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# Children's Division Maintaining 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, early childcare, 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. An efficient medical records system can provide the medical information needed to support proper care.

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 test 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.

A medical records system may be paper or electronic. A paper medical records system consists of physical documents that are placed in a file or folder. An electronic medical records system consists of medical information entered into a computer or other digital device.

This report documents the commitment of the Children's Division to the development and operation of a statewide system to maintain medical records and/or medical information for each child in its custody. The medical records system must operate and maintain all medical records consistent with federal and state law and Children's Division policy.

To ensure the confidentiality, maintenance of, and access to a child's medical records are consistent with applicable provisions of federal and state law, Children's Division is compliant with the Department's information security system. 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 Children's Division has placed great importance on the oversight and coordination of medical/behavioral health services provided to children in its custody. Developing, operating, and maintaining a medical records system is a vital and essential service for each child. The medical records system can provide prescribers, the child, parent(s), placement providers, and case managers with enough current and historical information to promote the effective and efficient delivery of various medical/behavioral health treatments. This report contains the Children's Division's current efforts to maintain medical records and their plans to implement a medical records system.

## Current Efforts for Maintaining Medical Records

The efforts to develop and operate a statewide medical records system have been consistent. Children's Division is committed to the development of a system that contains a full and accurate medical record for each child/youth. The operational commitment remains focused on ensuring that current and historical medical information/documents are included in each medical record. Children's Division continues the process to replace their case management system, Family and Children Electronic System (FACES) with a new Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS). The CCWIS project is being conducted in phases and is currently in an information gathering phase focused on ways to improve accessibility and functionality in the new CCWIS. A discussion on a medical records system within and/or attached to the new CCWIS may occur in later phases of the project. The Children's Division operational focus has centered on maintaining and increasing the collection of medical information/documents.

The document imaging system (OnBase) is the current medical records system. OnBase is a statewide system that contains images of documents for any services provided to the child/youth. The system is a centralized source for Children's Division staff to store, review, and retrieve various documents, including medical documents. In addition to OnBase, medical information/documents may be kept in the case manager's physical case file. All Children's Division and Foster Care Case Management staff, and Residential Contractors are directed to maintain in the physical case file any medical documents received that relate to the treatment of a child/youth in foster care who has a prescription for psychotropic medications. These documents must be kept, even if the information is entered into an electronic system.

The Children's Division case managers/supervisors and Health Information Specialist (HIS) staff utilize several electronic methods to obtain medical information/documents. Some of the methods are:

- Biscom Fax: A secure file transfer system for medical documents from various entities through digital fax
- CIOX: A clinical data technology system that securely connects healthcare decision makers with patient medical records for agencies that are enrolled with CIOX Health
- health eXchange evolved (hXe): A centralized record management system that allows the submission of record requests directly to any healthcare provider
- ShowMeVax: Missouri's, Immunization Information System
- Cyber access: MO HealthNet (Missouri Medicaid) Billing Claims system

A significant method for the collection of medical information/documents is the Show Me Healthy Kids (SMHK) portal called Envolve. The Envolve portal is a secure web portal where health care providers and specialty plan members can access demographic information on members who are in Children's Division custody and in Alternative Care. In addition to the demographic information, Envolve contains some medical information/documents (appointments, immunizations, claims, contact/case notes), and ancillary interests such as the child/youth's care plan, referrals for services or resources to meet social determinants of health. The information that the portal contains has been referred to as the child/youth's "Health Passport," because the information spans medical and well-being domains and is available to different parties involved in the health care oversight of the child/youth. Currently, there are only a few Children's Division Central Office and HIS staff who are authorized users of Envolve.

The emergence of health information sharing i.e., Health Information Exchange has increased the ability to collect medical information/documents. MO HealthNet has contracted with several Health Information Networks (HIN) to share medical information electronically. The HIS staff have access to several HIN's such as Velatura, Show-Me Health Information Network of Missouri (SHINE), and the Tiger Institute for Health Innovation. The HIS staff are testing these HINs to determine if they can provide the medical information/documents needed to assist with services provided to children/youth and if access to the HINs can contribute to compiling and maintaining a medical record.

## **Plans to Develop a Medical Records System**

There have been initial conversations between the Department of Social Services and SMHK to discuss possible avenues of enhancing how medical information/documents are collected, received, and reviewed, as well as identifying additional solutions that would offer wide access to medical information/documents electronically. These conversations have centered around the utilization of SMHK's portal.

The integration of and/or communication with OnBase and the new CCWIS has been a unique and complex discussion. The fundamental functions of a new authorized CCWIS are to provide state and federal agencies with current information using new technology. OnBase is a vital database that contains an array of service information for children/youth in Alternative Care; however, the connection between a document imaging system and new technology has raised some challenges.

Also, the development of the new CCWIS contains several Federal requirements that are directly connected with funding for the project. Children's Division's current focus is on building the foundation of the CCWIS through a review and assessment of processes within FACES. The goal is to assess the FACES functions and develop upgraded methods in the new CCWIS. Discussions regarding a medical records system may be addressed when the central functions of the CCWIS have been finalized.

Although the development of a new medical records system is on-going, Children's Division's actions to maintain and expand the collection of medical information/documents continues to improve.