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

PATRICIA S. PLOEHN, LCSW
Director

May 26, 2010

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TO: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
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FROM: Patricia S. Ploehn, LCSW
Director

WEST COVINA FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY dba HOMES OF HOPE, CASA ESPERANZA GROUP HOME PROGRAM CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW

In accordance with your Board's April 14, 2009 motion, we are informing your Board of the results of a group home compliance review.

West Covina Foster Family Agency dba Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home is located in the 1st Supervisorial District and provides services to Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services' (DCFS) foster youth. According to Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home's program statement, its stated goal is "to provide quality residential foster care to minors who are unable to live with their families and instill hope, trust, joy and meaning in the lives of minors in its care." Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home is licensed to serve a capacity of six children, ages 13 through 17.

The Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a review of the Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home in November 2009 at which time, it had one six-bed site and five placed Los Angeles County DCFS children. All five children were females. For the purpose of this review, four currently placed children were interviewed and their case files were reviewed as the fifth child was placed less than 30 days. For the sampled children, their overall length of placement was 10 months and the average age was 16. Eight staff files were reviewed for compliance with Title 22 regulations and contract requirements.

There were two children on psychotropic medication. We reviewed their case files to assess timeliness of psychotropic medication authorizations and to confirm the medication logs documented correct dosages were being administered as prescribed.

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The purpose of this review was to assess Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home's compliance with the Contract and State regulations. The visit included a review of Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home's program statement, administrative internal policies and procedures, four placed children's case files, and a random sampling of personnel files. A visit was made to the facility to assess the quality of care and supervision provided to children, and we conducted interviews with children to assess the care and services they were receiving.

A copy of this report has been sent to the Auditor-Controller (A-C) and Community Care Licensing (CCL).

SUMMARY

Generally, West Covina Foster Family Agency dba Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home was providing good quality care to DCFS placed children, and the services were provided as outlined in its program statement. The children interviewed stated that they want to continue residing at the placement and that the staff are genuinely concerned about them.

The direct care staff stated that they were pleased with the support that they receive from the administrative staff. In fact, the facility manager reported that the Group Home administrative staff were attentive to the needs of the children and were open to listening to the direct care staff's suggestions for improvement.

At the time of the review, the Group Home needed to address a few minor physical plant deficiencies, none of which posed a safety hazard to any placed children. The Group Home also needed to develop comprehensive Needs and Services Plans (NSPs), honor the visitation rights of the placed children and offer and support related services to ensure that the placed children's permanency plans would be fully implemented.

Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home was receptive to implementing some systemic changes to improve its compliance with regulations and the Foster Care Agreement. Further, the Administrator stated that she welcomed the findings in the review so that current operating systems can be improved.

NOTABLE FINDINGS

The following are the notable findings of our review:

- Of the 13 timely initial and updated NSPs reviewed for the four children's case files, none were comprehensive in that they did not complete all the required elements in accordance with the NSP template. The NSPs did not include specific and measureable treatment goals as they related to permanency, life skills and visitation. Additionally, there was no documentation regarding progress toward the permanency plans. Subsequent to this review, DCFS provided Group Home Contractors with a refresher Needs and Services Plan training on January 12, 2010.

- Three out of four sampled children's permanency plans were incorrect. Two children's permanency plans were documented as Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (PPLA), however both plans should have been Family Reunification (FR). The third child's plan was documented as FR but should have been PPLA.

- For the two placed children whose permanency plans should have been documented as FR, no related services were being offered by the agency.

The detailed report of our findings is attached.

EXIT CONFERENCE

The following are highlights from the exit conference held December 10, 2009:

In attendance:

Cynthia Jones, Administrator, Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home, and Jui Ling Ho, Monitor, Out-of-Home Care Management Division, DCFS

Highlights:

The Administrator was in agreement with our findings and recommendations. She stated that obtaining a copy of the review instrument was very helpful because she had information on the scope of the review.

