

**Western Citizens Review Panel  
Meeting Summary  
December 15, 2017  
9:00 a.m.-12 noon**

**Attendees:**

*Panel Members:* Melissa Cavagnaro, Ellen Kennedy (Chair), Dennis Walczyk, Sarlyn Tate (co-Chair)

*Guests:* Dr. Gale Burstein, Erie County Commissioner of Health  
Joyce Brown, Office of Assemblywoman Crystal Peoples-Stokes  
Lisa Gordon, Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) (by phone)  
Donna Stott, Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) (by phone)

*WRI Staff:* Jennifer Goldman, Citizen Review Panel Coordinator  
Darlene Ward, Executive Director  
Ellen Unruh, Associate Executive Director (by phone)

**Handouts:**

- Agenda
- September 29, 2017 Western CRP Meeting Summary
- OASAS PowerPoint slides
- Bill related to KinGAP subsidy
- Erie County Opiate Task Force
- Foster Care Youth Leaving System
- Early Childhood and Home Visiting
- Draft CRP 2018 meeting calendar
- CRP Operating Guidelines – draft revisions

**Welcome and Introductions**

*Ellen Kennedy, Panel Chair*

Panel Chair Ellen Kennedy welcomed meeting attendees and convened the meeting.

**AGENDA ITEM: WRI Updates**

*Jennifer Goldman, WRI*

Mrs. Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided updates from WRI including an update on the status of the Annual Report and discussion of meeting topics to be included in an online survey with the purpose of prioritizing meeting topics for the upcoming year.

**AGENDA ITEM: Discussion with Legislative Staff**

*Joyce Brown, Office of Assemblywoman Crystal Peoples-Stokes*

Ms. Joyce Brown, from the Office of Assemblywoman Crystal Peoples-Stokes, joined the meeting. Panel Chair Ellen Kennedy provided a brief summary of the work of the Panels. Ms. Brown described the current budgetary climate, including the potential impact of federal tax reform on New York State. Ms. Kennedy then summarized the Panels' most recent Annual

Report, specifically the request for an increase in funding for home visiting services, and asked Ms. Brown for suggestions of how to most effectively advocate for the increase.

Ms. Brown suggested that the Panel arrange for local legislators to meet directly with home visiting staff. She then also suggested a press conference, hosted at a home visiting program, to announce the release of the report.

Ms. Brown agreed to share the information discussed at the meeting with Assemblywoman Peoples-Stokes. Panel Chair Ellen Kennedy thanked her for her time.

**AGENDA ITEM: Debrief Discussion with Legislative Staff** *Ellen Kennedy, Panel Chair*

Panel members agreed to explore the idea of a press conference in January. Panel Chair Ellen Kennedy volunteered to follow up on contacting the appropriate participants. Panel members discussed identifying a western NY legislator to help carry the home visiting funding message.

**AGENDA ITEM: OCFS Updates** *Lisa Gordon, OCFS*

Lisa Gordon joined the meeting to provide the following updates from OCFS:

**Child and Family Service Review/ Program Improvement Plan (CFSR/PIP) Submission**

OCFS received Technical Assistance from the Children's Bureau. The PIP has been updated accordingly and will be submitted by 12/31.

**Family Assessment Response (FAR)**

Accomplishments for 2017 include:

- FAR quality assurance assessment tool was incorporated into the ongoing case monitoring process
- The FAR track application was updated and re-launched
- The CPS Manual was updated to include FAR and is going through internal clearances
- The FAR Family Led Assessment Guide (FLAG) now needs to be submitted for the approval of a supervisor. This CONNECTIONS change was made at the request of counties using FAR.
- Regional offices participated in a two day FAR training for new staff and FAR refresher for seasoned staff.
- A computer based training provided to district staff prior to entering FAR Process and Practice training, was updated and is currently being produced.
- Oneida and Cortland are exploring the potential use of FAR.

Goals for 2018 include:

- Streamline an internal process for reviewing practice issues found during case reviews including sharing information with our training partners
- ACS is looking to greatly expand FAR in 2018. OCFS will be offering supports as needed through regular meetings with ACS
- Create webinars on the use of FAR when issues of domestic violence are identified in a case.

### Home Visiting – Healthy Families New York (HFNY)

At the end of 2017 and beginning 2018, Healthy Families New York will expand to 4 additional programs bringing the total to 42 serving 46 communities. HFNY is currently going through the accreditation process as a state multi-system and completed gathering 15 year follow up information on its Randomized Control Trial study. OCFS anticipates hearing about findings in late 2018.

### Workload Study

No updates since last meeting.

### Raise the Age Bill

OCFS continues to work on the projected number of youth coming into the system as foster care placements and is developing a program and aftercare model. OCFS will be communicating with the field as soon as it is ready. OCFS is also developing DJJOY beds and working with the counties to create detention programs for the new population. OCFS continues to have ongoing discussions with Office of Court Administration, State Education Department, and Division of Criminal Justice Services leadership.

### Fatalities

A new fatality report will be released soon. The number of safe sleeping related fatalities has gone down.

### **AGENDA ITEM: Regional Anti-Opioid Initiatives**

*Donna Stott, OASAS*

*Dr. Gale Burstein, Erie County Commissioner of Health*

Dr. Gale Burstein and Ms. Donna Stott (by phone) joined the meeting for a discussion about anti-opioid initiatives in the region. Ms. Kennedy began the discussion by providing a brief overview of CRP work and also mentioned that Buffalo Region Directors of Service mentioned opioids as an area of concern at one of their recent meetings.

Dr. Burstein provided an overview of the work of the Erie County Opiate Task Force. She shared that the number of opioid overdose deaths in Erie County has been steadily increasing, causing Erie County to declare a public health crisis and form the Task Force. The Task Force is addressing several specific issues through the efforts of 7 workgroups, and the workgroups communicate with each other. Some of the specific issues being addressed by the workgroups include improving overdose follow up through a law enforcement/social work collaboration funded by a federal grant, increasing the availability of medication-assisted treatment, utilizing

grants to expand community education and awareness, and increasing training for OBGYNs to more effectively identify substance addicted pregnant woman.

Ms. Donna Stott, Regional Director for OASAS, joined the meeting by phone to share regional efforts and initiatives through OASAS to combat opioid addiction. Some of these efforts include:

- Advocating for changes in law so that doctors can prescribe opiates for only up to seven days at a time,
- Working with hospitals to improve discharge plans for people that have been hospitalized due to an overdose,
- Increasing the number of beds available in treatment facilities,
- Removing the cap on available slots for methadone treatment,
- Applying for and receiving grants to increase telemedicine for addiction in under-served, rural areas,
- Working with law enforcement and jails to improve after care for recently released inmates,
- Increasing the use of evidence-based addiction prevention and treatment programs in voluntary agencies,
- Developing an easy-to-use web-based dashboard to quickly identify treatment availability,
- Increasing funding for training on the use of Naloxone,
- Increasing funding for recovery centers and youth clubhouses, and
- Increasing funding for regional addiction resource centers.

Ms. Kennedy thanked both guests for their time.

**AGENDA ITEM: Closing Business**

*Ellen Kennedy*

Ms. Kennedy reminded panel members of upcoming meeting dates:  
Joint CRP conference call – January 22, 2018 at 12:30

Meeting was adjourned by the Panel Chair.