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August 26, 2016

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
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Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Philip L. Browning
Director

DREAM HOME CARE, INC. GROUP HOME 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 the Dream Home Care, Inc. Group Home (the Group Home) in March 2016. The Group Home is a Rate Classification Level 11 and has three sites located in the Fourth Supervisorial District. The Group Home provides services to the County of Los Angeles DCFS placed children. According to the Group Home's Program Statement, its stated purpose is, "to serve court dependent abused, neglected, emotionally disturbed 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 Group Home's practices and services over the most recent 90 days. The Group Home scored at or above the minimum acceptable score in 8 of 9 focus areas: Permanency, Placement Stability, Visitation, Engagement, Service Needs, Assessment & Linkages, Teamwork, and Tracking & Adjustment. The OHCMD noted an opportunity for improved performance in the focus area of Safety.

In June 2016, the OHCMD Quality Assurance Reviewer met with the Group Home to discuss the results of the QAR and to provide the Group Home with technical support to address methods for improvement in the area of Safety. The Group Home provided the attached approved Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) addressing the recommendations noted in this report.

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

PLB:KR
KDR:rds

Attachments

c: Sachi A. Hamai, Chief Executive Officer
John Naimo, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Cora Manalang, Executive Director, Dream Home Care, Inc. Group Home
Lajuannah Hills, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division
Lenora Scott, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division

DREAM HOME CARE, INC. GROUP HOME
QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW (QAR)
FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) of the Dream Home Care, Inc. Group Home (the Group Home) in March 2016. The purpose of the QAR is to assess the Group Home's service delivery and to ensure that the Group Home 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 QAR focuses on the focus child's functioning during the most recent 30-day period and for Practice Indicators, the QAR focuses on the Group Home'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 Group Home staff members and two therapists.

At the time of the QAR, the Group Home served 18 DCFS placed children. The focus children's average number of placements was one, their overall average length of placement was 11 months and their average age was 16. The focus children were randomly selected. One focus child was included as part of the sample for the Contract Administration Division's (CAD's) 2015-2016 Contract Compliance Review.

QAR SCORING

The Group Home 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 Group Home staff, DCFS CSWs, service providers, and the focus children. The minimum acceptable score is 6 in the area of Safety and 5 in all remaining areas.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	Group Home QAR Score	Group Home QAR Rating
Safety - The degree to which the Group Home staff ensures that the focus children are free of abuse, neglect and exploitation by others in his/her placement and other settings.	6	4 - Fair Safety Status	The focus children have a minimally safe living arrangement with the present caregivers. Protective strategies are at least minimally adequate in reducing risks of harm. The focus children are at least minimally free from danger in other settings.
Permanency - The degree to which the focus children are living with caregivers, who are likely to remain in this role until the focus children reach adulthood, or the focus children are in the process of returning home or transitioning to a permanent home and the focus children, the Group Home staff, caregivers, DCFS CSWs and if applicable, Department of Probation Officers (DPOs) support the plan.	5	5 - Good Status	The focus children have substantial permanence. The focus children live in a family setting that the focus children, Group Home staff and team members have confidence will endure lifelong.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	Group Home QAR Score	Group Home QAR Rating
Placement Stability - The degree to which the Group Home staff ensures that the focus children's daily living, learning and work arrangements are stable and free from risk of disruptions. Known risks are being managed to achieve stability and reduce the probability of future disruptions.	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 in either setting over the past 30 days.
Visitation - The degree to which the Group Home staff support maintaining important connections with significant family members/Non-Related Extended Family Members (NREFMs) through appropriate visitation and other means.	5	5 - Substantially Acceptable Maintenance of Visitation and Connections	Generally effective family connections are being sought for all significant family members/NREFMs through appropriate visits and other connecting strategies. All appropriate family members/NREFMs have regular visits.
Engagement - The degree to which the Group Home staff working with the focus children and their family members/NREFMs and other team members for the purpose of building a genuine, trusting and collaborative working relationship with the ability to concentrate on the focus children's strengths and needs.	5	5 - Good Engagement Efforts	To a strong degree, a rapport has been developed, such that the Group Home staff, DCFS CSWs, DPOs (if applicable) and the focus children feel heard and respected. Reports indicate that good, consistent efforts are being used.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	Group Home QAR Score	Group Home QAR Rating
Service Needs - The degree to which the Group Home staff involved with the focus children work toward ensuring the focus children's needs are met and identified services are being implemented and supported and are specifically tailored to meet the focus children's unique needs.	5	5 - Good Supports and Services	A good and substantial array of supports and services substantially matches intervention strategies identified in the focus children's case plans. The services are generally helping the focus children make progress toward planned outcomes.
Assessment & Linkages - The degree to which the Group Home staff involved with the focus children and their family members/NREFMs understand the focus children's strengths, needs, preferences and underlying needs and services provided are regularly assessed to ensure progress is being made toward case plan goals.	5	5 - Good Assessment and Understanding	The focus children's functioning and support systems are generally understood. Information necessary to understand the focus children's strengths, needs and preferences is frequently updated.
Teamwork - The degree to which the "right people" for the focus children and their family members/NREFMs, have formed a working team that meets, talks and/or 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	Group Home QAR Score	Group Home QAR Rating
Tracking & Adjustment - The degree to which the Group Home staff involved with the focus children and their family members/NREFMs are carefully tracking the progress that the focus children are 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 the focus children's status is occurring.