As agreed, Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home provided a timely written Corrective Action Plan (CAP) addressing each recommendation noted in this compliance report. The approved CAP is attached.

As noted in the monitoring protocol, a follow up visit will be conducted to address the provider's approved CAP and assess for full implementation of CAP recommendations.

If you have further questions, please call me or your staff may contact Armand Montiel, Board Relations Manager, at (213) 351-5530.

PSP:LP:MG
EAH:BB:jh

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Wendy Watanabe, Auditor Controller
Donald H. Blevins, Chief Probation Officer
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Emmanuel Azahriah, President, Homes of Hope, Incorporated
Sukhwinder Singh, Executive Director, Homes of Hope, Incorporated
Sybil Brand Commission
Jean Chen, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division
Lenora Copeland, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division

WEST COVINA FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY DBA HOMES OF HOPE, CASA ESPERANZA GROUP HOME PROGRAM CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW

Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home
1568 McLeod Place
Pomona, California 91768
License Number: 197804217
Rate Classification Level: 11

The following report is based on a "point in time" monitoring visit and addresses findings noted during the November 2009 monitoring review.

CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE

Based on our review of four children's files and eight staff files, Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home was in full compliance with five out of nine sections of our Contract Compliance review: Licensure/Contract Requirements; Educational and Emancipation Services; Children's Health-Related Services (including Psychotropic Medications); Children's Clothing and Allowance; and Personnel Records (including Staff Qualifications, Staffing Ratios, Criminal Clearances, and Training). The following report details the results of our review:

LICENSURE/CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

Based on our review of four placed children's case files and/or documentation from the provider, Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home fully complied with all nine elements reviewed in the area of Licensure/Contract Requirements.

Recommendation:

None

PROGRAM SERVICES

Based on our review of four children's case files, Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home fully complied with seven out of eight elements reviewed in the area of Program Services.

Based on our review, we found that the treatment team develops and implements the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) with input from the child. The NSPs are current. However, none of the 13 required initial and updated NSPs were comprehensive. The NSPs did not include specific and measureable treatment goals as they relate to permanency, life skills, and visitation. Additionally, there was no documentation of specific information regarding the progress of the permanency plan. The Group Home's CAP appropriately addresses action they will implement regarding the NSP/Quarterly Report findings.

Additionally, three out of four sampled children's permanency plans were incorrect. The first two children's permanency plans were documented as Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (PPLA), however both plans should have been Family Reunification (FR). The third child's plan was documented as Family Reunification (FR) but should have been Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (PPLA). Because of the incorrectly documented permanency plans, no related efforts were made for the children and their family members. The Administrator stated that she and the Group Home social worker will ensure that the permanency plans in the children's NSPs are accurately identified, implemented and documented and the Agency shall offer and/or support related services to ensure that the permanency plan will be fully implemented.

Recommendations:

Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home management shall ensure that:

1. NSPs are comprehensive and include all required elements.

2. A permanent plan of reunification, adoption, relative guardianship or other legal guardianship is accurately identified and documented in the children's Needs and Services Plans. Additionally, the Agency shall offer and/or support related services to ensure that the permanency plan will be fully implemented.

SITE VISITS INCLUDING CHILD INTERVIEWS

FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

Based on our review of Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home and interviews with the four children, Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home fully complied with five out of six elements in the areas of Facility and Environment.

Generally, the exterior of the Group Home was well maintained. The front and back yards were clean and adequately landscaped.

The Group Home maintained age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment and on-site educational resources.

The Group Home maintained a sufficient supply of perishable and non-perishable foods.

Children's bedrooms were fairly well maintained and orderly. The mattresses were comfortable, and all the beds had a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements were appropriate. Window coverings and window screens were in good repair.

While the Group Home provided a home-like environment, the interior had a minor deficiency, which did not pose any safety risks to placed children. Specifically, the light fixture in the computer area did not work and needed to be repaired or replaced.

