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March 10, 2016

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
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From: Philip L. Browning
Director

ROSEMARY CHILDREN'S SERVICES FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) of Rosemary Children's Services Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in June 2015. The FFA has one site located in the Fifth Supervisorial District and one office in Riverside County and provides services to the County of Los Angeles DCFS placed children. According to the FFA's program statement, its purpose is, "to provide education, support and treatment services that empower others, including the child when appropriate, to make positive life decisions surrounding the care and future of foster children."

The QAR looked at the status of the placed children's safety, permanency, and well-being during the most recent 30 days and the FFA's practices and services over the most recent 90 days. The FFA scored at or above the minimum acceptable score in 8 of 9 focus areas: Safety, Permanency, Placement Stability, Visitation, Service Needs, Assessment & Linkages, Teamwork and Tracking & Adjustment. OHCMD noted opportunities for improved performance in the focus area of Engagement.

The FFA provided the attached approved Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) addressing the recommendation noted in this report. In December 2015, OHCMD Quality Assurance Reviewer met with the FFA to discuss results of the QAR and to provide the FFA with technical support to address methods for improvement in the area of Engagement.

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

PLB:EM:KR:rds

Attachments

c: Sachi A. Hamai, Chief Executive Officer
John Naimo, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Jana Trew, Executive Director, Rosemary Children's Services Foster Family Agency
Lajuannah Hills, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division
Lenora Scott, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division

ROSEMARY CHILDREN'S SERVICES FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW (QAR)
FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) of Rosemary Children's Services Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in June 2015. The purpose of the QAR is to assess the FFA's service delivery and to ensure that the FFA is providing children with quality care and services in a safe environment, which includes physical care, social and emotional support, education and workforce readiness, and other services to protect and enhance their growth and development.

The QAR is an in-depth case review and interview process designed to assess how children and their families are benefiting from services received and how well the services are working. The QAR utilizes a six-point rating scale as a *yardstick* for measuring the situation observed in specific focus areas. The QAR assessed the following focus areas:

Status Indicators:

- Safety
- Permanency
- Placement Stability
- Visitation

Practice Indicators:

- Engagement
- Service Needs
- Assessment & Linkages
- Teamwork
- Tracking & Adjustment

For Status Indicators, the reviewer focuses on the child's functioning during the most recent 30 day period and for Practice Indicators, the reviewer focuses on the FFA's service delivery during the most recent 90 day period.

For the purpose of this QAR, interviews were conducted with three focus children, three Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Children's Social Workers (CSWs), three FFA staff members, and three certified foster parents.

At the time of the QAR, the placed children's average number of placements was six, their overall average length of placement was 13 months and their average age was seven. The focus children were randomly selected. None of the focus children were included as part of the sample for the 2014-2015 Contract Compliance Review.

