County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

425 Shatto Place, Los Angeles, CA 90020
(213) 351-5602

JACKIE CONTRERAS, Ph.D.
Interim Director

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April 27, 2011

To: Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, Mayor
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Supervisor Don Knabe

From: Jackie Contreras, Ph.D.
Interim Director

LIFECIRCLE GROUP HOME PROGRAM CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW

In accordance with your Board's April 14, 2009 motion, we are informing your Board of the results of a group home compliance review.

Lifecircle Group Home (Lifecircle) has one site which is located in the 5th Supervisorial District and provides services to Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services' (DCFS) foster youth. According to Lifecircle's program statement, its stated goals are to "provide a stable, constant, nurturing and normal environment that is responsive to the individual's needs," and to "minimize the risk factors that may impede the resident's ongoing development, to encourage the bonding process and to strengthen parent/child attachment."

The Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a review of Lifecircle in November 2010 at which time it had one six-bed site and four placed DCFS children, all male. For the purpose of this review, these four children were interviewed and their case files were reviewed. The children's overall average length of placement was six months and their average age was 16. Five staff files were reviewed for compliance with Title 22 regulations and contract requirements.

Two children were prescribed psychotropic medication. We reviewed their case files to assess timeliness of psychotropic medication authorizations and to confirm that medication logs documented that dosages were being administered as prescribed.

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The purpose of this review was to assess Lifecircle's compliance with the contract and State regulations. The visit included a review of Lifecircle's program statement, administrative internal policies and procedures, all placed children's case files and a random sampling of

personnel files. A visit was made to the one site to assess the quality of care and supervision provided to children, and we conducted interviews with children to assess the care and services they were receiving.

A copy of this report has been sent to the Auditor-Controller (A-C) and Community Care Licensing.

SUMMARY

Generally, Lifecircle was providing good quality care to DCFS placed children and services were provided as outlined in the agency's program statement. The children interviewed stated they wanted to continue residing at the placement and that the staff was helpful to them and treated them well.

The direct care staff stated they felt supported by the administrative staff and that the Group Home administrative staff was attentive to the needs of the children.

At the time of the review, Lifecircle needed to ensure that all Needs and Services Plans (NSP) were comprehensive and included all elements in accordance with the NSP template.

Lifecircle management was receptive to the one deficiency noted and stated that it would implement changes to improve its compliance with regulations and the Foster Care Agreement.

NOTABLE FINDINGS

The following is the significant finding based on our review:

- Of the 10 initial and updated NSPs reviewed for the four children's case files, the only information lacking was the reason for placement. History of the child entering the child welfare system and the reason or justification for their placement at Lifecircle should be included.

The NSP finding was brought to the attention of the Administrator at Lifecircle and she understood the importance of developing comprehensive NSPs.

The detailed report of our findings is attached.

EXIT CONFERENCE

The following are highlights from the exit conference held on January 13, 2011.

In attendance:

Mamie Nelson, Director, Lifecircle, and Linda Reusser, Monitor, DCFS OHCMD.

Highlights:

The Director was in agreement with our finding and recommendation. She stated that, based on the Monitor's explanation of the findings, she was able to see the importance of the Group Home staff obtaining and inserting necessary information into NSPs so that NSPs are comprehensive.

As agreed, Lifecircle provided a timely written Corrective Action Plan (CAP) addressing the one recommendation noted in this compliance report. The approved CAP is attached.

As noted in the monitoring protocol, a follow up visit will be conducted to address the provider's approved CAP and assess for full implementation of recommendations.

If you have any questions, your staff may contact Aldo Marin, Board Relations Manager, at (213) 351-5530.

