County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
425 Shatto Place, Los Angeles, California 90020
(213) 351-5602

PHILIP L. BROWNING
Director

Board of Supervisors
HILDA L. SOLIS
First District
MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Second District
SHEILA KUEHL
Third District
DON KNABE
Fourth District
MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

December 28, 2015

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Philip L. Browning
Director

Diane Ingersoll for

CHILDREN'S HOMES OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GROUP HOME QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) of Children's Homes of Southern California (the Group Home) in October 2014. The Group Home has five sites located in the Third Supervisorial District and provides services to County of Los Angeles DCFS placed children and youth. According to the Group Home's program statement, its purpose is "First, to help youths develop the skills and self-esteem, which will enable them to become self-sufficient and productive persons in society. And second, to help develop and promote a viable social support system for youths outside the foster care system."

The QAR looked at the status of the placed children's safety, permanency and well-being during the most recent 30 days and the Group Home's practices and services over the most recent 90 days. The Group Home scored at or above the minimum acceptable score in 7 of 9 focus areas: Permanency, Placement Stability, Visitation, Engagement, Service Needs, Assessment & Linkages, and Tracking & Adjustment. OHCMD noted opportunities for improved performance in the focus areas of Safety and Teamwork.

The Group Home provided the attached approved Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) addressing the recommendations noted in this report. In May 2015, OHCMD quality assurance reviewer met with the Group Home to discuss results of the QAR and to provide the Group Home with technical support to address methods for improvement in the areas of Safety and Teamwork.

If you have any questions, your staff may contact me or Aldo Marin, Board Relations Manager, at (213) 351-5530.

PLB:EM:KR:rds

Attachments

c: Sachi A. Hamai, Chief Executive Officer
John Naimo, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Jorge Marquez, Executive Director, Children's Homes of Southern California
Lajuannah Hills, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division
Lenora Scott, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division

CHILDREN'S HOMES OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW (QAR)
FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) of Children's Home of Southern California Group Home (the Group Home) in October 2014. The purpose of the QAR is to assess the Group Home's service delivery and to ensure that the Group Home is providing children with quality care and services in a safe environment, which includes physical care, social and emotional support, education, and workforce readiness, and other services to protect and enhance their growth and development.

The QAR is an in-depth case review and interview process designed to assess how children and their families are benefiting from services received and how well the services are working. The QAR utilizes a six-point rating scale as a *yardstick* for measuring the situation observed in specific focus areas. The QAR assessed the following focus areas:

Status Indicators:

- Safety
- Permanency
- Placement Stability
- Visitation

Practice Indicators:

- Engagement
- Service Needs
- Assessment & Linkages
- Teamwork
- Tracking & Adjustment

For Status Indicators, the reviewer focuses on the child's functioning during the most recent 30 day period and for Practice Indicators, the reviewer focuses on the Group Home's service delivery during the most recent 90 day period.

For the purpose of this QAR, interviews were conducted with three focus children, three Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Children's Social Workers (CSWs), the Group Home Executive Director, three Group Home childcare workers, two Group Home program managers, and one Group Home administrator.

At the time of the QAR, the placed children's average number of placements was five, their overall average length of placement was nine months and their average age was 16. The focus children were randomly selected. None of the focus children were included as part of the sample for the 2014-2015 contract compliance review.

