rights, or when the court relieves the agency from providing “reasonable efforts”.

Results

<i>Item 20</i>	Rural	Clark	Washoe	Total	Percent
Strength	3	13	8	24	45.28%
ANI	10	16	3	29	54.72%
Total applicable	13	29	11	53	
NA	1	5	3	9	
Total cases	14	34	14	62	
Strength by site	23.08%	44.83%	72.73%		

Overall, 53 cases were applicable for review of this item, 33 out of home and 20 in home cases. It should be noted that only 36.36% (12 out of 33 applicable cases) of out of home cases reviewed for this item indicated strength.

Summary/ Findings

The QA unit of the Family Programs Office reviewed 62 cases statewide in 2011.

The following review areas indicated an improvement in performance from the 2009 CFSR review:

Item	CFSR 2009	QICR 2011
Item 10: OPPLA	43.0	50.0
Item 17: Services to child, parent and foster parent	37	41.94
Item 18: Child and family involvement in case planning	44	44.07
Item 19: Caseworker visits with child	55	56.45
Item 20: Caseworker visits with parent	44	45.28

The improvement on items 17-20 were within 1-2% of the results from the 2009 CFSR.

The State of Nevada has been diligently working to increase the frequency and improve quality of visits between the caseworker and the child. Supervisors and managers have available to them the following compliance tracking tools: CFS7D7 and CFS7L5, both of which pull data based upon inputs into the statewide automated child welfare information system, UNITY. When comparing the data from either UNITY data report (CFS7L5 or CFS7D7) to the rating from item 19 of the annual QICR review it is important to understand what the review tool measures, and what the UNITY reports measure. Both UNITY data reports measure compliance with state and federal policy regarding child and caseworker visitation in foster care cases, however neither UNITY report provides any evaluation of the quality of the visit between caseworker and target child.

Item 19 of the QICR review evaluates both the *compliance* and the *quality* of the interaction between the caseworker and the target child. Comparing the data from UNITY reports to the QICR can be somewhat misleading because of the aforementioned differences, and also because the population of the QICR and CFS7D7 / CFS7L5 are different. The QICR reviews evaluate both *in home* and *out of home* cases, of a small stratified sampling of the state's total *in home* **and** *out of home* cases during a specific PUR. The UNITY data reports only evaluate compliance in the total population of out of home cases during a FFY.

According to the CFS7D7 reports (which indicate how many children in care were requiring caseworker visits) the entire state (WCDSS, CCDFS and DCFS) had combined total of 6737 unique children in care who were placed within the state for at least 24 hours during FFY2011. Of those 6737 children it is expected that 5756 would receive a monthly visit from the respective agency for every eligible month in care. Children in placement less than 1 complete calendar month (regardless of actual accrued days in care) are excluded from this calculation.

Per data report CFS7D7 (data collected on January 6, 2012) Nevada's statewide reported compliance to ACF was **52.08%** for FFY 2011. Of the 6561 expected to have a visit with the caseworker, 3417 of them had a visit every month a visit was required. This number does not reflect how frequently an individual child was seen. Federal reporting requirements mandate that for a case to be in compliance the child must have a recorded visit for every eligible month. Failing to make a visit during FFY 2011 renders the entire case out of compliance with the federal expectation. For example, a child that was seen 11 of 12 months is evaluated as not in compliance with the expectation. CFS7D7 reports how many children had a visit every eligible month; it does not measure the frequency with which the agency visited children.

QICR reviews rated item 19 (caseworker visits with children) only slightly higher than either UNITY data reports at 56.45%. When broken down by case type the QICR reviews rated item 19 (caseworker visits with children) as 59.52% strength for out of home cases and 50.00% strength for in home cases.

Particular focus for improvement should be placed upon quality caseworker visits with children of in home cases. During the PUR for QICR 2011, only 30% of in home cases indicated an area of strength. This lower rating has as negative impact upon Nevada's overall evaluation of caseworker visits with children as it relates to the QICR reviews.

The following items indicate a decrease in performance when compared to the 2009 CFSR review:

Item	CFSR 2009	QICR 2011
Item 1: Timeliness of investigations	86.0	76.19
Item 3: Services to prevent removal/re-entry	78.0	70.45
Item 4: Risk Assessment and safety management	55.0	48.39
Item 7: Permanency Goal	62.5	57.14

Recommendations

Nevada is currently under a PIP for many of the identified issues and recommendations. Over time Nevada should see improvement after implementation of many of the action steps being conducted in the PIP.

- Consider additional training regarding case note documentation. The quality of case notes varied significantly by case worker. Some case notes were lacking in relevant detail. Some case notes included detail that was irrelevant to the case activity about which the case note was documenting.
- Permanency goals should be thoughtful and determined on a case by case basis with involvement of the child and parents. Continued collaboration with the court is essential to timely permanency for children.
- Ensure each child is being seen at least once every 30 days with additional focus on the quality of the visits between the agency and child. Ensure all workers develop/establish efficient skills for child and family engagement. Documentation of these efforts needs to illustrate that the child/families needs, progress and safety are addressed during these imperative visits. In out of home placement situations when reunification is the permanency goal, it is equally as important that regular visits between the agency and parents occur to address case plan progress and that these efforts are reflected in case documentation .
- Review and consider methods of assessing family functioning or training on the current assessment tools. The current NCFAS G+R is not being used to its full potential. Often the final results are incomplete and out of date. The documents reviewed do not reflect who, when or how information was collected. Furthermore there is no meaningful translation of information gleaned from assessments into the case plan itself. The NCFAS G+R is just one of several assessment tools available to the caseworker. The caseworker should consider the results of several assessments when creating case plans and making recommendations.
- Initial risk and safety assessment to include family history to include applicable out of state abuse/neglect histories need to be accurately reflected on the assessment tool. On in-home cases the assessment must encompass all the children in the home. Coordinate worker access to revised Safety Training to enhance future performance measures.

- Comprehensive initial and on going assessments for child and family needs throughout the life of the case needs to begin at the onset by engaging the mother, father, and the child (as age appropriate), to include documented safety planning as well as independent living. Facilitate access to suitable services and monitor access/progress through collateral contacts need to be reflected in case documentation. If one parent is absent from the home diligent search efforts be initiated to locate that parent as well as concerted efforts to engage him/her need to be reflected in the case documentation. In out of home situations assessment of the foster parents needs and suitable services also needs to be reflected in case documentation and successfully resolved to ensure placement stability for children.
- A solid assessment of family functioning drives the case plan objectives. Assessments and case plans should be flexible enough to allow for changes as additional information is collected through out the life of the case. The best case plans and goals consider information collected over a period of time and from a variety of different types of assessments. The caseworkers should consider the results of several assessments when creating case plans and making recommendations.
- There should be a clear relationship between the information collected in various assessments, child and family team meetings and case visits and the case plan including the permanency goals.
- Case plan objectives may be more effective and achieved when the family is actively engaged in the development of those objectives through regular Child Family Team (CFT) meetings; which are then explicitly reflected in the case file. These regularly documented CFT also function as an effective forum to address barriers to case plan progress and monitor successes.
- Consider developing a work group aimed to identify the elements of best practice by focusing on improving the quality of case management for OPPLA and independent living referrals and collaborations.
- Focus on developing practice guidelines regarding caseworker visitation with parents – specifically focus on out of home cases. Only 36.36% (12 of 33) of out of home cases reviewed for this item scored as Strength.