JC:RS:KR
EAH:BB:lr

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Wendy Watanabe, Auditor-Controller
Donald H. Blevins, Chief Probation Officer
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Sybil Brand Commission
DeWayne Winrow, PH.D., Executive Director, Lifecircle
Jean Chen, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing
Lenora Scott, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing

LIFECIRCLE CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW - SUMMARY

11620 Gladstone Avenue
Lakeview Terrace, CA. 91342
818-834-2463
License # 198204244
Rate Classification Level: 12

	Contract Compliance Monitoring Review	Findings: November 2010
I	**Licensure/Contract Requirements** (9 Elements) 1. Timely Notification for Child's Relocation 2. Stabilization to Prevent Removal of Child 3. Transportation 4. SIRs 5. Compliance with Licensed Capacity 6. Disaster Drills Conducted 7. Disaster Drill Logs Maintenance 8. Runaway Procedures 9. Allowance Logs	Full Compliance (ALL)
II	**Facility and Environment** (6 Elements) 1. Exterior Well Maintained 2. Common Areas Maintained 3. Children's Bedrooms/Interior Maintained 4. Sufficient Recreational Equipment 5. Sufficient Educational Resources 6. Adequate Perishable and Non Perishable Food	Full Compliance (ALL)
III	**Program Services** (8 Elements) 1. Child Population Consistent with Program Statement 2. DCFS CSW Authorization to Implement NSPs 3. Children's Participation in the Development of NSPs 4. NSPs Implemented and Discussed with Staff 5. Therapeutic Services Received 6. Recommended Assessments/Evaluations Implemented 7. DCFS CSWs Monthly Contacts Documented 8. Comprehensive NSPs	1. Full Compliance 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Full Compliance 5. Full Compliance 6. Full Compliance 7. Full Compliance 8. Needs Improvement
IV	**Educational and Emancipation Services** (4 Elements) 1. Emancipation/Vocational Programs Provided 2. ILP Emancipation Planning 3. Current IEPs Maintained 4. Current Report Cards Maintained	Full Compliance (ALL)

V	**Recreation and Activities** (3 Elements) 1. Participation in Recreational Activity Planning 2. Participation in Recreational Activities 3. Participation in Extra-Curricular, Enrichment and Social Activities	Full Compliance (All)
VI	**Children's Health-Related Services (including Psychotropic Medications)** (9 Elements) 1. Current Court Authorization for Administration of Psychotropic Medication 2. Current Psychiatric Evaluation Review 3. Medication Logs 4. Initial Medical Exams Conducted 5. Initial Medical Exams Timely 6. Follow-up Medical Exams Timely 7. Initial Dental Exams Conducted 8. Initial Dental Exams Timely 9. Follow-Up Dental Exams Timely	Full Compliance (ALL)
VII	**Personal Rights** (11 Elements) 1. Children Informed of Home's Policies and Procedures 2. Children Feel Safe 3. Satisfaction with Meals and Snacks 4. Staff Treatment of Children with Respect and Dignity 5. Appropriate Rewards and Discipline System 6. Children Free to Receive or Reject Voluntary Medical, Dental and Psychiatric Care 7. Children Allowed Private Visits, Calls and Correspondence 8. Children Free to Attend Religious Services/Activities 9. Reasonable Chores 10. Children Informed about Psychotropic Medication 11. Children Aware of Right to Refuse Psychotropic Medication	Full Compliance (ALL)
VIII	**Children's Clothing and Allowance** (8 Elements) 1. $50 Clothing Allowance 2. Adequate Quantity of Clothing Inventory 3. Adequate Quality of Clothing Inventory 4. Involvement in Selection of Clothing 5. Provision of Personal Care Items 6. Minimum Monetary Allowances	Full Compliance (ALL)

	7. Management of Allowance 8. Encouragement and Assistance with Life Book	
IX	**Personnel Records (including Staff Qualifications, Staffing Ratios, Criminal Clearances and Training)** (12 Elements) 1. Education/Experience Requirement 2. Criminal Fingerprint Cards Timely Submitted 3. CACIs Timely Submitted 4. Signed Criminal Background Statement Timely 5. Employee Health Screening Timely 6. Valid Driver's License 7. Signed Copies of GH Policies and Procedures 8. Initial Training Documentation 9. CPR Training Documentation 10. First Aid Training Documentation 11. On-going Training Documentation 12. Emergency Intervention Training Documentation	Full Compliance (ALL)

LIFECIRCLE GROUP HOME PROGRAM CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW

SITE LOCATION

11620 Gladstone Avenue
Lakeview Terrace, CA. 91342
818-834-2463
License # 198204244

The following report is based on a "point in time" monitoring visit and addresses findings noted during the November 2010 monitoring review.

CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE

Based on our review of four children's files and five staff files, Lifecircle was in full compliance with eight of nine sections of our Contract Compliance review: Licensure/Contract Requirements; Facility and Environment; Educational and Emancipation Program Services; Recreation and Activities; Children's Health-Related Services, including Psychotropic Medication; Personal Rights; Children's Clothing and Allowance; and Personnel Records. The following details the one deficiency noted during our review.

PROGRAM SERVICES

Based on our review of four children's case files, Lifecircle fully complied with seven of eight elements reviewed in the area of Program Services.

During our review, we found that placed children met the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in its program statement. We found that the treatment team assisted in the development and implementation of Needs and Services Plans (NSP).

However, of the 10 initial and updated NSPs reviewed for four children's case files, none were comprehensive in that the reason for placement provided was insufficient. The NSP should provide some history of the child entering the child welfare system and the reason or justification for the child's placement at Lifecircle.

Recommendation:

Lifecircle Group Home management shall ensure that:

1. NSPs are comprehensive and include all required elements.

PRIOR YEAR FOLLOW UP FROM THE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER'S (A-C) REPORT

Objective

Determine the status of the recommendations reported in the A-C's prior monitoring review.

Verification

We verified whether the outstanding recommendations from the A-C's last monitoring review were fully implemented. The last report was issued on August 8, 2009.

Results

The Out-of-Home Care Management Division's prior monitoring report for 2009 contained one outstanding recommendation: to develop comprehensive NSPs. The A-C's prior monitoring report dated April 2009 contained four outstanding recommendations. Specifically, Lifecircle needed to maintain the backyard lawn and repair or replace items in the Group Home. The agency also needed to include input from the treatment team and the child in the development and implementation of the NSPs. Additionally, the Group Home needed to maintain current court authorizations for all children taking psychotropic medications and ensure that all children receiving psychotropic medication are routinely evaluated by the prescribing psychiatrist. The A-C's recommendations also included that all children should be provided with opportunities to shop and select their own clothes.

Based on our follow-up of these recommendations, Lifecircle fully implemented all four of the A-C's 2009 recommendations.

Recommendation:

None

Lifecircle

We make a way when there's no way℠
That's the circle of life.

Lifecircle Unlimited Inc.
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Lakeview Terrace, CA 91342
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Facsimile: 818.897.0263
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January 18, 2011

Barbara Butler – OHCMD Monitor
Out of Home Care Management Division
9320 Telstar Ave. # 216
El Monte, CA. 91731

Dear Ms.Butler:

This is the corrective action plan for the 2010 Performance and Compliance Review conducted by Linda Reusser in November, 2010.

The reason for placement on page 2 of each child's Needs and Services Plans will be elaborated upon to include more history on the child concerning what led up to the placement of the child. In the future, that information will include:

(1) The child's former residence prior to placement at Lifecircles (in the family home with parent(s), was with the Legal Guardian's or Adoptive Parents' home, was at another group home or foster home placement, etc.)

(2) What led to the placement (type of abuse/neglect by parent; mental health issues so that parent could not care for the child; the child had mental health issues so that parent did not have the appropriate knowledge or skills to care for the child, etc.)

(3) Any other information concerning the family that may be linked to the child's placement.

The above information will be obtained by either eliciting the information from the CSW, from a review of the latest Court Report and from the placed child's self-report. GHSW and/or GH Director will be responsible.

Thank you for allowing this correction to be made.

Mamie Nelson
Lifecircles Director