QAR SCORING

The Group Home received a score for each focus area based on information gathered from on-site visits, agency file reviews, DCFS files and interviews with the Group Home staff, DCFS CSWs, and the children. The minimum acceptable score is 6 in the area of Safety and 5 in all remaining areas.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	GH QAR Score	GH QAR Rating
Safety - The degree to which the Group Home ensures that the child is free of abuse, neglect, and exploitation by others in his/her placement and other settings.	6	4	**Fair Safety Status** - The focus children are usually avoiding behaviors that cause harm to self, others, or the community but rarely may present a behavior that has low or mild risk of harm. The focus children may have had related history, diagnosis, or behavior presentations in the past, but may have presented risk behaviors at a declining or much reduced level over the past three months. The focus children have a minimally safe living arrangement with the present caregivers.
Permanency - The degree to which the child is living with caregivers, who are likely to remain in this role until the child reaches adulthood, or the child is in the process of returning home or transitioning to a permanent home and the child, the Group Home staff, caregivers and DCFS CSW, support the plan.	5	5	**Good Status** - The focus children have substantial permanence. The focus children live in a family setting that the children, the Group Home staff, caregivers, caseworker, and team members have confidence will endure lifelong.
Placement Stability - The degree to which the Group Home ensures that the child's daily living, learning, and work arrangements are stable and free from risk of disruptions and known risks are being managed to achieve stability and reduce the probability of future disruption.	5	5	**Good Stability** - The children have substantial stability in placement and school settings with only planned changes and no more than one disruption in either setting over the past 12 months with none in the past six months. Any known risks are now well controlled.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	GH QAR Score	GH QAR Rating
Visitation - The degree to which the Group Home staff support important connections being maintained through appropriate visitation.	5	5	**Substantially Acceptable Maintenance of Visitation & Connections** - Generally, effective family connections are being sought for all significant family/Non-Related Extended Family Member (NREFM) through appropriate visits and other connecting strategies.
Engagement - The degree to which the Group Home staff working with the child, biological family, extended family and other team members for the purpose of building a genuine, trusting and collaborative working relationship with the ability to focus on the child's strengths and needs.	5	5	**Good Engagement Efforts** - To a strong degree, a rapport has been developed, such that the Group Home staff, DCFS CSW, certified foster parent and the focus children feel heard and respected.
Service Needs - The degree to which the Group Home staff involved with the child, work toward ensuring the child's needs are met and identified services are being implemented and supported and are specifically tailored to meet the child's unique needs.	5	5	**Good Supports & Services Needs** - A good and substantial array of supports and services substantially match intervention strategies identified in the case plan. The services are generally helping the focus children make progress toward planned outcomes. A usually dependable combination of informal and formal supports and services is available, appropriately used, and seen as generally satisfactory. The array provides an appropriate range of options in the selection of providers.
Assessment & Linkages - The degree to which the Group Home staff involved with the child and family understand the child's strengths, needs, preferences, and underlying issues and services are regularly assessed to ensure progress is being made toward case plan goals.	5	5	**Good Assessment and Understanding** - The focus children's functioning and support systems are generally understood. Information necessary to understand the focus children's strengths, needs, and preferences are frequently updated. Present strengths, risks and underlying needs requiring interventions and supports are substantially recognized and well understood.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	GH QAR Score	GH QAR Rating
Teamwork - The degree to which the "right people" for the child and family, have formed a working team that meets, talks, and makes plans together.	5	4	**Minimally Adequate to Fair Teamwork** - The team contains some of the important supporters and decision makers in the focus children's life, including informal supports. The team has formed a minimally adequate to fair working system that meets, talks, and/or plans together; at least one face-to-face team meeting has been held to develop plans.
Tracking & Adjustment - The degree to which the Group Home staff who is involved with the child and family is carefully tracking the progress that the child is making, changing family circumstances, attainment of goals and planned outcomes.	5	5	**Good Tracking & Adjustment Process** - Intervention strategies, supports and services being provided to the focus children are generally responsive to changing conditions. Frequent monitoring, tracking, and communication of focus children's status and service results to the team are occurring. Generally successful adaptations are based on a basic knowledge of what things are working and not working for the focus children.

Status Indicators
(Measured over last 30 days)

What's Working Now (Score/Narrative of Strengths for Focus Area)

Permanency (5) Good Status

Permanency Overview: The Group Home provides substantial permanence for each of the focus children. The Group Home is providing the services that correspond with the focus children's permanency plan. The Group Home collaborates with the DCFS CSWs to ensure that the steps to permanence are being followed. The Group Home is providing permanency services that include daily life skills training and emancipation and youth development services. Furthermore, the DCFS CSWs for the three focus children are very satisfied with the Group Home's efforts in adhering to the concurrent plans and with the Group Home's decisions in developing the appropriate permanency goals for the focus children. The focus children have shared that they are aware of their permanency plans and they are working toward achieving their case plan goals. Each of the focus children has expressed wanting to remain at the Group Home long-term, after they turn 18, as a non-minor dependent, receiving services under extended foster care. All three of the focus children are receiving services to prepare them for living independently.

