

# Community Taskforce to Review Youth Corrections Systems Standards 90-Day Update Meeting Summary

29, August, 2022

Sedgwick County Public Safety Building

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## Taskforce Members In-Person

Dr. Rhonda Lewis
Holly Osborne
Jazmine Rogers
Lamont Anderson
NaQuela Pack
Pastor C. Richard Kirendoll
Tracey Mason, Sr.
Valerie Leon
Yeni Telles
Yusef Presley

## Taskforce Members via Zoom

Larry Burks
Marquetta Atkins
Annamarie Arensberg
Mike Fonkert
Debbie Kennedy

## Resource Members

- Hope Cooper, Kansas Dept. of Corrections
- Steven Stonehouse, Sedgwick County Dept. of Corrections
- Kristin Peterman, Dept. of Children and Families
- Dee Nighswonger, Dept. of Children and Families
- Shantel Westbrook, COMCARE
- Jennifer Wilson, COMCARE
- Paul Duff, Wichita Police Dept.
- Elora Forshee, 911 Emergency Communications
- Russell Leeds, County Manager's Office
- Nicole Gibbs, Dept. of Strategic Communications

## Greeting and Welcome

*Commissioner Sarah Lopez and Wichita City Council Member Brandon Johnson*

## Dashboard Preview

*Jack Joseph, Sedgwick County Geographic Information Services*

- Sedgwick County has developed a public dashboard maintain public awareness of the ongoing efforts being made to implement the recommendations as presented by the taskforce in April.

- Jack Joseph explained that the dashboard gives an immediate overview of the progress being made by all entities. At the very top of the dashboard, there is a link that will take viewers to the Community Taskforce webpage. In addition to this link, the dashboard also contains links to the PDF that lists each recommendation along with an explanation. The dashboard is able to show what recommendations are directed at which agency, individual agency progress, and an overarching section that breaks down what has been completed/not-completed.
- Jack goes on to explain that the dashboard will soon contain a third option in the overall section that shows projects that are ongoing, but have been started.
- The dashboard will be accessible through the Community Taskforce webpage on the Sedgwick County website, but has not yet been published for public viewing.
- There was no formal estimate given on when the dashboard would be fully functional, but, Russell Leeds, Assistant County Manager said that only a few more updates need to be made before the dashboard is ready for public viewing.

### **Questions from Taskforce Members about Dashboard**

- Dr. Rhonda Lewis suggested that the database be made available for a test run to ensure public usability and access.

### **911 Center/COMCARE Mental Health Update**

*Jennifer Wilson, COMCARE*

- “Develop an uninterrupted, 24/7 mobile mental health response system that can be dispatched by 911...”
  - Jennifer Wilson discussed the current staffing levels at COMCARE, including the fulfillment of all full-time positions dedicated to a mobile crisis response team. This team includes 3 clinicians and 2 integrated care specialists.
  - Jennifer also mentioned COMCARE’s 24/7 Mental Health Hotline, which can be reached at 316-660-7500. In addition to COMCARE’s 24/7 Mental Health Hotline, 988 has also gone live as of July 16, 2022. 988 is a national hotline that is specific to Mental Health emergencies, and would connect the caller with a qualified mental health professional in this area.

*Elora Forshee, Emergency Communications*

- “Embed qualified mental health providers with the 911 system”
  - Elora Forshee discussed an ongoing effort, along with COMCARE, to integrate a mental health professional within the 911 call center to assist callers suffering with a mental health emergency. Elora said that they are working on a pilot program that should begin in December 2022 in order to test appropriate hours, necessary tools, and effectiveness.
    - This pilot will likely transition to a permanent position, using the mental health contingency to create the compensation package for this person.

- “Add an additional position, Continuing Education Coordinator, to the 911 budget...”
  - Elora discussed the funding for this position, and mentioned that it would not be added to the FY23 budget. Elora discussed the ongoing need for this position, and that it would like require a current staff person to fill the role.
- “...establish a Community Advisory Board...”
  - Elora discussed the need for this Community Advisory Board to assist in the identification of issues, and to aid in the pursuit to diversify thinking with the Emergency Communications department.
  - Elora mentioned that the Community Advisory Board would be established, and have its first meeting before the end of Q1 in FY23. She stated that due to the upcoming election, she wanted to ensure all appointed members were selected by the County Commissioners that would be serving during the first full year of the Community Advisory Board meetings.
- “Address the high turnover rates at 911...”
  - At the August 24, 2022 Board of County Commissioner’s meeting, the County Commissioner’s approved a budget that included an improved pay plan for several departments, including Emergency Communications.
  - The details of this plan are still being established, but the taskforce will be made aware of any decisions made by Human Resources and Emergency Communications as it relates to employee compensation and recruitment efforts.

