

*~ The CONNECTIONS WEEKLY ~*  
*April 13 ~ 20, 2007*



***The CONNECTIONS Health Services Component & the H100 Code in CCRS...***

Local districts and authorized agencies are responsible for providing comprehensive medical services for all children in foster care, for documenting such services, and for maintaining current records. Federal and New York State statutes and regulations define the services that must be provided, as well as standards for the confidentiality of medical information. The Health Services functionality, implemented with Build 18.9, was developed to support the continuity and integrity of the child's medical care and completion of activities required by federal or state mandate. Based on this, districts that are entering health information in the Health Services component in CONNECTIONS will no longer need to enter the H100 code (health exam) in CCRS. Additionally workers are advised to ignore the cues that appear on the monthly CCRS District/Agency Caseload Report.

***Please Take Note: Attention Needed to the Child Summary Report & Child History Report Generated from the Health Services Tab...***

In accordance with § 373-a of the Social Services Law, the biological parent's names should *not* be included in the medical histories of a child legally freed for adoption or of a child placed in foster care, when providing this information, as authorized by law. Currently both of these reports contain the names of the biological parents. Until these reports are corrected, we must direct you to **redact the biological parents names from these reports, prior to sharing them with authorized individuals.**

***Two New CONNECTIONS Tip Sheets...  
Build 18.9 Outcome & Activity Block Tip Sheet  
Build 18.9 Health Services Component Tip Sheet***

Take a look! There are two new tip sheets posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet!

### ***Info About the Outcome & Activity (O & A) Blocks...***

Outcome and Activity blocks that are in an active status "come forward" to each new FASP so that they can continue to be worked on. When they come forward they must be updated. The user must change the status of these blocks from "new" to another status (retained, modified, completed etc.). The user must also select from a list of "level of achievement" so as to indicate how the family is doing with the activity (improvement, same, worse etc.). Please note that this functionality has been a requirement; a fix implemented in Build 18.9 corrected an edit that had not been working properly since the implementation of Build 18.

**A reminder:** Users must remember to update any blocks that come forward. This may involve updating blocks other users created as it would be inefficient to create the same O&A block over and over.

### ***A Reminder about Updating Person Address Info in CONNECTIONS...***

We just want to gently remind local districts to update Person address information in the CONNECTIONS application when it differs from the initial address that was transmitted upon intake. As you are aware, a Person's address is also used by the State Central Register to forward correspondence and it is very important that the addresses be complete and correct so that the correspondence is addressed to, and received by, the correct individuals at the correct address. Your help in this matter will eliminate potentially costly errors and we thank you!

### ***CONNECTIONS Training Info...***

#### ***Operational Training Events in STARS...***

With the Build 18.9 training winding down, we just want to remind you that CONNECTIONS Operational Training is scheduled for the second quarter and is in STARS. Please take a look and see if the training that you have been waiting for is now being offered in your area! There are several courses that SUNY Training Strategies Group is offering during the second quarter. Please see below for further info...

**Basic Foster and Adoptive Home Development (FAD) (lab training)** – This two-day course provides an overview of developing and maintaining foster and adoptive homes in CONNECTIONS in accordance with current New York State regulations, including:

- Ø Responding to an inquiry
- Ø Maintaining person information
- Ø Certifying a foster/adoptive home
- Ø Maintaining FAD homes in CONNECTIONS
- Ø Annual Reauthorizations
- Ø Closing homes
- Ø Re-opening homes
- Ø FAD reports

### **CONNECTIONS Security** *(lab training)*

This one-day course designed for Security Coordinators and Back-up Security Coordinators provides an overview of CONNECTIONS Security, including:

- Ø Maintaining staff, office and units
- Ø Security reports
- Ø Transferring workers
- Ø End-dating and reinstating staff

### **Case Management for Child Welfare Workers\*** *(lab training)*-

This two-day course provides an overview of the Case Management functionality within a casework context, including:

- Ø Creating and stage-progressing an FSI to an FSS
- Ø Maintaining information in an FSS stage
- Ø Documenting progress notes
- Ø Launching and completing a Family Assessment and Service Plan
- Ø Closing a stage
- Ø Changing a stage type

### **Specialized Preventive Case Management (SPCM)** *(lab training)* **(NYC only)**-

This two-day course provides an overview of the Case Management functionality for preventive cases with a focus on ACS policy and procedures, including:

- Ø Advocates Preventive Only (ADVPO) cases
- Ø Creating and stage-progressing an FSI to an FSS
- Ø Maintaining information in an FSS stage
- Ø Documenting progress notes
- Ø Launching and completing a Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP)
- Ø Closing a stage
- Ø Changing a stage type

### **Child Protective Services Investigation\*** - *(lab training)*

This three-day course provides an overview of CPS Casework Flow and documentation, including:

- Ø Demographic information
- Ø Progress Notes
- Ø Safety Assessment
- Ø Risk Assessment
- Ø Maintaining allegations
- Ø Concluding an investigation
- Ø Opening a case for services
- Ø Completing a Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP)