The permanency plan for one focus child is Permanent Plan Living Arrangement (PPLA). This focus child is determined to work toward achieving his permanency plan of transitioning into transitional housing, attending college and becoming independent. However, he would like to remain as close to the San Fernando Valley as possible so that he can be close to his family. The Group Home staff and his DCFS CSW are working closely with the focus child to achieve his goal of attending college. The focus child reported that he is happy being placed at the Group Home and he likes the Group Home staff and gets along well with them.

The permanency plan for the second focus child is also PPLA, with the plan of transitioning out of care as the specific goal. Due to the focus child's excessive acting out behavior, DCFS is unable to recommend placement in a lower level of care. Further, the focus child expressed that he does not want to be adopted and wants to remain placed at the Group Home receiving permanency planning services that are approved by DCFS. He would like to become independent, and he feels that with the services he is receiving in the Group Home, he will one day be able to do so. He stated that he is comfortable with the staff and the Group Home. Overall, he feels safe at the Group Home and indicated that he likes this Group Home more than prior placements.

The third focus child is receiving court-ordered permanent placement services and according to the DCFS CSW, PPLA continues to be the appropriate plan for him. The focus child is refusing to return to the home of his adoptive mother or maintain a relationship with her. The focus child has stated that he wants to remain at the Group Home, find employment and learn the necessary skills so that he may make better decisions for himself. He would like to transition out of care upon turning age 18. He reported that the services he is receiving from the Group Home are preparing him for independence.

Placement Stability (5 Good Stability)

Placement Stability Overview: The Group Home is providing good stability for the focus children in its care. The Group Home is committed to working with each of the focus children and takes responsibility in ensuring that the children's needs are met and that they have the support necessary to remain stable in placement. The Group Home ensures that the Group Home staff has training to meet the focus children's needs. The three focus children reported that they like living at the Group Home and they get along with the staff. Additionally, they all stated that they want to remain placed at the Group Home for as long as they can. The plan for each of the focus children is to remain at the Group Home until they are able to successfully transition out of care or into transitional housing.

The first focus child is working on having his needs addressed and working toward achieving his treatment goals. He is stable at the Group Home; both the Group Home staff and the focus child reported that he is doing well. The focus child reported that he is at one of the highest levels at the Group Home and he has his own room, which is known as the "honor room." The focus child further stated that he is happy living in the San Fernando Valley, he has good school attendance and he is doing well academically. He has also worked hard to make it to the high school football team. He says that he is excited and motivated to graduate. He feels comfortable and respected at the Group Home and he feels that the Group Home is preparing him for independence.

The second focus child stated that he wants to remain placed at the Group Home. The Group Home is committed to working with the focus child. The Group Home provides the level of care, supervision and the adjunctive services needed by the focus child in the least restrictive setting possible and affords him the opportunity to decrease his negative behaviors and aggressive interactions with adults and peers. The focus child has made some progress and reported that he is working hard to improve his behavior and manage his anger, as he admits that he easily becomes angry and can become physically aggressive. The Group Home staff reported that overall, he is doing well. According to his DCFS CSW, he is stable in the Group Home and has not requested replacement to a different group home.

The third focus child acknowledged that he does not always follow the rules at the Group Home or make the best choices for himself at school or in the community, but he stated that he likes his placement and that his needs are met. He reported that he has no problems or concerns at the Group Home. He emphasized that he does not want to return to his adoptive home. He further stated that he feels accepted at the Group Home. According to his DCFS CSW, the Group Home is providing for the focus child's needs and at this time, the Group Home is providing structure and supervision in the least restrictive setting possible.