OHCMD conducted the last QAR of the Group Home in June 2015 and noted opportunities for improvement in the focus areas of Safety and Teamwork. In October 2015, the Quality Assurance Reviewer met with the Group Home to discuss the results of the QAR and to provide the Group Home with technical support to address methods for improvement in these two areas. Based on the information below, it appears that the Group Home showed improvement in the area of Teamwork; however, there is continued need for improvement in the area of Safety on their 2015-2016 QAR.

STATUS INDICATORS
(Measured over last 30 days)

Status Indicators	Safety	Permanency	Placement Stability	Visitation
2014-2015 Scores	5	5	5	5
2015-2016 Scores	4	5	5	5

In the area of Safety, the OHCMD found that the Group Home had partially implemented their 2014-2015 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to enhance the quality of care and supervision provided to the placed children in its care. During last year's QAR, the OHCMD found that the Special Incidents reported by the Group Home did not include all required information or updates. To address this concern, the Group Home retrained their staff on reporting of Special Incidents. In reviewing Special Incidents, the OHCMD noted that the Group Home provided updates when there was additional information to report. However, the Group Home fell below the minimum acceptable score in the area of Safety, as there were child safety concerns related to the Group Home's ability to provide adequate supervision and to intervene to prevent incidents of assaultive behavior between placed children. There were two incidents of fighting at the Group Home; each incident involved two placed children. The placed children involved sustained minor injuries. However, no one required medical

treatment, and law enforcement was not involved. Additionally, one focus child left the Group Home without permission. He returned several hours later, under the influence of an unknown substance. Another placed child's bedroom smelled of marijuana. During the room inspection, marijuana was not found, but rolling papers were confiscated. Further, the special incidents reported by the Group Home during the current QAR review period were not cross-reported to the OHCMD.

The OHCMD Quality Assurance Reviewer met with the Group Home to provide technical assistance on reporting of Special Incidents and to discuss child safety concerns, how to work together to implement the Safety QIP, as well as modify or develop strategies to ensure the safety and well-being of the placed children that would be successful for the Group Home.

The focus children interviewed did not report any safety concerns. They reported that they were comfortable in the Group Home, they felt respected and heard by Group Home staff, and the DCFS CSWs for the focus children had no child safety concerns.