### **Developing Effective Resource User Skills – (lab training)**

This one-day course is designed for experienced CONNECTIONS users who are designated to assist co-workers in using CONNECTIONS with a focus on recommended practices for troubleshooting and problem solving, including:

- Ø Techniques for helping other workers to learn to resolve CONNECTIONS issues on their own
- Ø Resources/Support Tools
- Ø Managing workloads
- Ø Case maintenance
- Ø Family Services Stage tasks

### **Vacancy Control – (lab training)**

This half-day course introduces participants to the Vacancy Control functionality in CONNECTIONS, including:

- Ø Obtaining real-time access to vacant bed information in foster care and congregate care settings
- Ø Maintaining beds and bed characteristics

\* The content of this course is integrated in the CORE and CPSR training currently offered to new case workers/CPS specialty workers.

We encourage you to register staff now for the course(s) that may help them more successfully navigate CONNECTIONS! And, if you do not see the course you are looking for and have a CONNECTIONS training need (as well as a minimum of 5 people to participate) please call the SUNY Training Strategies Group, CONNECTIONS Training Project office at 1.877.451.4835 and ask for George Kleinmeier. Tell him about the specific training you are looking for. We will try to accommodate all requests as quickly as possible!

### ***An Update on the Citrix Upgrade...***

In an effort to keep you "up-to-date" about the Citrix Upgrade; as you are aware, a few weeks ago we deployed the first 'leg' of the update, and the Citrix PN Agent was upgraded to version 9.237. We are currently in the process of testing the 'final' stage of the roll-out and had anticipated an April 16th implementation. In light of competing CONNECTIONS activity, we have made a decision to briefly postpone the implementation of the MetaFrame XP CONNECTIONS Environment upgrade. As we have identified, the postponement will be brief, as we will be completing the implementation shortly and will notify you of the rescheduled date.

### ***An Update to the CONNECTIONS Build 18.9 Questions & Answers...***

As you know, this document was created as an on-going log of those 'frequently asked questions', with accompanying answers, about Build 18.9. As an FYI, we

are in the process of updating this document with additional Q & A's. An updated version of the document will be posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet next week.

### ***A Note About the Web Version of the Permanency Hearing Report Templates...***

We have recently fielded a few questions from users about the use of the web version of the Permanency Hearing Report templates. In reviewing the questions with the Policy team we report that districts may use the web versions of the statement and notices and the web version of the freed child Permanency Hearing Report, if they have an "8D" child in a CWS stage, as well as the web version of any PHR, if districts have had to close and reopen CONNECTIONS/WMS cases due to retro-payment issues. However, we would like to add a word of caution regarding the use of the Permanency Hearing Report templates, as the templates should not be viewed as a substitution for required information that should be recorded within the CONNECTIONS application.

### ***NEW OCFS Data Warehouse FASP Report...***

The OCFS Data Warehouse Team is pleased to announce a new FASP report in the Cognos ReportNet environment. The **Current Pending FASPs - Agency Pending With** report is located in the "OCFS DW - FASP Reports" folder. The report can help supervisors and managers determine which agency is next to act on a pending FASP. It provides local districts and voluntary agencies with a list of FASPs in "Pending" status, including FASP Submitter information and the name of the agency with which the FASP is awaiting action. An updated FASP Reports Step-by-Step Guide is posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet on the Data Warehouse page. Please contact the Data Warehouse Team with any questions.

To access the report:

1. Go to the Cognos ReportNet environment: <http://htptda0a1aspcog/crn/>
2. Read the confidentiality agreement, and click "I Accept"
3. Click on the link for "Public Folders"
4. Click on the link for "OCFS DW – FASP Reports"
5. Click on the link for the folder that displays. (Contract agency staff will see a "Voluntary Agencies" folder, LDSS staff will see a "Local Districts and Regional Offices" folder, and state staff will see both folders.)
6. Click on the link for the "Current Pending FASPs – Agency Pending With" report to run it, and complete the report prompts when they appear.

### ***CONNECTIONS Fun Facts...***

Bet'cha didn't know how many users access the application on a weekly basis. For the month of March we had:

Week 1: 13,225 users

Week 2: 13,243 users

Week 3: 13,098 users

Week 4: 13,249 users

Week 5: 13,253 users

More fun facts to come next week!

### ***New Postings to the CONNECTIONS Intranet...***

The following document(s) were recently posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet website:

- Build 18.9 Outcome & Activity Block Tip Sheet
- Build 18.9 Health Services Component Tip Sheet
- The CONNECTIONS Weekly

### ***Weekly System Maintenance...***

#### ***CONNECTIONS Application Downtime...***

- ***Friday, 4/13/07*** from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM
- ***Wednesday, 4/18/07*** from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM
- ***Friday, 4/20/07*** from 5:00AM – 7:00AM