Visitation (5 Substantially Acceptable)

Visitation Overview: The Group Home has maintained reasonable family connections for the three focus children. The Group Home reported that there is family involvement for the three focus children. The Group Home staff and the DCFS CSWs discuss the court-ordered visitation plans for each focus child on a regular basis to ensure compliance. The Group Home is supportive of the visitation plan of each focus child. The Group Home encourages the focus children to visit and or maintain contact with their family members, but also respects the focus children's decision not to maintain contact. However, when appropriate, the Group Home will still make efforts to keep the relatives informed of the focus children's progress. The Group Home arranges for visitation with the family, per court orders and transportation to the visits is provided for the focus children. The Group Home keeps logs regarding visitation and telephone contact between the focus children and their family members and if visits or telephone contact do not occur, the DCFS CSWs are notified and the visits/phone calls are rescheduled in a timely manner.

One of the focus children has chosen not to have visits with his family. He has no other relatives who can participate in his treatment program. The focus child stated that the Group Home staff has encouraged him to visit, but he does not wish to do so at this time. When the focus child is ready to or requests visitation, the Group Home will make arrangements and provide transportation. The Group Home is exploring mentoring services through the YMCA and the DCFS CSWs has contacted several agencies for mentoring services; however, due to his age, he did not meet the requirements of the programs identified.

<u>What's Not Working Now and Why (Score/Narrative of Opportunities for Improvement)</u>

Safety (4 Fair Status)

Safety Overview: The Group Home provided a fairly safe living environment for the three focus children. Each of the focus children reported that they like residing at the Group Home and they feel safe and did not express any safety concerns. They reported that the Group Home staff are always

present and provide them with appropriate supervision. They further stated that the Group Home staff intervenes when necessary to ensure incidents at the Group Home do not escalate and that safety strategies are in place to keep them from harm.

The Group Home submitted 260 Special Incident Reports (SIRs) via I-Track database system during the past 30 days; 20 of the SIRs reported involved the focus children. The SIRs were submitted timely and properly cross-reported. Additionally, the SIRs were comprehensive, capturing all aspects of the reported incidents. The SIRs included children being defiant, tardy to school, child-to-child assault, possession of contraband, medication updates, school suspension, child at-risk of not participating in graduation activities, child interfering in an investigation regarding theft and verbal altercation, which escalated to property destruction.

Although the Group Home staff and the DCFS CSWs all worked together to ensure child safety, the Group Home fell below the minimum score of six in the area of Safety, due to the Group Home having an open referral with DCFS Out-of-Home Care Investigations Section (OHCIS) during the past 30 days. The referral alleged Physical Abuse by a staff. The allegation of Physical Abuse was inconclusive; however, General Neglect was substantiated. Further, the incident was not reported to the Group Home administrator when it occurred. The Group Home acted appropriately by retraining staff and taking disciplinary actions. This incident did not involve any of the focus children.

PRACTICE INDICATORS

(Measured over last 90 days)

What's Working Now (Score/Narrative of Strengths for Focus Area)

Engagement (5 Good Engagement Efforts)

Engagement Overview: The Group Home makes good efforts to engage the key parties and the focus children in making decisions in the best interest of the children. The focus children reported that they know who their team members are. The focus children also reported that they feel comfortable speaking to the Group Home administrator and the Group Home staff when they have concerns and they feel that they are listened to and respected. The Group Home ensures that the focus children have regular contact with their DCFS CSWs and family members. The Group Home staff makes efforts to meet with the DCFS CSWs when the DCFS CSWs are visiting placed children. The Group Home maintains contact with the DCFS CSWs, providing information about the children's progress, behavioral issues and concerns, medical visits, family visits and updates on the overall status of the focus children. Information regarding the focus children is provided to DCFS CSWs and key people by telephone, via e-mail, or face-to-face.

The focus children may contact their DCFS CSWs whenever they want to do so. The Group Home has built a good rapport with DCFS CSWs. The Group Home staff reported that the Group Home has regular communications with the DCFS CSWs.