QAR SCORING

The FFA received a score for each focus area based on information gathered from on-site visits, agency file reviews, DCFS court reports and updated case plans, and interviews with the FFA staff, DCFS CSWs, service providers, and the children. The minimum acceptable score is 6 in the area of Safety and 5 in all remaining areas.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	FFA QAR Score	FFA QAR Rating
Safety - The degree to which the FFA ensures that the child is free of abuse, neglect, and exploitation by others in his/her placement and other settings.	6	6	**Optimal Safety Status** - The focus children are optimally and consistently avoiding behaviors that cause harm to self, others, or the community and are free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and/or intimidation in placement.
Permanency - The degree to which the child is living with caregivers, who are likely to remain in this role until the child reaches adulthood, or the child is in the process of returning home or transitioning to a permanent home and the child, the FFA staff, caregivers and DCFS CSW, supports the plan.	5	5	**Good Status** - The focus children have substantial permanence The focus children live in a family setting that the children, FFA staff, caregivers, caseworker, and team members have confidence will endure lifelong.
Placement Stability - The degree to which the FFA ensures that the child's daily living, learning, and work arrangements are stable and free from risk of disruptions and known risks are being managed to achieve stability and reduce the probability of future disruption.	5	5	**Good Stability** - The focus children have substantial stability in placement and school settings with only planned changes and no more than one disruption. The focus children have established positive relationships with primary caregivers, key adult supporters and peers in those settings.
Visitation - The degree to which the FFA staff support important connections being maintained through appropriate visitation.	5	5	**Substantially Acceptable Maintenance of Visitation & Connections** - Generally effective family connections are being excellently maintained for all significant family/Non-Related Extended Family Members (NREFMs) through appropriate visits and other connecting strategies.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	FFA QAR Score	FFA QAR Rating
Engagement - The degree to which the FFA staff working with the child, biological family, extended family and other team members for the purpose of building a genuine, trusting and collaborative working relationship with the ability to focus on the child strengths and needs.	5	4	**Minimally Adequate to Fair Engagement Efforts** - To a minimally adequate degree, a rapport has been developed, such that the FFA staff, DCFS CSW, certified foster parent and the focus child feel heard and respected. Reports indicate that minimally adequate to fair efforts are being used by the FFA as necessary to find and engage the focus children, caregivers and other key people.
Service Needs - The degree to which the FFA staff involved with the child, work toward ensuring the child's needs are met and identified services are being implemented and supported and are specifically tailored to meet the child's unique needs.	5	5	**Good Supports & Services -** A good and substantial array of supports and services substantially matches intervention strategies identified in the case plan. The services are generally helping the focus children make progress toward planned outcomes. A usually dependable combination of informal and formal supports and services is available, appropriate, used, and seen as generally satisfactory.
Assessment & Linkages - The degree to which the FFA staff involved with the child and family understand the child's strengths, needs, preferences, and underlying issues and services are regularly assessed to ensure progress is being made toward case plan goals.	5	5	**Good Assessment and Understanding -** The focus children are functioning and support systems are generally understood. Information necessary to understand the focus children's strengths, needs, and preferences is frequently updated. Present strengths, risks, and underlying needs requiring intervention or supports are substantially recognized and well understood.
Teamwork - The degree to which the "right people" for the child and family, have formed a working team that meets, talks, and makes plans together.	5	5	**Good Teamwork** - The team contains most of the important supporters and decision makers in the focus children's lives, including informal supports. The team has formed a good, dependable working system that meets, talks, and/or plans together.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	FFA QAR Score	FFA QAR Rating
Tracking & Adjustment - The degree to which the FFA staff who is involved with the child and family is carefully tracking the progress that the child is making, changing family circumstances, attainment of goals and planned outcomes.	5	5	**Good Tracking and Adjustment Process** - Intervention strategies, supports and services being provided to the focus children are generally responsive to changing conditions. Frequent monitoring, tracking, and communication of focus children's status and service results to the team are occurring. Generally successful adaptations are based on a basic knowledge of what things are working and not working for the focus children.

STATUS INDICATORS

(Measured over last 30 days)

What's Working Now (Score/Narrative of Strengths for Focus Area)

Safety (6 Optimal Safety Status)

Safety Overview: The FFA's safety status was optimal. The FFA social workers and certified foster parents ensure that the placed children feel safe in placement. The FFA social workers visit the certified foster homes weekly and meet with the placed children and certified foster parents to ensure the children's safety and well-being. The FFA social workers conduct facility checks weekly and conduct a more extensive home inspection every two months. Additionally, an annual home inspection is conducted prior to the family being recertified by the FFA. The FFA staff and the certified foster parents are trained in recognizing problems and situations that could place children in imminent danger. The FFA Quality Assurance staff reviews the Special Incidents Reports (SIRs) weekly to determine if there are any trends. In addition, the FFA staff holds monthly support group meetings for the certified foster parents. According to the certified foster parents, the FFA staff provides them with ongoing training which includes reporting special incidents and absence without leaves (AWOLs). Additionally, the certified foster parents reported that the FFA staff and administrators are always supportive.

