Outcome: Cluster B will reach the target of serving 1.56% of children ages birth to 1 so that: Early intervention services are reaching the children and their families that need those services early enough to achieve the maximum impact.

Strategy update from last quarter:

We hypothesized if physicians prefer to refer to their own clinic, then we need to show the uniqueness of First Steps and that for some families may be a better alternative than the clinic setting in order to see an increase in referrals.

The LPCC continues to visit clinics in rural counties, reminding referral sources of the available First Steps services, leaving them with updated materials and posters (DeKalb county on 4/29/15 and Noble county on 4/30/15).

Previously, the SPOE director had sent a letter to the Directors of Noble Parkview Clinic and the Topeka outpatient Clinic asking for meetings. Both directors were able to meet on 5/5/15 and discussed collaboration efforts. Noble Parkview Clinic director would like to partner with First Steps, to best meet the community’s needs. There are children on waiting lists at the clinic and First Steps may be an appropriate option for them. Additional handouts and posters were left for this clinic and the meeting seemed to be productive. First Steps is now aware as to how it can better utilize Noble Parkview therapists and the clinic is more conscious when reviewing the needs of a child, to consider that First Steps may be a fit. The clinic is cognizance that for some children, to begin with clinic services and then to transition into First Steps home-based services may also be suitable.

In February, another First Steps OT provider left to join the Amish Clinic in Topeka, no driving to appointments, higher pay and compensation for report writing. Currently this clinic has 7 First Steps providers, all leaving for similar reasons. The SPOE Director has spoken with most of the therapists and they agree they want to collaborate with First Steps and address the medical needs as well as the more specialized services generally available by only a few First Steps therapists serving this rural community. The SPOE Director met with the clinic director on 4/9/15 to discuss collaboration efforts.

In efforts to reach more families, the Cluster has implemented agreements with several area hospitals. Families are asked if they would like to submit their address to First Steps (form provided) and First Steps follows up with this family in 3 months with a postcard outlining developmental milestones for the 4-6 month olds and 6-9 month olds, to check on their infant’s development. This is implemented for all families in NICU’s and in the general nurseries. Recently this form was implemented in Kosciusko County General Hospital, Eden Care in LaGrange, Auburn Birthing Center (DeKalb), Parkview Noble and DeKalb Health in the next quarter. LPCC coordinator has tracked this information and just sent out the first round of post cards in June. LPCC will continue to follow up with local hospitals to make sure they don’t have any questions and are comfortable with the process.
**Explanation of Data:**
Quarterly data 1.22% (135)

4/1/14-3/31/15- One day child count for children 0-1: **135**

Though we have not met the goal we have eligible children who are not in need and therefore no plans are written. These tend to be the premature infant whose family is excited they can take their baby home. They do not see the need for a SC plan and re-evaluation in 3 months. If these families return to First Steps it is a referral from the follow up progress clinic.

**Strategies (Who is responsible/timeline/evaluation):**
To ensure consistency throughout the entire Cluster, at the March 26th assessment team meeting, the SPOE reviewed *informed clinical opinion*, when it is appropriate to use for newborns referred from the NICU and/or referred with a medical diagnosis supporting high probability of future developmental delays. SPOE reminded the assessment team members when it is appropriate to write SC only plans, if no delays are present at the current time of assessment but delays are suspected in the future due to the child’s diagnosis. Assessment team members also discussed consistency among scoring the AEPS. It was decided that at the next assessment team meeting, 6/25/15, assessment team members will complete some additional AEPS training. Individuals will complete a portion of the AEPS, on a pseudo child, and then compare the scoring amongst the group. This will prompt discussion on consistency.

The intake supervisor offered training to all intake coordinators on more efficient practices and techniques in regards to gathering supportive and sufficient medical documentation at their team meeting on 4/15/15. Strategies included timeframe for faxing initial requests from date of parent signature, as well as follow up phone calls to the physician if documentation is not received within 5 business days, as documented on the intake contact log (see attachment). This was to help ensure the assessment team has the needed documentation prior to the initial assessment, to support high probability of developmental delay for the medically eligible children. SPOE will follow up with the assessment team at the 6/25/15 meeting, to discuss if there have been improvements with this timeliness.

The LPCC has expanded outreach coverage to prenatal classes, participating in the prenatal education for moms and dads in the following area hospitals: Parkview Whitley, Parkview Noble and Cameron (Steuben county).
List barriers to accomplishing strategies and how to address them:

The first responders to the hospital flyers for newborns were received in March 2015. The follow up post cards were sent out this month, to check on their child’s development. Therefore, the results of this outreach to the newborn families would not yet be reflective (flyers and postcard attached).

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Explain:
Talk with other LPCC Coordinators on ways to increase referral numbers for under age 1

Stakeholder Collaboration:
Area hospitals who have already agreed to discussing First Steps information with their discharge packets in the NICU as well as general newborn nurseries: Elkhart General, Goshen General, Memorial, St. Joseph Regional Medical Center, Cameron Hospital, Parkview Whitley, Eden Care and Parkview La Grange.
Assessment Team meeting scheduled for 6/25/15.