Serviced Needs (5 Good Supports & Services)

Service Needs Overview: The Group Home has a good array of services, supports and extracurricular activities to help the focus children make progress toward planned outcomes, which match intervention

strategies identified in the focus children's case plans. The Group Home works collaboratively with the focus children's DCFS CSWs, school staff and mental health providers toward ensuring the placed children's needs are met and that identified services are being implemented and supported. The children receives regular medical and dental check-ups, academic support services, weekly individual and/or group therapy, as well as medication management. The Group Home also provides emancipation services to assist the focus children in becoming independent.

The first focus child is prescribed psychotropic medication and receives monthly psychiatric monitoring. He participates in weekly individual therapy to address past trauma, triggers to his high-risk behaviors and substance use. He also participates in weekly group therapy at the Group Home. The focus child has made significant progress and is showing improvement. He is also doing well academically and participates in the high school football team. Because of the progress the focus child has made at school, Group Home and in treatment, the Group Home has rewarded him and he has earned special privileges for improving his behavior. The focus child stated that he is doing well and that the services he is receiving are meeting his needs.

The second focus child has made significant progress as well. He reported that the services he is receiving are helping him improve his grades and to do better at the Group Home. The focus child is receiving weekly individual and group therapy. However, due to poor academic performance and school attendance, he was placed on academic probation and removed from the school basketball team. The Group Home staff has been working closely with the school counselor to ensure improvement at school and to assist the focus child in rejoining the basketball team. The focus child is provided with academic tutoring at a minimum of two days a week at the Group Home and at school.

The third focus child reported that he is happy at the Group Home and stated that the Group Home provides for all his needs. He admits that he has struggled to comply with rules at school and at the Group Home, engaging in disrespectful verbal behaviors and he sometimes does not follow his treatment and services goal, but he states he is making progress because of the services he is receiving. The focus child is receiving weekly individual and group therapy to address anger management issues and develop coping skills. The focus child is working on improving academically. He realizes he must make better efforts of attending school daily and not being truant. He attended summer school and is provided with academic tutoring at a minimum of two days a week at the Group Home, which helped him improve academically. The focus child also participates in the high school football team.

Assessment & Linkages (5 Good Assessments and Understanding)

Assessment & Linkages Overview: The Group Home generally understands the focus children's functioning and support systems. The focus children's strengths and underlying needs are recognized and understood. The services being provided assist the focus children make progress and improved functioning and well-being.

The Group Home ensures that initial medical and dental visits are completed within the first 30 days of placement. The Group Home provides services needed or recommended by the DCFS CSWs to help the placed children and assist them in improving their behaviors. The focus children meet with their therapist at the Group Home weekly to assess their progress and to evaluate their needs. The focus children reported being understood and helped by the Group Home therapist and staff. The focus

children also reported that they have seen improvement in their behavior since being placed at the Group Home. The Group Home stated that the focus children have decreased the number of incidents of leaving the Group Home or school without approval and engaging in negative interactions with peers and staff. The DCFS CSWs for the focus children all reported that they are kept informed of the children's progress and felt that the children's strengths and needs are comprehensively understood by the Group Home.

Tracking & Adjustment (5 Good Tracking and Adjustment Process)

Tracking & Adjustment Overview: The Group Home's intervention strategies, supports and services provided generally reflect the focus children's needs. Intervention strategies and services have been helpful for the focus children. Regular monitoring and tracking of the focus children's status is communicated between the Group Home and the DCFS CSWs. The Group Home staff interviewed clearly expressed their understanding of the children's strengths and needs and their efforts to help the children to progress and succeed at the Group Home. The Group Home staff monitors the focus children's behavior daily. The Group Home determines if the children are making progress towards their treatment and Needs and Services Plan (NSP) goals by observing if there is a reduction in incidents, occurrences and acting out behaviors by the focus children. The Group Home tracks the children's progress via weekly meetings to discuss concerns and the focus children's behavior. This information is documented in the NSPs.