The first focus child is 18 years old. The child reported that his certified foster home is a safe place to live in as it is located in a good neighborhood and his certified foster parent is always available. He reported getting along with the other children in the home and that there is always an adult in the certified foster home to supervise the placed children. The second focus child reported that she feels safe at all times, as there is always adult supervision in the certified foster home. The third focus child reported that she is always supervised in her certified foster home and in the community. The DCFS CSWs interviewed reported having no safety concerns regarding the FFA's certified foster parents or the care that the focus children received from their certified foster parents.

The FFA submitted one SIR via I-Track database during the past 30 days. The SIR did not involve any of the focus children. The SIR involved a placed child exhibiting assaultive behavior, which resulted in a psychiatric hospitalization. The FFA staff adhered to policies and procedures for submitting the SIR as it was timely submitted and properly cross-reported to all required parties. There were no investigations opened or substantiated referrals by the Out-of-Home Care Investigations Section during the last 30 days.

Permanency (5 Good Status)

Permanency Overview: The FFA provides good permanence for the focus children. The FFA social workers and certified foster parents were aware of the focus children's permanent plans and worked collaboratively with the DCFS CSWs in ensuring appropriate services to support the permanency plans are provided. The FFA makes certain the focus children are having regular contact with their family members to ensure bonds are maintained. The focus children reported being aware of their permanency plan.

The first focus child's permanent plan is Permanent Planned Living Arrangement (PPLA) with an emphasis on Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP) with a family friend. The FFA social worker and the focus child's certified foster parent are supportive of his plan. His certified foster parent is providing guidance and teaching the focus child life skills needed to live independently. The focus child reported he maintains family connections by having regular contact with his father and grandparents and sporadic contact with his mother and siblings.

The permanent plan for the second focus child is family reunification with her mother. The focus child indicated that she understood that her permanency plan is reunification with her mother; however, she would prefer to live with her adult sister. The focus child reports the FFA social worker supports her in maintaining contact with her family members. Her certified foster parent reported that she might be interested in pursuing a permanent plan for the focus child if reunification is no longer an option.

The third focus child's permanent plan is PPLA and the concurrent plan is adoption; however, no prospective parent has been identified. The focus child maintains contact with her mother and siblings.

The DCFS CSWs reported that the FFA is supportive of the focus children's permanency plans.

Placement Stability (5 Good Stability)

Placement Stability Overview: All of the focus children have good stability in their placement and in their school settings. The focus children's placements have been stable with no disruptions during the past 30 days. To ensure positive outcomes, the FFA makes efforts to find a good match between the placed children and the certified foster parents. To promote stability, the FFA social workers conduct weekly visits to the certified foster homes to ensure the focus children's well-being. The FFA also provides the certified foster parents with additional support and training as deemed necessary.

The focus children are all adjusting well in their respective certified foster homes. The first focus child recently graduated from high school. He reported that he will remain as placed until his SILP is approved. The FFA social worker continues to provide the focus child with the necessary support to prevent placement disruptions. The second focus child reported that her needs are being met as she has a stable home and she gets along with her certified foster family. She stated that she will remain as placed until she is reunified with her family. The third focus child had a history of multiple placements due to her challenging behavior. To ensure placement stability, the FFA put in place weekly in-home therapeutic services and had the focus child evaluated for psychotropic medication.

To prevent a disruption in the second and third focus children's school, their certified foster parents transported the focus children to their school of origin until the end of the semester.

Visitation (5 Substantially Acceptable Maintenance of Visitation & Connections)

Visitation Overview: The FFA has established effective visitation and maintenance of family connections for the focus children. The FFA staff, certified foster parents and DCFS CSWs work together to assist the focus children in maintaining connections with their family. The FFA follows the court ordered visitation plans and collaborates with the DCFS CSWs in ensuring the children have regular visits and telephone calls with their family members. The FFA social workers or the certified foster parents monitor and provide transportation to the family visits.

