

THE CONNECTIONS WEEKLY

February 29 - March 7, 2008



Impact Analysis: Entering AFCARS Data in CONNECTIONS...

Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) consists of a number of data elements that states are required to report to the federal government on a semi annual basis. With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, OCFS will be able to capture data pertaining to: conditions associated with the child's removal; foster home composition; and a child's adoption. An Impact Analysis titled ***Entering Data Required for AFCARS*** discusses what stays the same, what is new or changing and the implications/considerations of additional required documentation. The Impact Analysis includes a mapping document of the AFCARS elements.

The impact analysis document is available on the CONNECTIONS intranet site on both the Home and Implementation page.

Correspondence from the Desk of the Division of Child Welfare and Community Services, Deputy Commissioner Jane Lynch...

On Friday, February 15th a letter was forwarded from OCFS Division of Child Welfare and Community Services Deputy Commissioner, Jane Lynch, regarding the need for local districts to report medical diagnosis or well child status on the *Clinical Appointment* window of the Health Tab for designated children in order to fulfil AFCARS (Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System) elements in the CONNECTIONS application. For your reference, a copy of the letter is posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet on the Home page.

To assist local districts with this process, a report has been created that identifies the children, with a PC of placement, do not have a qualifying diagnosis recorded. The reports are in a shared drive that can be accessed using the URL below. The report will be run monthly. The March report is scheduled to be posted sometime in the next week. Since confidential information is contained in the report they are password protected. Passwords have been sent to the local district Commissioners and Directors of Services. This URL will also link you to a folder with resource materials.

URL - \\fnphsen0a1ah\groups\connections\build_18\afcars_reports (Please note that you may also type this URL directly into the address browser.)

Build 18.9.6 Release Notes...

The Build Release Notes, identifying the specific content of the Build, are available on the CONNECTIONS intranet site on both the Home and Implementation page.

As you are aware, through your RIST and RUG group meetings, this Build will be implemented on Friday, March 7, 2008, and will include modifications to the CONNECTIONS application. The focus of this Build is on most of the remaining, short term FIT recommendations, additional user requests and system support for mission critical tasks and legislation.

Preview Will Be Available for Build 18.9.6...

For staff with access to Preview, Build 18.9.6 changes will be available in the Preview environment on Monday, March 3rd. In order to effect this change, the preview environment will be unavailable from Friday, February 29, 2008 beginning at 12:00 PM through Monday, March 3, 2008 at 1:00 PM. We encourage you to take a look at the new functionality that will be implemented when the Build is rolled out on March 7th!

Training Info You Should Know...

UPDATED - The Build 18.9 Job Aid - Health Services (Functionality for Caseworkers, Case Planners, Case Managers and CPS Workers/Monitors)

For your reference, an updated version of the Build 18.9 Job Aid - Health Services, has just been released and is posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet website on the Training page. This job aid provides a detailed overview of the CONNECTIONS system changes that were introduced with the implementation of Build 18.9 and Build 18.9.1; specifically information about health services. In addition to the revised job aid the accompanying document: Revisions to the Build 18.9 Health Services Job Aid, is also posted to the site on the same page. Revisions have been made to the job aid in the area of the security of health services information.

A NEW CBT - Completing Supervisory Tasks with CONNECTIONS

In our continued effort to be responsive to the requests from the field related to training needs, the CONNECTIONS Training Project of the Professional Development Program (PDP) has drafted a new CBT titled: Completing Supervisory Tasks with CONNECTIONS. This course provides supervisors from both districts and voluntary agencies with an overview of specific CONNECTIONS functionality that can be used to complete supervisory tasks. Topics in this course include an overview of supervisory responsibilities; monitoring casework activities using CONNECTION; using and generating reports; merging and splitting cases; reviewing work in CONNECTIONS and approving work in CONNECTIONS.

Copies of the CBT will be shipped to Staff Development Coordinators from each district and agency, as well as to Implementation staff from the OCFS Regional Offices. The memo announcing this CBT was forwarded to agency Staff Development Coordinators earlier today and is also posted to the CONNECTIONS website on the Training page.

Closing Adoption Cases Guide...

Closing Adoption cases requires activities in the CONNECTIONS system, WMS and CCRS. The 'Closing Adoption Cases Guide' has been updated to reflect the current requirements in these 3 systems. *It also identifies the order in which these activities must be completed for the CONNECTIONS case to be properly sealed.* This document

replaces the Adoption Discharge and Finalization Checklist that is posted on the CONNECTIONS website, and will be posted on the Implementation page, under Current Tools.

General Information Systems (GIS) Messages...

GIS 08 - #003 - Dated February 28, 2008

Use of Social Security Numbers in MA Cases involving Adopted Children

The purpose of this General Information System (GIS) message is to advise social services districts how to maintain the Social Security Number (SSN) to protect confidential information on adopted children.

On April 19, 2007, the New York State Department of Health issued GIS 07 MA/010 clarifying Social Security Number (SSN) requirements as a condition of Medicaid eligibility for children. Federal law requires that all applicants for Medicaid, including foster and adopted children, furnish their SSN as a condition of eligibility.

In those cases where an adopted child is not issued a new SSN following finalization of the adoption, social services districts may have been entering the adopted child's original (pre-adoption) SSN on the Welfare Management System (WMS). This entry may create a link to the adopted child's birth family and/or pre-adoptive case.

Therefore, social services districts are advised that an adopted child's original (pre-adoption) SSN must not be entered on WMS. A copy of the SSN is to be maintained in the hard copy sealed case record and the Medicaid case record. Case information on an adopted child is considered part of the confidential adoption record and must be protected to prevent exposure of any identifying information to anyone other than the worker authorized by law to access such information.