Implementation of strategies, supports and services are being tracked in progress notes, documentation in NSPs and communication with the focus children. The focus children's academic progress is tracked by reports received from school staff and administration, report cards and monitoring of daily school attendance. The Group Home staff members document the focus children's behavior, visits, outings and progress in log books and have Sign-In/Out sheets for the children. The Group Home prepares SIRs to address unauthorized absences (AWOLs), assaultive behaviors, behavior problems, or other incidents that occur at the Group Home. The Group Home uses its target behavior rewards system to reward the children's positive behavior and progress, as well as to remove privileges when the children do not follow the rules and guidelines of the Group Home. The Group Home staff is available and ready to adjust goals and request adjustment to services to meet the children's needs, if necessary. The Group Home will continue to meet the focus children's needs and follow DCFS recommendations.

<u>What's Not Working Now and Why (Score/Narrative of Opportunities for Improvement)</u>

Teamwork (4 Minimally Adequate to Fair Teamwork)

Teamwork Overview: The Group Home has provided a minimally adequate system of teamwork. The primary members of the team for each of the focus children were the Group Home administrator, the Group Home program manager and the Group Home staff. Each of the focus children is aware of the people who are part of their support team; however, based on interviews with the focus children and the team members, as well as a review of the case files, it appears that the focus children and their family members were not involved in team meetings. Further, meeting dates and times were determined by the Group Home and the meetings only included the Group Home administrator and the Group Home staff. The DCFS CSWs were contacted on a regular basis and were notified of the focus children's progress, but it did not appear that they participated in face-to-face team meetings regularly

held at the Group Home. Communication with the DCFS CSWs of the focus children was usually via monthly e-mail or telephone or during monthly face-to-face visits with the focus children. The Group Home needs to develop a plan that includes all key members in the decision making team being present for at least one meeting quarterly. The team should include the focus children and their family.

NEXT STEPS TO SUSTAIN SUCCESS AND OVERCOME CURRENT CHALLENGES

On November 21, 2014, OHCMD provided technical support to address findings indicated in the 2014-2015 contract compliance review. Specifically, OHCMD addressed SIR guidelines and policy to assist the Group Home in ensuring SIRs are comprehensive, submitted timely and properly cross-reported via the I-Track database. The importance of submitting an SIR when children are moved to a different Group Home site within the agency was also discussed.

In May 2015, the quality assurance reviewer met with the Group Home to discuss results of the QAR and to provide the Group Home with technical support to address methods for improvement in the areas of Safety and Teamwork. The Group Home submitted the attached Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). OHCMD quality assurance staff will continue to provide ongoing technical support, training, and consultation to assist the Group Home in implementing their QIP.

CHILDREN'S HOMES
of Southern California

22455 Victory Boulevard, West Hills, CA 91307
Telephone:(818)592-2960 Fax: (818)592-2961

May 29, 2015

Ms. Mary Espinoza,
Department of Children and Family Services
Out of Home Care Management Division
9320 Telstar Ave, Suite # 216
El Monte, CA 91731

Dear Ms. Mary Espinoza:

Following is the Improvement Plan regarding Quality Assurance Review Fiscal Year 2014-2015 conducted in October 2014 for Children's Homes of Southern California's five group home facilities (Licenses: #191221601, #191221595, #197601995, #191221575, #191222471).

Focus Area I:

- Safety, (4 Fair Status)
  - The Group Home provided a fairly safe living environment for the focus children of the review including appropriate supervision, appropriate Group Home staff interventions and safety strategies. Additionally, Special Incident Reports (SIRs) were submitted timely, cross-reported, and comprehensive. Eleven SIRs involved two of the focus children. DCFS OHCIS investigated two referrals during the past 30 days which did not involve the focus children which resulted in outcomes of Inconclusive for Physical Abuse & substantiated General Neglect added by DCFS Investigating Emergency Response CSW and OCHIS.