All three focus children have visits with their family members. The first focus child has Court approved visits with his mother and siblings. The FFA social worker and his certified foster parent encourage the focus child to visit with his siblings and mother regularly. However, the focus child has not made any efforts to contact them regularly. The focus child reported he has contact with his father and grandparents; however, he only sees his siblings and mother at his grandparents' house when they have gatherings. According to the focus child he sees his siblings about once a month. The DCFS CSW reported that the child did not make efforts to maintain contact with his mother.

The second focus child has visits with her mother twice a month. The visits are monitored by the certified foster parent. The focus child has weekly visitation with her younger siblings who are also placed within the same FFA. The focus child also has unmonitored day visits with her adult sister twice a month. The focus child reported that she would like to eventually be placed with her adult sister. She reported that her visits with her family members have been good. The DCFS CSW stated that the visits are going well.

The third focus child has weekly visits with her mother and the visits are monitored by her certified foster parent. The focus child also has siblings who are placed with another FFA. The court ordered the focus child and her family members to have weekly family visits at the FFA office of the focus child's siblings. Both of the FFAs work together to arrange visits that are reasonable for everyone. The focus child's certified foster parent provides transportation for the family visit. The child reported she enjoys her visits with her family. According to the DCFS CSW, the visits have been consistent and the focus child is happy with the visits.

PRACTICE INDICATORS

(Measured over last 90 days)

What's Working Now (Score/Narrative of Strengths for Focus Area)

Service Needs (5 Good Supports & Services)

Service Needs Overview: The FFA has a good array of support, extracurricular activities and services to help the focus children make progress toward meeting their case plan goals. The FFA reported that the FFA social workers and the certified foster parents have developed a rapport with the focus children and are able to identify the focus children's strengths and needs. The FFA social workers discussed with the DCFS CSWs the needed services for the placed children and arranged appropriate resources to assist the focus children in meeting their goals.

The first focus child's plan is to attend college and live with a family friend under SILP. The FFA social worker helped the focus child by assisting him to become self-sufficient and providing him with college information and resources for a part-time job. However, he has not followed through with the suggestions. The focus child reported he is satisfied with the services he receives from the FFA. He stated he is not interested in participating in any extracurricular activities as he is focusing on his future placement and college enrollment. The DCFS CSW reported that at times, the focus child has not been cooperative with returning his phone calls, and that the FFA social worker has been helpful in facilitating contact with the focus child.

The FFA social worker and the certified foster parent encouraged the first focus child to attend independent living courses and the certified foster parent has offered to provide transportation to the classes. However the focus child has not been cooperative and chose to spend time with his girlfriend. The focus child reported that he is too busy working toward moving to a family friend's home and enrolling in college.

The second focus child receives therapeutic services twice a month to assist her in various areas including working through the family reunification process. The focus child reported that she enjoys attending therapy as she likes her therapist. She stated she does not need any additional services. The focus child has also been linked with a mentoring program and reported that she sees her mentor at least three times a month. The focus child further stated that they go to different places such as shopping and to an amusement park. The FFA also arranged for the focus child to attend a summer camp. The FFA and the focus child's certified foster parent have agreed to pay for the camp fee. The focus child reported that her needs are met and that she has good relationships with her therapist and mentor from Big Brother/Big Sister of America. The DCFS CSW reported that the focus child is encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities and is taking guitar lessons.

The third focus child exhibited challenging behavior such as tantrums, hiding other's belongings and acting out at school. The focus child also has difficulty completing her schoolwork and has an Individualized Educational Plan. The focus child is provided with weekly therapeutic services and is prescribed psychotropic medication to manage her behavior. The focus child was enrolled in Ballet classes which she recently completed. The focus child reported she is getting along with other

children and behaves better. The DCFS CSW reported the focus child receives the services she needs and that the certified foster mother has been patient with the focus child.