In the areas of Permanency, Placement Stability and Visitation, the Group Home continues to provide a good quality of service. The permanency plan for all three focus children is Family Reunification, with a concurrent plan of Planned Permanent Living Arrangement. The Group Home supports the permanency goals established by DCFS. The Group Home demonstrates good efforts to assist the focus children in reunifying with their family, as well as preparing them for self-sufficiency by teaching them responsibility and skills through chores, cooking, cleaning, and shopping. The Group Home provides a stable, supportive environment for the focus children. The focus children have developed positive relationships with the Group Home staff. All three of the focus children like residing at the Group Home and reported having a special relationship with at least one Group Home staff member. Two of the focus children expressed wanting to remain at the Group Home until they transition from out-of-home care. The focus children and their DCFS CSWs reported that the focus children's needs are being met. The focus children have not experienced any recent placement disruptions. The Group Home staff and the DCFS CSWs work together to ensure the focus children maintain family connections through regular communication and visitation. One focus child has weekly monitored visits with his mother at her home; his adult sister monitors the visits. The second focus child refuses to visit with his mother; however, the focus child is visiting with his older sister on a regular basis. The third focus child also refuses to visit with his mother, but he visits regularly with his two younger siblings. A DCFS-appointed monitor picks the siblings up from the mother's home and transports the focus child and his siblings to a neutral setting. The focus children reported looking forward to their quality time with their respective family members.

Although, two of the focus children are refusing visitation with their parents, the Group Home staff continues to encourage the focus children to visit with their biological parents and counsels them on the importance of maintaining family connections. In addition, the Group Home continues to offer individual and group counseling to the focus children and is able to recommend therapeutic services available in the community as needed.

PRACTICE INDICATORS
(Measured over last 90 days)

Practice Indicators	Engagement	Service Needs	Assessment & Linkages	Teamwork	Tracking & Adjustment
2014-2015 Scores	5	5	5	4	5
2015-2016 Scores	5	5	5	5	5

In the areas of Engagement, Service Needs, Assessment & Linkages, and Tracking & Adjustment, the Group Home continues to make good efforts to engage the focus children and key people in decisions that are being made for them. The focus children reported that they have a "good connection" with the Group Home staff and their DCFS CSWs. The focus children also reported having a staff member at the Group Home on whom they can count on and trust. The Group Home maintains contact with the DCFS CSWs via telephone, e-mails, and text message. The Group Home continues to offer a good array of services to the focus children such as individual and group therapy and substance abuse treatment services. The Group Home also provides tutoring and academic support services. The Group Home provides a supportive learning environment at the Group Home with set homework and study time hours. One focus child is receiving in-home individual and group therapy. He and his family will begin family therapy to assist in reunification. The Group Home Social Worker shared that one of the focus children could benefit from additional therapeutic services at a community agency to address his relationship with his mother. However, he is refusing additional services at this time. This has been addressed with the focus child during individual therapy. However, the focus child is not ready to address the issues at this time. He prefers to manage his stress by working out at the local gym with the gym membership provided by the Group Home. The third focus child had informed his treatment team that he wanted to attend public school. The Group Home staff, the DCFS CSW, and the school team members supported the focus child and worked together for this focus child to transition from non-public school to a mainstream high school setting. The focus child has demonstrated significant academic improvement; he is earning passing grades in all subjects. The Group Home staff and the focus children's DCFS CSWs are supportive of the focus children and ensure all their service needs are met. Intervention strategies identified in the case plan and Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) match the services that are being provided to the focus children. The Group Home constantly assess the focus children's needs and provides appropriate interventions for them to function effectively in daily settings, at the Group Home, at school, and in the community. The Group Home facility managers and the Group Home child care workers review the focus children's status on a daily basis. DCFS CSWs reported that the Group Home maintains consistent contact with them in regards to the focus children's progress and the needs for adjustments or modifications to the focus children's treatment or case plan goals.