Recommendation:

Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home management shall ensure that:

3. The Group Home site is maintained and in good repair in accordance with Title 22 regulations.

EDUCATIONAL AND EMANCIPATION SERVICES

Based on our review of four children's case files, and interviews with the four children, Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home fully complied with all four (100%) elements reviewed in the areas of Educational and Emancipation Services.

Recommendation:

None

RECREATION AND ACTIVITIES

Based on our review of four children's case files, and interviews with the four children, Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home fully complied with two out of three elements in the area of Recreation and Activities.

The Group Home provided children with recreational activities and transportation to and from the activities. However, one child indicated that she would like to participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which she has an interest; however the agency has not made efforts for her to do so or there are no resources available at this time. The Administrator stated that they have limited resources in the Pomona area and the child had only been placed at Casa Esperanza Group Home for one month at the time of the review, therefore the Group Home has not had sufficient time to arrange for extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities for the youth thus far. Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home has appropriately addressed this finding in the attached CAP.

Recommendation:

Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home management shall ensure that:

4. The Group Home staff seek available community resources and that all children are given the opportunity to participate in age-appropriate extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH RELATED-SERVICES, INCLUDING PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION

Based on our review of four children's case files, and interviews with the four children, Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home fully complied with all nine elements

reviewed in the areas of Children's Health Related-Services, including Psychotropic Medication.

Recommendation:

None

PERSONAL RIGHTS

Based on our review of four children's case files, and interviews with the four children, Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home fully complied with eight out of 11 elements in the area of Personal Rights.

All four children reported that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. They also reported that they are allowed to make and receive personal telephone calls, and send and receive unopened mail. They reported that they attend the religious services of their choice and satisfaction with meals and snacks. All four children also reported that they receive requested medical, dental and psychiatric care. The children also expressed satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and reported that staff members treat them with respect and dignity. They also reported that they are given information about the Group Home's policies and procedures regarding discipline, children's personal rights, house rules, and children's complaint grievance procedures.

The four children reported that they felt safe in the Group Home and were provided with appropriate staff supervision. All four children reported that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Two out of the four sampled children reported that there is no appropriate rewards system in place. Both children also reported that the reward for good behavior is a $15 weekly allowance rather than the basic amount of $7 and more community passes. Neither child felt that the $8 increase in allowance is enough of an incentive for improving their behavior. The Administrator stated that she and the Group Home social worker will review the current "Rewards System" and develop other obtainable rewards that will enhance their current system. Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home has appropriately addressed this finding in the attached CAP.

Additionally, for one out of the four sampled children, the agency was not facilitating family visits. The Administrator explained to the Monitor that the group home was complying with the CSW's verbal directives not to schedule visits for mother due to extenuating circumstances. However, there was no documentation from the CSW nor a current minute order reflecting the rescinding of mother's visits and no detailed plans were in place for sibling visits.

One of the two children who is receiving psychotropic medication was not aware of her right to refuse the medication. Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home has appropriately addressed this finding in the attached CAP and agrees to have the Group

Home social worker again review rights to refuse medication with each child during individual sessions and this will be documented in the child's session notes and filed in the case record. Additionally, the Group Home Administrator will conduct random audits for this documentation.

Recommendations:

Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home management shall ensure that:

5. An appropriate rewards system is in place in accordance with Title 22 Regulations and Homes of hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home's Program Statement.

6. The agency honors the visitation rights of the placed children and arranges transportation services for them. Any modified visitation plans shall be documented and placed in child's case file.

7. All children are aware of their right to refuse medication and are informed that they will not be disciplined should they refuse to do so. Documentation of the children's refusal must be documented in the child's case file.

CLOTHING AND ALLOWANCE

Based on our review of four children's case files, and interviews with the four children, Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home fully complied with all eight elements reviewed in the areas of Clothing and Allowance.