Assessment & Linkages (5 Good Assessments and Understanding)

Assessment & Linkages Overview: The FFA generally understands the focus children's functioning, strengths, needs, preferences and support systems. Based on the FFA social worker's observations and interactions with the focus children, reports from the certified foster parents and other support systems, the FFA social worker develops Needs and Services Plan (NSP) goals for the focus children. The FFA social worker makes efforts to link the focus children with available resources. The FFA assesses the focus children's well-being and progress during their weekly visits. When placement is stable, the FFA social worker conducts bi-monthly visits with the focus children and their foster parents and reports progress and issues to the focus children's respective DCFS CSWs.

For example, the FFA noticed that the second focus child was exhibiting some academic challenges. The FFA social worker has met with the focus child, her school counselor and the certified foster parent to assist with stabilizing her academic performance and provide support to the focus child to assist her in improving her grades.

Another example, is where the FFA was made aware of the third focus child's challenging behavior. The focus child was assessed and was found to be in need of mental health services and psychotropic medication to stabilize her behavior. The FFA social worker, the certified foster parent and the DCFS CSW all reported that the focus child benefitted from the supports and services that she was linked to and has shown marked improvements in her behavior.

Teamwork (5 Good Teamwork)

Teamwork Overview: The FFA involves some of the important supporters and decision makers in the focus children's lives. The team consists of the focus children, DCFS CSWs, the FFA social workers, school counselor, certified foster parents, therapists and family members. The FFA social workers and certified foster parents share information regarding the focus children's daily activities and progress during their visits to the certified foster homes. The FFA social workers also provide the DCFS CSWs with updates, which includes reports from key supporters such as the focus children's therapists and school counselors.

The first focus child, his certified foster parent, the FFA social worker and the DCFS CSW work collaboratively and have ongoing discussions regarding the focus child's progress towards living independently. They recently met to discuss the focus child's transition plan.

The DCFS CSW for the second focus child has formed a good working relationship with the FFA social worker and certified foster parents. The FFA social worker, certified foster parent and the DCFS CSW have met together to discuss the focus child's progress. According to the FFA social worker, the school counselor and the therapist have also worked collaboratively with the FFA, the focus child and the certified foster parent to ensure the focus child's needs are being met.

The third focus child, the certified foster parent, the DCFS CSW and the FFA social worker have met together once to discuss the focus children's plan and progress in the past five months. Most communications are conducted by telephone or e-mail.

The focus children reported that the DCFS CSW, the FFA social worker and the certified foster parent work as a team and are satisfied with the supports they received from them.

The DCFS CSWs reported that they work collaboratively with the FFA social workers and the certified foster parents to ensure the children's needs are met.

Tracking & Adjustment (5 Good Tracking & Adjustment Process)

Tracking & Adjustment Overview: The FFA's intervention strategies, supports, and services provided to the focus children are generally responsive to changing conditions. During visits to the certified foster homes, the FFA social workers assess the status of the focus children and have a general understanding of what is working and what is not working. The FFA social workers track the focus children's progress through their observations and from reports made by the focus children's certified foster parents and other key supporters such as the therapists and school counselors. The focus children's goals and/or interventions are modified as needed by the FFA social workers with the approval of the DCFS CSWs.

The DCFS CSWs reported they were updated by the FFA social workers on any modifications related to the focus children's overall progress, services and NSP goals.

What's Not Working Now and Why (Score/Narrative of Opportunities for Improvement)

Engagement (4 Minimally Adequate to Fair Good Engagement Efforts)

Engagement Overview: The FFA works to ensure that good rapport has been developed among the focus children and their family members, the DCFS CSWs and the certified foster parents. The FFA social workers have weekly meetings with the focus children and their certified foster parents and make efforts to maintain monthly contact with their respective DCFS CSWs via telephone, e-mail or face-to-face meetings.