In those cases where an adopted child is issued a "new" SSN, that number may be entered on WMS. Adoption staff should work with Non Services staff to make sure that a copy of the adopted child's SSN is obtained and recorded as part of the Non-Services case record including, if the adopted child is eligible, the Medicaid case.

With the June, 18, 2007 WMS migration, edits associated with a SSN Code value '2' - SSN Applied For - and a blank SSN, have been revised. Specifically, a SSN Code value of '2' is no longer valid with Recert (06) transactions and an error (1205 'SSN REQ FOR THIS TRANSACTION') is generated. Social services districts are instructed to continue to use SSN Code value '2' for adopted children and override this error. SSN Code '4' - Not Applied For - should not be used. This edit applies only to Case Type 20 (MA-Only) and Case Type 24 (FHP). Please consult with your WMS Coordinator regarding specific instructions. OCFS is currently working with DOH to address this issue.

Social services districts are also advised that a CIN Consolidation should never be completed to consolidate an adopted child's 'new' CIN with their original (pre-adoption) CIN. Please refer to GIS 08-#001 - WMS Client Identification Number (CIN) Consolidation Process - for further information.

GIS 08 - #002 - Dated February 15, 2008

New Foster Care and Adoption Individual Categorical Codes in MA case

As a member of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA), NYS will provide Medicaid to children from other states with valid state Adoption Subsidy Agreements who are eligible for either Title IV-E Adoption Assistance or state adoption subsidy.

In an effort to enhance reporting capabilities, including ICAMA, effective 10/22/07, the NYS Department of Health, in cooperation with OCFS, created new Medicaid Individual Categorical Codes (ICC) for children in foster care and adopted children. The new ICC's are listed below with applicable case type.

ICC	Description	Case Type
74	IV-E Adoption	20
75	Non-NYS Non IV-E Adoption Residing in NYS	20
76	NYS Non-IV-E Adoption residing outside of NYS	20
77	Non-IV-E Foster Care	20
78	IV-E Foster Care	13
79	SSI Blind Foster Care	22
80	SSI Disabled Foster Care	22
81	NYS Non IV-E Foster Care Residing outside of NYS	20

These new ICCs should be used when opening new or reauthorizing existing Medicaid cases. Please contact your local WMS coordinator or Medicaid Supervisor regarding specifics.

This GIS is intended to reinforce the October 2007 DOH issuance and promote appropriate usage as there are no systemic edits in place to enforce, for example, that an MA recipient (CT 20 w/ICC 74) is, in fact, an active IVE Adoption Subsidy recipient in a Services (CT 40) case. Timely, accurate procedural communication between LDSS Services and MA staff is critical.

Need More Info

The Department of Health (DOH) WMS Coordinator letter on this topic, dated 10-09-07, is available at the NYS Department of Health website:

<http://health.state.nyenet/rev2007coord.htm> .

GIS 08 - #001 - Dated February 13, 2008

WMS Client Identification Number (CIN) Consolidation Process

(Please note that this piece is pertinent to local districts only.)

A new GIS message was communicated on Thursday, February 13th. The purpose of the GIS is to inform Local Districts of an enhancement to the WMS Client Identification Number (CIN) Consolidation process that was migrated to WMS Production on 10/22/07. This process allows a faster and more direct resolution with less processing steps to follow, by giving the district an on-line capability to remedy most multiple CIN occurrences. It also requires that the district assign a new security function to the staff designated to carry out the on-line CIN Consolidation task.

The OTDA-IT Customer Response Center (formerly known as the WMS Help Desk), currently has a mailbox set up to receive all WMS CIN Consolidation forms via e-mail to the mailbox address of: OTDA.SM.WMSCIN. Upstate Local Districts will now be able to

complete the WMS CIN Consolidation process directly on-line when consolidating multiple CIN situations within their district, and will only need to use the 'old' process of e-mailing multiple CINs to OTDA when they involve multiple district involvement.

For this new on-line process, a new security function of 0188 - CIN Consolidation - has been made available in NYSeWebstar under the TTSS Menu, for assignment to staff performing the new on-line CIN Consolidation. Please work with your local district TTSS Administrator to identify appropriate staff for this online CIN Consolidation security function. Staff can access the data entry screen for CIN Consolidation via the WMS Menu, screen WMSMNU, selection F7 - NS Data Entry & Disposition (WCINC1) CIN Consolidation.

Local Districts are reminded that an adopted child's 'new' CIN should never be consolidated with their 'original' CIN.

Need More Info

For more information regarding the WMS CIN Consolidation process, please visit the OTDA-IT website at: <http://otda.state.nyenet/it/notices.asp>

For questions regarding the WMS CIN Consolidation process, please contact the OTDA-IT Customer Response Center at 1-800-342-3010 or the OCFS-IT Customer Support at 1-800-342-3727.

As you are aware, all GIS messages are available in the Public Folders by following the path identified below.

*All Public Folders/dfa.state.ny.us/OCFS/TSU/ ***Services systems Reference Documents/ GIS (system change notices)*

New Postings to the CONNECTIONS Intranet...

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

- *The CONNECTIONS Weekly for the week of February 22, 2008*
- *CONNECTIONS Build 18.9.6 Release Notes*
- *Impact Analysis: Entering AFCARS in CONNECTIONS*

Weekly System Maintenance...

Due to regularly scheduled system maintenance, the CONNECTIONS application will not be available on...

- ***Wednesday, 3/5/08*** from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM
- ***Friday, 3/7/08*** from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM
- ***Wednesday 3/12/08*** from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM

Additional Downtime...

Due to implementation of Build 18.9.6, the CONNECTIONS application will not be available on ...

- ***Friday, 3/7/08*** from 6:00 PM - 12:00 AM