Safety Correction:

To ensure that Children's Homes (CHSC) maintains a high degree of Safety, Health, and Personal Rights for our residents to remain free of abuse, neglect, and exploitation by others in placement in accordance with Department of Children and Family Services policies, LA County Contract, and Title XXII Regulations for the *focus area above*, the following Improvement plan has been implemented:

- On October 10, 2014, Administrative Disciplinary action including suspension without pay and retraining was taken toward Employee involved in the referral as noted during the Quality Assurance 2014-2015 Review.
- On October 10, 2014, Agency conducted in-house training provided by Certified Pro-Act ® Instructor regarding the Personal Rights of placed residents. This was completed to ensure that All CHSC employees have operational and practical

knowledge of ensuring that placed children are free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation by others in placement.

- On January 23, 2015, Agency conducted additional training provided by LMFT entitled Communication Skills for Child Care Workers. This training provides working knowledge to all CHSC employees in managing appropriate interactions and discussions with placed residents & staff to ensure a safe environment while in placement.
- On April 23, 2015 Employee involved in the above referral by QAR was reported to have engaged in inappropriate interactions with another placed resident. (I-Track # 408519 & SCAR # 0284-6941-1518-7045263) Upon notification, *Employee was immediately suspended and not permitted* to be on grounds or any known contact with placed residents within the Agency per Agency Policies and Procedures.
- **Most notably,** as a result of the allegation in 2014, another referral in April 2015 and Employee's history as well as Employee's inability to comply with Agency policy, Children's Homes of Southern California terminated said Employee as Child Care Worker/Facility Manager I involved in the incidents on 05/14/2015 *(see enclosed Administrative Letter)*. Termination of said Employee ensures that the placed youths' Safety is maintained and ensures compliance with all Rules and Regulations as **Employee is no longer permitted contact with Agency residents.**

To further ensure that all Children's Homes (CHSC) employees maintain the standard of Resident Safety **in accordance with QAR Children's Homes has also implemented the following plan:**

- Upon hire to Children's Homes of Southern California, all Employees will read, review, and receive a personal copy of the Personal Rights for Children's Residential Facilities (LIC 613B) contained in the California Code of Regulations, Title XXII.

  As a result, all Employees will have on-going knowledge regarding the Personal Rights of CHSC residents while employed at Children's Homes. In addition, all Employees will be made fully aware that violation of Personal Rights of Residents in Children's Facilities will result in CHSC disciplinary actions including **up to termination of employment**. Knowing consequences of Personal Rights at onset of employment for Children's Residential Facilities will prevent such occurrence from happening again.

- All Children's Homes (CHSC) Employees will be required to complete Annual Pro-Act Training in accordance with Title XXII Regulations, Section 843645 (d)(B).

  All CHSC Employees will have 180 days from their date of hire to complete the required Pro-Act training. All newly hired employees as well as current

employees will have at least four (4) opportunities per year to complete and update their training in accordance with California Code of Regulations, Section 843645(d)(B). In the event the Employee does not meet the requirement, the *Employee will not be able to work in the CCW or Facility Manager Position at any of CHSC facilities until such requirement is met.* This will ensure that all CHSC will have working knowledge including but not limited to: Maintaining Supervision & Care of Residents, Addressing Conflicts, Utilizing Appropriate Crisis Communication Skills, & **Identifying Triggers & Alternatives (Include issues sensitive in nature, i.e. sexual orientation/identity).** In addition, this will help in preventing Violations of Personal Rights and Maintain the Safety of placed youth.

- Children's Homes (CHSC) will also provide all employees calendar on-going quarterly training provided by a Licensed Mental Health Practitioner which addresses, refreshes, and reinforces Employee's knowledge of the Communication Skills in daily interactions with both staff and most importantly placed Residents.

- To ensure Children's Homes (CHSC) Employees are educated and have working knowledge in **the diversity of identities**, Children's Homes will provide all Employees calendar bi-annually training which addresses and reinforces Employee's ability to maintain appropriate therapeutic boundaries regarding Sexual Identity/Orientation of placed Residents. This includes topics not limited to LGBTQ, Sexual Orientation/Identity, Resident Culture, Boundaries, and Confidentiality.

