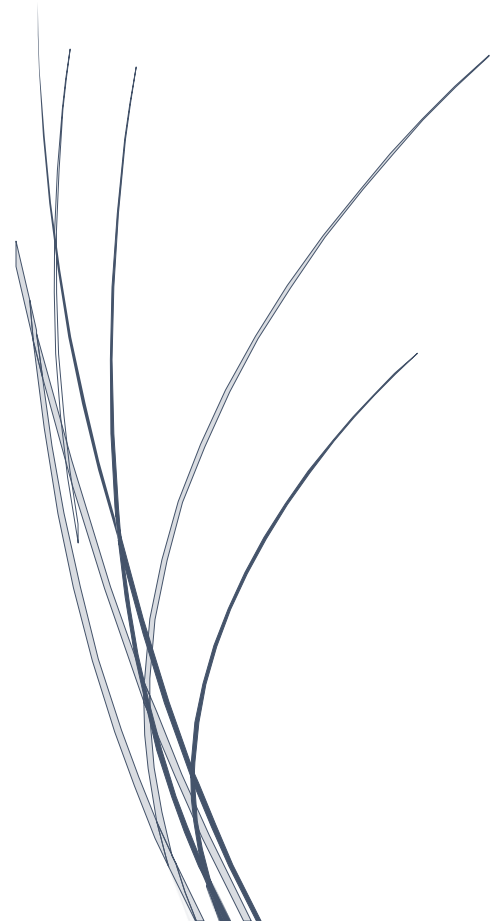




1st Semiannual 2024

Children's Division Access to Medical Records Report

Report for January 1, 2024 – June 30, 2024



Introduction

The Department of Social Services (the Department) oversees several programs to support the general welfare of children in the State of Missouri. The Department has established the Children's Division to administer and manage the programs for children who are in the legal custody of the state. The Children's Division promotes the well-being of Missouri children by partnering with parents, family/community members, and government agencies. The Children's Division has developed specific programs to provide specialized services. These programs help strengthen families through intervention, prevention, adoption, and foster care.

Each Children's Division program is unique; however, the emphasis of this report is on the children in the "Missouri Foster Care Program." This refers to children placed away from their parents or placed in Children's Division custody for 24-hour care. A foster care program includes placements in: foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child care institutions, and pre-adoptive homes. When children are suddenly separated from their parents or other caregivers for entrance into the foster care system, it can be a difficult and traumatic time for families. When the child is in Children's Division custody, it is in the best interests of the child for parents, resource providers, and case managers to know that child's medical history and current information and share that medical history with those individuals who are providing care.

This report documents the commitment of the Children's Division to ensure that pertinent medical records and/or medical information for a child will be made available to appropriate members of the child's treatment and/or family support team. The child's teams may include resource providers (such as foster parents), a guardian ad litem, medical care providers, parents, and other individuals who provide support or services to a child or family. Access to medical records and/or medical information is consistent with federal and state law and Children's Division policy.

To ensure the confidentiality, maintenance of, and access to a child's medical record are consistent with applicable provisions of federal and state law, Children's Division is compliant with the Department's information security policy. The information security process was implemented to be in compliance with the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act and the State of Missouri's Sunshine Law requirements.

The term medical record is used to describe the systematic documentation of a child's medical history and plan of care. The medical record includes a variety of "notes" entered by health care providers. These notes include, but are not limited to: orders for the administration of drugs and therapies, laboratory results, treatment/service plans, and observations of the child's symptoms and/or responses to treatment. The information contained in the medical record allows health care providers to assess the child's current treatments and review previous medical history. This can increase the providers' ability to prescribe safe and effective remedies. The medical record serves as the central source for planning the child's care and documenting the provision of medical services.

The Children's Division has placed great importance on the oversight and coordination of medical/behavioral health services provided to children in its care and custody. Access to medical records is a vital and essential service for each child. The medical records can provide prescribers, the child, parent(s), placement providers, and case managers with enough information to promote the effective and efficient delivery of various medical/behavioral health treatments. This report contains Children's Division's current efforts to create access to medical records and their future plans to provide access to these records.

Current Efforts for Access to Medical Records

Children's Division has incorporated several approaches to obtain medical information/documents. The documents are stored in a centralized data imaging system (OnBase) and any physical copies of the documents are retained in the case manager's physical file. Access to those documents is primarily maintained by the case managers. Members of the child/youth's Family Support Team (FST) can request access to medical information/documents through the case manager. Direct access to OnBase is limited to authorized staff. The primary discussions within Children's Division around "access" to medical information/documents have been connected to methods for sharing health information.

The sharing of health information also known as "Health Information Exchange" (HIE), has been the contemporary service promoted to foster access to medical information/documents. A HIE allows healthcare professionals and patients to appropriately access and securely share medical information electronically. The benefits of a HIE include the ability to:

- Inform care coordination in order to improve patient outcomes;
- Support transitions of care and referrals through sharing patient data electronically; and
- Implement clinical information reconciliation for medication, medication allergies, and current problems lists.

The Department of Social Services, MO HealthNet Division has a leadership role in establishing the HIE service and is a member of the Missouri Medicaid Enterprise which also includes, Department of Health and Senior Services and Department of Mental Health. The Missouri Medicaid Enterprise undertakes health information technology projects to improve individual health outcomes using a combination of state and federal funds.

In an effort to initiate the HIE concept, the State of Missouri has contracted with the following Health Information Networks (HIN).

- Lewis and Clark Information Exchange
- Velatura
- Show-Me Health Information Network of Missouri
- Tiger Institute for Health Innovation

The HIN Participant Locator Map is a publicly available tool for healthcare providers, HINs, and stakeholders to identify the locations of HIN-participating entities within the state.

In addition to the health information sharing services through HINs, Children's Division staff ensure completion of the [Health Care Information Summary](#) and [Child/Family Health and Developmental Assessment](#). These documents are required to be completed and provided to the resource provider within 72 hours whenever possible, but no later than 30 days following the initial placement date. If the child/youth has moved to another residence the Child/Family Health and Developmental Assessment, an updated Health Care Information Summary, and all prior [Monthly Medical Logs](#) must be provided to the resource provider no later than 72 hours from the date the child/youth was placed in the residence. In conducting HIE services these documents can be utilized to assist in providing the right healthcare for children/youth in Alternative Care.

Through various agencies and workgroups such as the University of Missouri's Center for Excellence, Foster Care ECHO, and Children's Mental Health Collaborative, Children's Division is collaborating to expand the utilization of health information sharing services. As a facilitator of the FST and a member of the Show Me Healthy Kids specialty plan care management team, the Children's Division's case managers are vital to the provision of access to medical information/documents. In addition to being involved with these teams, case managers have the ability to request medical information/documents from Health Information Specialist staff who have access to HINs. These efforts can allow appropriate members of the FST – i.e., parents, resource providers, and/or care management team – contact with a case manager who can oversee and monitor access through the sharing of pertinent health information.

Future Plans for Access to Medical Records

Children's Division has included the HIE concept as the framework to provide access to medical information/documents. Currently, HIE services are being used for health information sharing. Due to technological advancements and governmental trajectories, establishing more ways to share health information through various platforms has been at the forefront of discussions regarding access to medical information/documents. The future of access to medical information/documents appears to focus on locating electronic tools that align centralized data systems with a wide variety of accessibility.