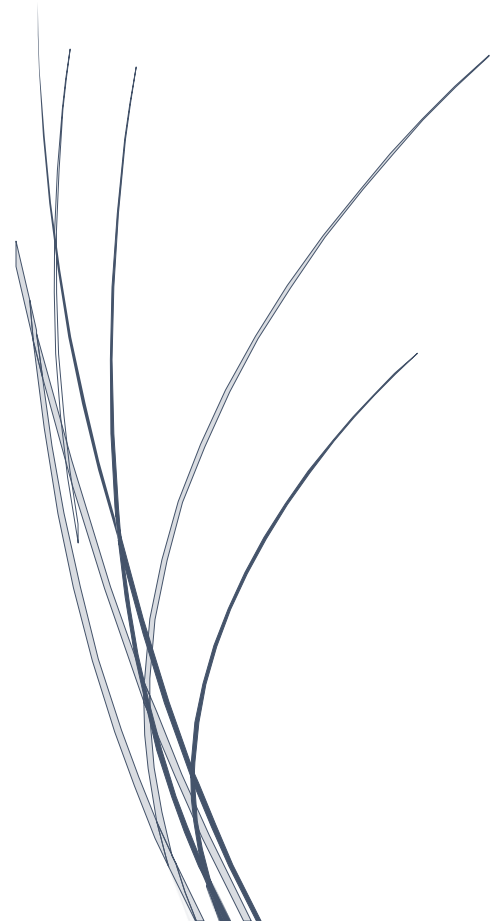




2<sup>nd</sup> Semiannual 2024

# Children's Division Access to Medical Records Report

Report for July 1, 2024 – December 31, 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**

In Children's Division, sharing health information i.e., "Health Information Exchange" (HIE), is the leading source of access to medical information/documents. The ability to improve the coordination of a child/youth's medical care through HIE services is invaluable. The State of Missouri has contracted with several Health Information Networks (HIN) such as the; Lewis and Clark Information Exchange (LACIE), Show-Me Health Information Network of Missouri, Tiger Institute for Health Innovation, and Velatura. The utilization of HIE services has increased the potential to produce successful healthcare outcomes for children/youth in foster care.

The completion of the [Health Care Information Summary](#) and [Child/Family Health and Developmental Assessment](#) forms continue to be essential tools to facilitate HIE services. 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 new 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.

Children's Division case managers and contracted case workers are the primary contact for members of the child/youth's Family Support Team ("FST") to obtain access to pertinent medical information and/or medical documents. The case manager must invite the resource providers, parents and their legal counsel, and legal guardian of the child/youth to an FST.

The case managers can retrieve medical information and documents stored in a centralized data imaging system (OnBase) and any physical copies of the documents retained in the case manager's physical file. Direct access to OnBase is limited to authorized Children's Division and contracted staff.

As a coordinator and facilitator, the Children's Division case manager can invite the Show Me Healthy Kids (SMHK) specialty plan care manager to attend an FST. Collaboration with the SMHK care manager can provide current and historical healthcare information. Children's Division and/or Foster Care Case managers have the ability to request medical information/documents for children/youth in foster care who are SMHK specialty plan members.

In addition, case managers can request medical information/documents from Health Information Specialist (HIS) 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.

Children's Division has implemented an online (Hospital Industry Data Institute (HIDI)) platform with the capabilities to track a majority of the children/youth who enter a hospital emergency department and/or are admitted as an in-patient for behavioral healthcare. When a child/youth has entered an emergency department/in-patient admission the HIDI platform provides real time alerts to Children's Division circuit managers. The purpose of the HIDI alert system is to assist the circuit managers with oversight and support for Children's Division case managers and supervisors. Children's Division staff who have been authorized to utilize the HIDI platform are; Alternative Care case managers, supervisors, circuit managers, regional leadership teams, HIS staff, members of the Children's Division residential unit, and a few other Children's Division team members who need the information to support the care/treatment of the child/youth. The HIDI platform can provide access to medical information and documents to any of authorized individuals.

## **Future Plans for Access to Medical Records**

The momentum to implement new digital technology within State agencies is moving forward, which has impacted almost every aspect of service delivery. Various data systems are being combined to create a single, centralized data system that contains information from a number of sources across multiple State agencies.

The HIDI platform trainings are planned and will be conducted in January 2025 for parent portal access which means a statewide access for some and then each region will have their own trainings. Foster Care Case Management staff will have their own portal and will be provided a training specific for their teams.

Children's Division is developing a new Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System centered on expanding accessibility to information pertaining to services provided to children/youth. Access to medical information/documents through various electronic formats continues to be the predominate objective.