### **Questions from Taskforce Members about 911/COMCARE**

- Yeni Telles asked if responders at 911 are using any specific tools to identify who was in need of specialized help.
  - Elora responded that these tools had not yet been imbedded within Emergency Communications, but that they were working closely with COMCARE to develop a program. Elora mentioned that this will mainly be focused on new staff at Emergency Communication’s, and that they are hoping to make new members of the team feel confident in the decision making.
- Tracey Mason Sr., asked if the pilot program was intended to be short term or if they were making plans for the long-term.
  - Russell Leeds responded that while the county budget is created yearly, whenever a new position is developed, the intent is for that position to be funded each year so long as the position remains an asset.
- Dr. Rhonda Lewis asked if an outside consultant would improve the training process.
  - Elora stated that a consultant may be beneficial, but that regardless, they want to find the best possible method.
- Dr. Rhonda Lewis also asked if Elora would be able to develop a list of potential members for the Community Advisory Board, despite it being an election year.

- Elora responded that she would be glad to begin a list, and start having those conversations, but that she wants to make sure that the Board of County Commissioners also have the opportunity to appoint individuals.

## **DCF – Foster Care Update**

*Dee Nighswonger and Kristen Peterman, DCF*

- Kristin Peterman, Foster Care Program Administrator, spoke to the efforts being made by DCF to implement the recommendations given by the taskforce.
- Kristin mentioned that the DCF budget for FY23 has increased by \$7million in an effort to improve evidence-based prevention and early intervention programs for families and youth across the state.
- Kristin stated that they were also using TANF Grant funds to help support prevention services through schools and community-based programs.
- In addition to the information provided by Jennifer Wilson regarding the kickstart of 988, Kristin mentioned that DCF is working on a strategy to best inform foster families and youth about the services available throughout the state, including the 988 hotline.
- Kristin also drew attention to SB12, which required DCF to develop and implement a performance-based contact plan. She mentioned that this plan also includes the development of a plan to gather feedback from various stakeholders regarding DCF services.
- Lastly, Kristin spoke on the partnership with the Capacity Building Center for States to determine the root causes for “crossover youth.” This includes gathering information regarding placement stability, availability of services, and the use of mental health and substance abuse professionals within DCF.

## **Questions from Taskforce Members about DCF**

- Yusef Presley asked about the time and location of upcoming stakeholder meetings.
  - Dee Nighswonger, Regional Director for DCF, mentioned the plan to schedule a meeting for community stakeholders, but that an official date had not yet been set.
- Jason mentioned the need for additional mental health trainings for current/new foster families, stating that the current training was insufficient.
  - Kristin responded, saying that they are working with various community organizations to develop additional training opportunities for families within individual communities.
- Tracey Mason Sr. followed up by asking where they were at in the process of developing partnerships with other agencies.
  - Dee mentioned that while nothing had been implemented, she was working on visiting various communities and working to develop a list of organizations that might benefit the conversation.

- NaQuela asked about recommendation to develop a pre/post survey to gauge the satisfaction of families who participate in Family First and Family Preservation programs.
  - Kristin responded that they were working with their advisory groups to determine the best method of collecting this data, along with exploration of what data would be most helpful when determining course of action.
- NaQuela also inquired about the development of trainings based on cultural awareness.
  - Kristin noted that several various community partners are being asked to provide assistance, along with feedback, and to be a resource within each individual community to help families.
  - Steve Stonehouse, with Sedgwick County Dept. of Corrections, also mentioned that Sedgwick County has been working with WSU to identify different organizations, develop programs, and diversify training based around culture, race, ethnicity, and gender. He mentioned that Dept. of Corrections is offering assistance in obtaining grants to help organizations receive and give these trainings.
- Yeni asked how Dept. of Corrections is making organizations aware of these grant opportunities.
  - Steve responded that they are working with WSU to develop a list, but that they haven't been able to inform every one of these opportunities yet.

### **Wichita Police Update**

*Paul Duff, Wichita Police Dept.*

- Completed-
  - Paul mentioned that WPD had successfully implemented new training requirements for new recruits, as well as made concrete steps to ensure the rest of their officers received the training as well.
  - He also noted their success in developing plans with the state and other agencies to expand WPD's capacity for training, the types of training received, and the implementation of new policies relating to the ongoing education of officers on race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality.
- In Progress-
  - The City of Wichita has allocated \$750,000 to integrating social workers within WPD to aid their response to mental health emergencies. Paul mentioned that these individuals have not yet been placed within the agency, due to staffing shortages, but that they were working on a plan.
  - WPD is also working on giving access to lieutenants and captains to view all bodycam footage, as well as a system to alter supervisors when use/show of force is being used frequently with a particular officer.
- Not Yet Started-
  - Lastly Paul spoke on two recommendations that had not yet been started – Implementing standardized training and Development of a county-wide ecosystem to

support grassroots organizations. Paul cited the lack of a lead agency as the primary hold on these recommendations.