- Children's Homes (CHSC) will also provide all employees on-going calendar quarterly training which addresses, refreshes, and reinforces Employee's prior knowledge throughout their employment with the agency of the Residents Personal Rights in Residential Facilities as contained in the California Code of Regulations, Title XXII, Section 84072.

In Summary, the *Employee associated with the above noted referrals was terminated on 05/14/2015 and utilization of training of practical applications for Employees for working with diverse populations including diverse sexual orientations, Initial and On-Going Knowledge of Child Care Worker Responsibilities as well as Employees having appropriate Supervision & Boundaries outside the therapeutic milieu, will ensure the ongoing safety of placed residents with Children's Homes of Southern California.*

Furthermore, CHSC will be able to ensure that Child Care Workers and Facility Managers are **available to provide and maintain appropriate safety, supervision, and placement specific to their job duties** according to Title 22 Regulations, Section 84072 (c)(14) with the support of on-going quarterly trainings. Furthermore, by coordinating and complying with DCFS, Agency and Community Care Licensing Regulations on Children's Personal Rights with the On-Duty Program Manager, CHSCH will be able to

ensure that Resident's Personal Rights are not violated. Lastly, if any emergency arises regarding the continuity of a Resident's Placement due to safety concerns, the Facility Manager will contact the On-Duty Program Manager immediately and inform them of any changes. The Program Manager will then resolve the issue/concern.

Focus Area II:

- Teamwork, (4 Minimally Adequate to Fair Status)
  - The Group Home has provided a minimally adequate system of teamwork. Focus children are aware of persons of their support team. Meetings are held weekly, CSWs are contacted on regular basis, however, whole teams are minimally formed at the Group Home and members (including family) are not always present at the meetings.

Teamwork Correction:

To ensure that Children's Homes (CHSC) maintains a good degree of Teamwork for our residents in placement in accordance with Department of Children and Family Services policies, LA County Contract, and Title XXII Regulations for the *focus area above*, the following improvement plan has been implemented:

- Group Home Program Director will conduct monthly reviews of the Master NSP/Quarterly Due Date Calendar which indicated currently placed youth's NSP/Quarterly status.
- Each Initial & Updated NSPQ/Quarterly will be completed as indicated by the Due Date in accordance with established policies and procedures.
- During the completion of the Completed NSP/Quarterly Report, the Program Manager **will utilize the Master NSP/Quarterly Due Date Calendar** obtained from the Program Director **to notify** the support team for coordination of services of each placed resident regarding **a quarterly face-to-face meeting.** The support team will include the placed resident, case-carrying DCFS CSW, GH Home Facility Manager II, Therapist, GH Program Manager, and minimally one family member of the placed resident who is involved in the child's life, *if available.*
- Attempts to complete a quarterly **face-to-face meeting** will be documented in formats not limited to facsimile, email, and/or verbal confirmation and maintained on the NSP/Quarterly under Visitation/Involvement Section and

CHILDREN'S HOMES
of Southern California

CHSC ACT® system accordingly.

- *In the event*, that a placed resident's behavior require a change in case plan and/or a need to address stabilization within placement, the Program Manager will contact the support team of the placed resident to have **a face-to-face meeting prior and in addition to the regularly scheduled** quarterly face-to-face meeting. The attempts to schedule **alternate face-to-face meetings** of the support team will be documented and maintained on the NSP/Quarterly under Visitation/Involvement Section and CHSC Act® system accordingly.

- Group Home will continue to communicate with support team of placed resident utilizing formats including but not limited to facsimile, email, telephone, facility visits by DCFS CSW and the placed resident's family members in maintaining coordination of services.

Thank you for your attention in this matter and consideration of the above plan. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 818-592-2960.

Sincerely,

Michelle Villacorta, MA
Program Director
Children's Homes of Southern California

Enclosures:
Agency Training Log Dated 10/10/14
Agency In-Service Schedule 2014
Agency Training Log Dated 01/23/15
Agency In-Service Schedule 2015
EE Administrative Letter 5/14/15