Recommendation:

None

PERSONNEL RECORDS

Based on our review of eight staff personnel files, Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home fully complied with all 12 elements reviewed in the area of Personnel Records.

Recommendation:

None

PRIOR YEAR FOLLOW-UP FROM THE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER'S REPORT

Objective

Determine the status of the recommendations reported in the Auditor-Controller's (A-C) prior monitoring review.

Verification

A review of the Auditor-Controller's prior monitoring report, issued on April 10, 2009, revealed there were no recommendations.

Results

The prior monitoring report contained no recommendations, and therefore no follow up regarding implementation was required.

WEST COVINA FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY DBA HOMES OF HOPE,
CASA ESPERANZA GROUP HOME
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW

Homes of Hope, Casa Esperanza Group Home
1568 McLeod Pl.,
Pomona, California 91768
License Number: 197804217
Rate Classification Level: 11

	Contract Compliance Monitoring Review	**Findings: November 2009**
1	Licensure/Contract Requirements 9 Elements	Full Compliance
2	Program Services 8 Elements	7 Elements Full Compliance, NSPs Need Improvement
3	Facility and Environment 6 Elements	5 Elements Full Compliance, Light in Computer Area Needs Repair
4	Educational and Emancipation Services 4 Elements	Full Compliance
5	Recreation and Activities 3 Elements	2 Elements Full Compliance, Extra-Curricular Activities Need Improvement
6	Children's Health-Related Services (including Psychotropic Medications) 9 Elements	Full Compliance
7	Personal Rights 11 Elements	8 Elements Full Compliance, Reward System Needs Improvement, Visitation Facilitation Needs Improvement, Medication Rights Needs Improvement
8	Children's Clothing and Allowance 8 Elements	Full Compliance
9	Personnel Records (including Staff Qualifications, Staffing Ratios, Criminal Clearances and Training) 12 Elements	Full Compliance

CASA ESPERANZA TREATMENT CENTER

1568 McLeod Pomona, California 91768
Telephone: (909) 620-7543 Fax: (909) 865-3325
Facility Number #197804217 email: etc7@verizon.net

ADDENDUM

January 22, 2010

Ms. Ju Ling Ho
Children Services Administration
Out of Home Care Management
9320 Telstar Ave, #206
El Monte, California 91731

Re: Casa Esperanza Treatment Center
Contract Compliance Review

Ms. Ho,
Per our conversation on January 21, 2010, you indicated that you needed an addendum to include "Comprehensive NSP's" to the compliance review CAP. The following is the CAP you requested.

CITATION	CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN
WELL BEING/EDUCATION/EMANCIPATION: A. Comprehensive NSP's.	The facility Administrator and Group Home Social Worker will ensure that NSP's are comprehensive. This will be accomplished by the following: 1. Group Home Social Worker/Administrator will attend DCFS scheduled NSP trainings. Next Training scheduled on January 12, 2010. 2. Group Home Social Worker will follow recommendations given to facility by Ms. Ho (OHCM) during this review period. 3. Group Home Social Worker will utilize Ms. Ho, OHCM as a resource for further trainings, if needed.
B. Permanency Plans	The Administrator and the Group Home Social Worker will ensure that the permanency plan in the child's Needs and Service Plans are accurately identified, implemented and documented as follows: 1. The Group Home Social Worker, during documented monthly contacts with CSW, will obtain the permanency and concurrent case plan

	for each child. 2. The Group Home Social Worker will document the permanency plan on the Quarterly/NSP report. 3. Once permanency services are identified, the group home staff will support the related services for full implementation. 4. The administrator will ensure that all Group Home Staff are fully aware of the child's permanency plan; treatment goals and updates.