### **Questions from Taskforce Members about WPD**

- Tracey Mason Sr. asked if Paul could elaborate on the progress being made to create a centralized database to include grassroots organizations.
  - Paul stated that WPD was currently working on a list of all organizations in Sedgwick County, including information regarding services and contacts, for officers as resource in the field.
- Mr. Mason also requested elaboration on the need for lead agency with the final two recommendations that had not yet been started.
  - Paul discussed the complexity in unifying organizations of this size, and said that they are having trouble getting everyone to agree on what the needs are and what the process should look like.
- Dr. Rhonda Lewis then mentioned the need for a neutral convener, a third-party organization or person that could assist in getting everyone together.
  - Paul and others in the room agreed that they would work to find someone at WSU or Kansas Leadership Center who may be able to assist in this process.
- NaQuela asked why the COMCARE hotline was not used as a resource on the night of Cedric Lofton's death, and what WPD is doing to ensure that officers know that this is a resource they should take advantage of.
  - Paul responded that they didn't have all of the information from that night, but that after an ongoing partnership with COMCARE, he is confident that his officers know COMCARE is a resource and will use it when appropriate.

### **Dept. of Corrections Update**

*Steve Stonehouse, Dept. of Corrections*

- Policies
  - Department of Corrections has updated the JIAC policy 8.810 – Use of Force – to include the recommendations as listed in the April 2022 taskforce recommendations list.
  - Dept. of Corrections has also implemented policies that update the language of the JIAC Medical Criteria for Admission, including the disallowing of a juvenile in a Wrap Restraint to be brought into the facility.
  - Lastly, Steve spoke on the separation of juveniles from one another when initially brought into JIAC for assessment to decrease the likelihood of increased stress.
- Medical Contract
  - Increased Sedgwick County Funding for JDF and JIAC has allowed for those facilities to invest in improved mental health care. These services also include a nursing staff person available at JIAC and JDF 24/7. Lastly, this improved contract

also allowed for access to remote/virtual mental health consultants from COMCARE or another service provider that will be available 24/7.

- Trainings
  - JIAC and JDF have developed training programs to better inform staff of trauma care services or youth, including CIT training, Implicit Bias Training, and other trainings related to cultural and gender diversity. These trainings will be required for all staff persons within JIAC and JDF.
- Community Involvement/Service Provision
  - Dept. of Corrections is working to develop a database of grassroots organizations within Sedgwick County that serve youth. Steve mentioned that this will be an ongoing project, in order keep everything up-to-date.
  - In addition to the database, Dept. of Corrections with working with Team Justice to build a relationship with local volunteers to implement the Crossover Youth Practice Model. WSU consultants are working to identify stakeholders and volunteers.
- Facility Improvements
  - JIAC has established a “calming room” that includes soft furniture, new paint, and a sound system to decrease the stress level of juveniles entering JIAC.
  - Dept. of Corrections has also asked for a video recording system including audio capacity through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) through Sedgwick County.
- Memorandums of Understanding
  - An MOU between JIAC and WPD has been signed that honors the 2016 US Attorney General Opinion, and all reports must be completed prior to the youth entering JIAC.
  - This MOU also includes the requirement that WPD officers must stay on scene, or nearby, until the juvenile has been processed at JIAC.
  - In addition, the MOU includes that JIAC Staff members are not allowed to handle intake for someone described as a “combative juvenile” alone.

### **Questions from Taskforce Members about Dept. of Corrections**

- Yusef Presley asked how access is granted to the calming room.
  - Steve responded that they can either be invited in by a staff member, or they can ask to enter the room. Signs will be posted, and juveniles will be made aware of the room.
- Jason asked if Dept. of Corrections were offering any trainings that were specific to the care of juveniles.
  - Steve mentioned that, except for the CIT training, all trainings are for juveniles.
- Jazmine asked Steve if the intake form questions had been clarified.
  - Steve responded that the intake form is completed verbally, and that while a written copy would be provided, intake staff would be able to elaborate if needed.

## Final Questions

- Jazmine asked if Paul Duff could elaborate on the feasibility issue he presented with the bodycam footage.
  - Paul explained that staff were working on determining how that information could be stored, when it could be accessed, and how it would impact the booking process.
- Russell Leeds asked the taskforce to elaborate on their recommendation to increase the number of mental health professionals in Sedgwick County.
  - The taskforce explained that this request was not aimed specifically at COMCARE, although they place a part, it was more about investing in an ecosystem that supported mental health professionals and those hoping to be mental health professionals within Sedgwick County.

**180 Day Update-** The 180 day update meeting will occur the week of Dec 5, 2022. Taskforce members will receive a calendar notice/invitation with date, time and location.