In the area of Teamwork, the OHCMD found that the Group Home had implemented the 2014-2015 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to address the finding that treatment team meetings were not occurring on a regular basis and key parties were not being invited to

treatment team meetings. To address this, the Group Home is now ensuring that all key parties are invited to participate in the treatment team meetings. Based on the current QAR, the Group Home staff is ensuring that an invitation is extended to all key parties, including the DCFS CSWs and the focus children's family members, when appropriate. The focus children, the DCFS CSWs, and the Group Home staff reported having attended a treatment team meeting to discuss the needs of the focus children. In addition, one focus child's DCFS CSW shared that she is excited about the new Shared Core Practice Model, as it appears that the Group Home and the team members are working together to ensure positive outcomes for children.

NEXT STEPS TO SUSTAIN SUCCESS AND OVERCOME CURRENT CHALLENGES

In June 2016, the OHCMD provided the Group Home with technical support related to the CAD's 2015-2016 Contract Compliance Review findings in the areas of Licensure/Contract Requirements, Facility and Environment, Health and Medical Needs, and Personal Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being. Technical support was provided on how the Group Home can ensure Special Incident Reports are appropriately documented, cross-reported to all required parties and submitted timely; maintain a detailed Sign-In/Out log; that food cabinets are never locked; and that dental exams are completed timely.

In June 2016, the Quality Assurance Reviewer met with the Group Home to discuss the results of the QAR and to provide the Group Home with technical support addressing methods on improving in the area of Safety. The Group Home submitted the attached approved QIP. The OHCMD Quality Assurance staff will continue to provide ongoing technical support, training, and consultation to assist the Group Home in implementing their QIP.

DREAM HOME CARE INC.
A NON PROFIT CORPORATION

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Sonya Noil, CSA I
Quality Assurance Section
DCFS, Out-of-Home Care Management Division
9320 Telstar Avenue #216
El Monte, CA 91731

June 27, 2016
RE: Dream Home Care, Inc.
Long Beach Group Homes
(Gardenia, Allington and Gaviota)

Dear Ms. Noil,

This is in reference to the Quality Assurance Review (QAR) conducted in March 2016 by DCFS, Out-of-Home Care Management Division.

In the area of Safety, Dream Home Care Inc. scored below the minimum acceptance score. The following Quality Improvement Plan is being submitted to address these concerns and to fully implement.

A. Dream Home Care had not cross-reported some SIR Itrack incidences to OHMCD, as required.

• QIP –Group home administrators and social workers staff retraining was conducted to ensure that all reportable incidences via Itrack are cross-reported to all appropriate agencies including OHCMD. The Incident Reporting DCFS Technical Support Guidelines were reviewed in May 6, 2016 conducted by Out-of-Home Care Management Division, Ms. Sonya Noil and Emergency Shelter Care Manager, Ms. Jennifer Kerr.
• QIP –Another retraining for all staff in SIR Itrack System is scheduled in July 2016 which includes the appropriate agencies required for cross-reporting of reportable incidences including OHCMD. Review of all guidelines for reporting will include providing addendum to the Itrack System as soon as new information becomes available. (specifics to outcomes of AWOL/Runaway or medical hospitalizations/ injury information).

B. OHCMD has safety concerns related to the ability to provide adequate supervision and to intervene to prevent incidents of assaultive behavior between placed children.

• QIP –Staff retraining is scheduled in July 2016 which includes recognizing antecedents (gestures, tone of voice, positioning, etc) before a crisis escalates. (Therapeutic Early Intervention review). Staff retraining on proper supervision, proximity and closed monitoring of residents.
• QIP –monthly staff meeting will continue to include "Role Plays" of current month's specific significant incidences to recognize what other strategies could have been done otherwise to prevent such incidences.

The group home administrator, group home social worker and the compliance program coordinator will work as a team to ensure that these QIP's are fully implemented. Staff retraining Sign In Log will be submitted.

We are hoping that the above Quality Improvement Plan will meet your standards and approval.
Thank you.

Sincerely,

Cora Manalang
CEO