If you have any questions or need clarification regarding this corrective action plan, please do not hesitate to contact me at (626)814-9085.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Jones

Cynthia Jones
Administrator

CASA ESPERANZA TREATMENT CENTER

1568 McLeod Pomona, California 91768
Telephone: (909) 620-7543 Fax: (909) 865-3325
Facility Number #197804217 email: etc7@verizon.net

January 8, 2010

Ms. Barbara Butler
Children Services Administration
Out of Home Care Management
9320 Telstar Ave, #206
El Monte, California 91731

Re: Casa Esperanza Treatment Center
Contract Compliance Review

CITATION	CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN
II. **Facility and Environment:** 11. Are common quarters well maintained? a. More lighting is needed in the computer area.	A. A lamp was purchased and placed in the computer lab area to ensure adequate lighting.
V. **Recreation and Activities:** 29. Are children given opportunities to participate in age appropriate extra curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest?	The group home staff will ensure that children are given opportunities to participate in age appropriate extra curricular activities. This will be accomplished by: a. Facility Manager to hold monthly planning activity meetings with children by the 25th of each month where each child will have the opportunity to provide written input for consideration of the next month's activities. Activities will be reviewed and incorporated into the Monthly Activity Calendar. The meeting will be documented **(See Attachment A).** b. Group Home Facility Manager and Child Care Workers will explore community resources through local clubs, community Newspaper and community colleges, etc. to offer the children a broader range of community based extra-curricular activities, enrichment and social activities. c. The Group Home Administrator will follow-up to

	ensure that GH staff are actively seeking resources.
VII. **Personal Rights:** 43. Is an appropriate rewards and discipline system in place? a.. No reward system in place.	The Administrator and Social Worker will review the current "Rewards System" and develop other obtainable rewards that will enhance our current rewards and incentives. The following will be included: a. An opportunity for the children to earn additional points that result in a Level Increase for the week that rewards them with a special privilege. A "Special Privilege Pass" will be provided that can be redeemed within 3 days. b. An opportunity for the children to earn additional points that can result in choosing an item from the "Incentive Closet," such as gift certificates, movie passes, manicures, etc., as points are earned. c. Offer a "Reward Day" once a month, where children can choose either a special activity for the day or select a gift from the incentive closet (or both) as a reward for good behavior and/or school progress improvement for the month
45. Are children allowed private visits? a. No efforts were made to facilitate visits.	The Group Home follows all written visitation orders given through the CSW or via the minute order. In many cases visits are suspended and/or terminated due to circumstances that are beyond the group homes control or due to CSW directives. Ms. Ho and Administrator discussed this issue and it was explained to Ms. Ho that the group home is following CSW directives NOT to schedule visits due to extenuating circumstances with other parties. Ms. Ho asked for documentation from the CSW or current minute orders reflecting the modifications, however we did not have the modification of orders in writing directly from the CSW. CSW did not provide written documentation, thus a citation was given. Proof of documentation from the CSW can be obtained by the following: Facility Administrator or Group Home Social Worker will: 1. Provide a detailed visitation plan in the minor's NSP. 2. Request updated minute orders from CSW's when visitations are modified or changed. 3. Request, in writing, any modifications that CSW's are making regarding visitations that are not in the minute order. 4. All requests to CSW to obtain the updates in writing and follow-up attempts will be made via letter and filed in

	child's case record. 5. Homes of Hope will honor visitation rights and develop a plan for the placed child.
49. All children are aware of their right to refuse medication and are informed that they will not be disciplined should they refuse to.	The Administrator will ensure that all children are aware of their right to refuse medication as follows: a. At Placement of the child by the Facility Manager. b. Group Home Social Worker will again review rights to refuse medication with each child during individual sessions and will be documented in the child's session notes and filed in the case record. c. Group Home Administrator to make random audit for this documentation.

It has been our privilege to serve the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services through the provision of foster care services. It is our desire to meet all contract requirements and support the dedication of the county in the care of dependent children.

If you have any questions or need clarification regarding this corrective action plan, please do not hesitate to contact me at (626)814-9085.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Jones
Administrator