



## Program and Service Committee Minutes

Thursday October 24, 2025

By Zoom

9:00 A.M.

### Attendance

Wendy Sawyer, Ricki Hall, Jessica Petter, and Debra Schrader were in attendance by Zoom. Wendy will be the reporter for the November 20, 2025 board meeting.

### 1st Quarter Report (*information*)

The committee reviewed the first quarter reports from contractors. Below are a few of the highlights.

- All contractors' quarterly reports were submitted timely, by October 15, 2025.
- There were 11 quarterly reports reviewed by the committee that represented multiple ECI service types.
- There is concern regarding staffing for Lutheran Services in Iowa which has impacted benchmark targets.
- Most of the programs appear to be on track or close to on track for benchmark targets.
- Overall, 17% of funding have been expended; on target is 25%. There is no concern with rate of spending.
- Notes of interest include the following:
  - Preschool tuition scholarship requests are down due to HHS requiring families apply for child care assistance and getting denied before awarding a scholarship.
  - 100% of family support programs of enrolled new families meet the 80% criteria set by the 4 R Kids board and all three family support programs meet the 75% state enrollment criteria.
  - One family support program has a waiting list.
  - Infant and early childhood mental health consultation is experiencing high requests for service and has expended 46% of funding allocated in the first quarter.
- A summary of the report will be provided at the November 20, 2025 board meeting.
- A copy of the 1st Quarter progress report is located at [www.4rkids-eci.org](http://www.4rkids-eci.org).

### Corrective Action Plan (*action requested*)

Lutheran Services in Iowa has been unable to fill staff positions during all FY2025 and the first three months of this current fiscal year. Currently, 1.8 FTE family support worker staff positions remain unfilled. A performance improvement corrective action plan is needed. The following will be required in the performance improvement corrective action plan.

- Submit a written staff retention plan within 10 calendar days, outlining strategies to improve retention and workplace culture.
- Provide weekly updates on staffing status and retention efforts.
- Submit revised benchmarks including, number of families and number of home visits.
- Provide a budget update after the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter report in regards to the amount of funding that will be unused for the fiscal year.
- A formal review of progress will be conducted in 60 days.

In addition to the performance improvement corrective action plan, \$22,000 will be unused due to unfilled staff position and will be reduced in FY2026 contract.

### Dallas County ISU Extension Request

Due to high demand for services, Dallas County ISU Extension has submitted a request for \$58,500 additional funding for infant and early childhood mental health consultation, child care incentives, and training. It is recommended to approve the funding request.

### Thrive Iowa Update (*information*)

The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services will contract directly with Warren County Health Services starting in January 1, 2026 and Thrive will no longer exist and a new model called Restore Hope will be used. Warren County Health Services will receive a total of \$969,500 for a 3 1/2 year contract. Funds can only be used to support 3 FTE and mileage and is to serve up to 3 counties during the term of the contract. No funding is allowed for housing or essential needs. The 4 R Kids ECI board will no longer be responsible for contract oversight. HHS has made no attempt to inform the ECI director of the changes.

### ECI Redistricting (*information*)

The ECI Director has drafted an advantage and disadvantage document of the 4 R Kids ECI area. This will be presented at the November 20, 2025 board meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00. Next meeting is scheduled for Friday February 6, 2026 at 9:00 by Zoom.