The certified foster parent of the first focus child stated she was included in discussions regarding the focus child and his case plan goals. The focus child reported he was supported and respected by his certified foster parents and the FFA social worker.

The DCFS CSWs reported that the FFA's certified foster parents are making efforts in engaging them to meet the needs of the focus children. The DCFS CSW for the third focus child added that she communicates well with the focus child's certified foster parent and obtained most of the information through her.

Although there appears to be good communication between the DCFS CSWs and the FFA's certified foster parents, the DCFS CSW for the third focus child reported having minimal contact with the FFA social worker. Additionally, the certified foster parent for the second focus child reported she felt that her concerns were not heard and the FFA social worker was not supporting her. The certified foster

parent reported that she did not report her concerns with the FFA social worker. Instead, she chose to seek guidance from the FFA supervising social worker whom she reported as being very helpful and accessible. The FFA could benefit from engaging DCFS CSWs, certified foster parents and focus children in discussion regarding the focus children's challenges, concerns and progress towards meeting their treatment plan goals.

NEXT STEPS TO SUSTAIN SUCCESS AND OVERCOME CURRENT CHALLENGES

In December 2015, OHCMD provided the Group Home with technical support related to the findings indicated in the 2014-2015 Contract Compliance Review including Title 22 regulations; maintenance of certified foster parent record; maintenance of the facility and grounds; NSP requirements; maintenance of children's allowance records and providing children with a life book.

In December 2015, the OHCMD Quality Assurance Reviewer also met with the FFA to discuss results of the QAR and to provide the FFA with technical support to address methods for improvement in the area of Engagement. The FFA submitted the attached Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). OHCMD Quality Assurance staff will continue to provide ongoing technical support, training, and consultation to assist the FFA in implementing their QIP.

Rosemary Children's Services
CARING FOR THE CHILD
TEACHING THE TEEN
FOSTERING THE FAMILY

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United Way

www.rosemarychildren.org

December 8, 2015
County of Los Angeles
Department of Children and Family Services
Out of Home Care Management Division
9320 Telstar Ave., Suite 216
El Monte, CA 91731
Attn: Gladys Hidayat

To: Gladys Hidayat
From: Erin Ellis, Foster Care Director, Rosemary Children's Services
Subject: Quality Improvement Plan for 2015 Quality Assurance Review

Rosemary Children's Services Foster Family Agency focuses on continuous quality improvement of our program. Based on the Quality Assurance Review (QAR) that was conducted in June 2015 it was indicated that our Foster Care Social Workers (FCSWs) need to improve their engagement with the County Social Workers (CSWs) and our Foster Parents. The following Quality Improvement Plan has been developed to address this:

1) Our FCSWs currently contact the CSWs at least once a month via email or telephone for case updates and to request any needed items (ie signatures on NSPs, forms, visitation plans, etc.) However, they do not often meet with them in person to engage with them. Effective February 1, 2016 in order to improve the engagement and teaming between our FCSWs and CSWs we will be utilizing a letter that will be sent to the CSWs via email and regular mail to schedule a team meeting between our FCSW, the CSW, the foster parents, the child and anyone else pertinent to the case at the beginning of placement and at least quarterly in order to aid in the case planning and implementation process. We will utilize the team meeting to update the CSW on the foster child's progress, successes, and any needs, as well as to ensure services are in place.

2) Our Clinical Supervisor, will be conducting a training for our FFA Staff on January 26, 2016 on Engagement and Teaming. He will be teaching engagement strategies to our staff to better engage with their foster parents, CSWs, and other members of the team, in order to improve the overall teaming of our cases. He will focus on improving the communication between all parties, and help our FCSWs to learn how to really engage with the CSWs and foster parents versus just giving or receiving information on the case.

The Foster Care Director, will be responsible for ensuring that this QIP is fully implemented. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (626) 403-2277.

Sincerely,

Erin Ellis, MA

Erin Ellis, MA
Foster Care Director