

**May 26, 2009**

Department of Human Services  
Addictions and Mental Health Division

**Report on the Addictions and Mental Health Division  
Prevention Fidelity Project**

**Project Overview and Recommendations**

**Fidelity Process Overview**

The following is a summary of the Prevention Fidelity Project conducted from June 2007 through April 2009. This report provides an overview of the process, outcomes from the reviews and recommendations for future reviews and next steps.

In May 2007, Addictions and Mental Health (AMH) conducted its first fidelity pilot project. The goals of this project were to collect information and develop protocols for the AMH fidelity review process and to prepare AMH staff and selected providers to conduct fidelity reviews while increasing their knowledgeable about the specific evidence based practice (EBP) they reviewed.

Prevention programs received limited applications for review during this pilot project, although there are over 100 prevention practices on the AMH EBP list. It was found that the majority of prevention practices do not have a fidelity tool. To ensure prevention was represented in the pilot project, AMH convened a group of five prevention specialists, with extensive experience in this field. They were charged with the following:

1. Create a standardized form/tool to review all programs/practices for fidelity
2. Identify sites and practices to test the tool/process
3. Evaluate process and report results
4. Determine next steps

In June 2007, the group met and developed a sample tool. Three programs and one practice were selected to test the sample tool created.

- Project Northland
- Strengthening Families
- ReConnecting Youth
- Communities That Care

Teams consisted of one AMH prevention staff person and one county prevention specialist. Each team observed one session of each practice/program. All teams used the sample fidelity tool, however Strengthening Families and Communities that Care also used accompany forms specific to that program.

## **Outcomes of Program Reviews**

- Facilitator of program must have ample time to implement the program. ( i.e. 6 months) prior to review.
- Plan to communicate with actual facilitator before observation to clarify expectations, outcomes, purpose, etc. Some observations were set up by county prevention coordinator but facilitated by school personnel, etc.
- Schedule fidelity review with other components of local prevention efforts to see how things transpire as a system.
- Form/tool was cumbersome, but doable. There are some questions (CPS, MDS data, etc.) that are more appropriate to ask a county coordinator and other questions that are more appropriate to use in a fidelity review.
- Form is not suited for all types of programs. More suited to prevention coordinator or direct staff that are implementing program.
- Regarding process: it is one thing to review a curriculum and another to review an organic, community based process. Would require different forms.

## **Recommendation for next steps:**

- ◇ Need to simplify form to be more user friendly, applicable for both internal and external reviews. At this time questions need more clarity for interpretation.
- ◇ Need to obtain “essential elements” for each program/practice potentially reviewed.
- ◇ Need to engage broader involvement of prevention workers.
- ◇ Need to provide a mini training of what a fidelity review entails to prevention field.
- ◇ Include fidelity review as a component of mentoring within CPS practicum requirements.
- ◇ Include fidelity review with components of site review and program outcomes.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the Prevention Fidelity Project provided AMH data and recommendations on how to effectively conduct prevention fidelity reviews and next steps. If we are to continue our efforts in this direction, the prevention tool/form would need to be revised and implemented more to determine its effectiveness, in addition to being combined with other components of the state site review system.