**FFY13**  
Indiana First Steps Quality Improvement Plan  
Cluster: A  
Quarter Date: 1/1/2014-3/31/2014  
Indicator: 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome: Cluster A will meet the state targets for positive child outcomes in Knowledge and Growth by the time a child exits the First Steps program</th>
<th>So that: all children in the Cluster can achieve maximum growth and function within age appropriate developmental expectations.</th>
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**Explanation of Data:**

Quarterly Data (55.4/58 %):  Outcome #3 SS1 Knowledge & Skills  
(68.0/70%):  Outcome #3 SS2 Knowledge & Skills

Cluster A is not meeting the targets in two areas of Child Outcomes. These areas include percent of children who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time of exit when entering the program below age expectations and the percent of children functioning within age expectations by the time they turned three or exited the program.

We hypothesize that these lower than targeted percentages in the above mentioned areas can often be explained by the using entrance and exit scores from the AEPS to determine rates of growth on the Indiana First Steps Early Intervention System Exit Summary. A child’s entrance score can be greatly impacted by the age of the child at the time of evaluation. For instance, an infant may come into the program showing minimal delays based on the AEPS scores, while in actuality is demonstrating substantial delays based on the evaluator’s informed clinical opinion. Therefore, an infant whose AEPS entrance scores are all zeros, may exit several years later with scores that indicate standard deviations in areas that were developmentally normal on the AEPS at the time of program entrance. Scores can also be impacted by the month that a child was evaluated. For example, a child who shows a minimal delay on the AEPS at 20 months, could show a much greater delay if evaluated a few weeks later when he would fall into a higher age bracket for scoring.

**Strategies (Who is responsible/timeline/evaluation):**

If we hypothesize that parents may complete exit summaries differently depending on how they are presented, then we need to develop a uniform system to familiarize parents with the exit summary and present it to all parents the same way.

Service coordinators will:

- Discuss the questions that will be presented to parents at each quarterly meeting using a discussion form that has been created from the exit summary.
- Follow-up with parents on all areas where they report no progress has been made to address any concerns they may have before the child exits.
- Complete the exit summary with the parent, rather than giving it to them to complete independently.

Agency supervisors will:

- Direct provider agency providers to use the exit summary as a trigger during quarterly reports to give direction to providers.

**Evaluation:** SC will monitor parent responses and report back to LPCC coordinators whether they are seeing any improvements in outcomes as reported by parents from one quarter to the next. LPCC will monitor results of exit summary to see if outcome percentages are increasing over each subsequent quarter.
**We hypothesize that data results can vary greatly with the method used for completion of the exit summary. Parents may answer questions differently when completing the exit summary on their own, versus completing it with the coordinator or provider, where they have the option to ask for clarification on any areas of uncertainty.**

Finally, we hypothesize that many parents may not be aware of how progress in one area of development can also indicate growth in other areas of development. For example, if a child who was not talking at entrance has begun to use words by exit, parents may not always correlate this with social growth in addition to improved communication skills.

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If we hypothesize that comparing AEPS entrance scores to AEPS exit scores does not always accurately reflect rates of growth, then an alternate means of documenting growth should be used. This could be achieved by using scores from the evaluation used to determine delays in the specific area being addressed, using the deviation documented on ICO forms or using provider progress reports to determine growth.

**Evaluation: LPCC will monitor quarterly findings to determine if alternate measurement tools show any improvement in child outcomes.**

If we hypothesize that parents are not always fully aware of how progress in one area is closely related to progress in another area, then coordinators and providers will:

- Educate parents during sessions on how progress in one area will lead to progress in other areas of development.
- Provide information to parents in terms that they will hear on the exit summary so they are not hearing this information for the first time at exit.

**Evaluation: LPCC to monitor quarterly findings to determine if progress outcome percentages have improved.**

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List barriers to accomplishing strategies and how to address them:

Some barriers that we may encounter with this plan include:

- Getting providers to incorporate the information from the exit summary into their ongoing sessions and using it when completing their quarterly reports. This could be addressed at the agency level with trainings at staff meetings to teach staff the importance of meeting indicators within the First Steps Program.
- Determining which tools would be most accurate to use to determine progress. This could be addressed by using input from the assessment team and ongoing providers and addressing each child on a case by case basis.
• The increased amount of time needed to thoroughly review this information at all quarterly meetings and ongoing sessions. This could be addressed by training staff how to effectively communicate information with parents in terms that will familiarize them with the verbage they will hear at the exit interview.

**Resources needed:**
- [X] State Clarification
- [ ] IIDC
- [ ] Training
- [ ] Mentoring
- [ ] Other: ________________________________

**Explain:**
State clarification on alternate tools to use to measure progress in children who enter the program early and show no standard deviation on the AEPS

**Stakeholder Collaboration:**
LPCC Committee, SPOE staff, Agency personnel, data review committee, Assessment Team members