

**Department of Family and Protective Services
Adult Protective Services
Program Performance Report**

1st Quarter FY 2006 February 1, 2006

Executive Summary

In April 2004, Executive Order RP 33 instructed the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to investigate and conduct systemic reform of the state's Adult Protective Services (APS) program. In November of 2004, the Governor's Office and HHSC published a report outlining 252 corrective actions intended to bring about system wide program reform. In June of 2005, the 79th Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 6 into law. Statutory language in the bill aligned with a number of corrective actions outlined in the Governor's report, including a significant emphasis on the development of a new APS performance management system. The following report provides an overview of APS reform actions taken to date as well as an overview of the new APS performance management system.

As of February 1, 2006, 85 percent of the APS reform items have been completed.

APS Reform Accomplishments

Training and Staff Skill Development:

The goal is to improve caseworkers' knowledge and skills resulting in better case decisions and enhanced outcomes for clients.

- The APS basic training program expanded from three weeks to 11 weeks in order to ensure staff received comprehensive training before conducting an investigation.
- APS initiated the comprehensive Blended Learning for APS In-Home Skills Training (BLAST), which incorporates web-based training, classroom training and on-the-job training. Staff have the opportunity to learn basic information via web-based training, enabling classroom trainers to focus on advanced skill sets.
- The initial few months of employment are critical to developing quality caseworker practices and enhancing staff retention. Nine field trainers were employed to supervise new employees during their on-the-job training phase in order to ensure staff receive individual attention.
- Staff receive an additional three weeks of advanced classroom training in the first year that focuses on advanced skills.
- In order to ensure ongoing knowledge and skill development of tenured staff, APS requires 18 hours per year of continuing education training for all direct delivery staff and supervisors.
- Comprehensive training on risk assessment and mobile technology were provided to address program enhancements as a result of APS Reform.

Guardianship:

The Guardianship program transfer eliminates conflict of interest and increases safety and systems of care for clients.

- The guardianship program was transferred to the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) on September 1, 2005.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed between the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) and DADS. MOU defines roles and responsibilities of each agency to ensure clients receive necessary services in a timely manner.

- DFPS and DADS have convened a regularly scheduled workgroup to resolve ongoing issues involved in the inter-agency referral process.

Staffing:

Additional resources allocated to the APS program in order to facilitate manageable caseloads and enhance client outcomes.

- APS program hired additional full-time equivalents (FTEs) allocated for fiscal years 2005-2006.
- Pre-screening and a realistic job preview were instituted to ensure that applicants most likely to succeed in a particular position are selected for an interview.
- The interview process was standardized for direct delivery staff.
- An education stipend is available to all APS staff. The stipend motivates workers to attain a higher level of education in APS-related fields and encourages workforce retention.

Technological Innovation:

Increases caseworker efficiency and improves client outcomes through effective assessment, consultation and documentation.

- DFPS in conjunction with HHSC have developed a mobile office model that incorporates the use of tablet PCs. All direct delivery staff in the APS in-home and APS facility programs were given tablet PCs and digital cameras. Efficient and effective protective services are dependent on a caseworker's ability to work independent of a standard office environment.
- Mobile Protective Services (MPS) software was developed enabling caseworkers to document case activities into their tablet PCs when they are in their mobile office environment. Upon returning to the office or using wireless connectivity, workers can transfer data from their tablet into the IMPACT database. IMPACT is the database used by DFPS to collect and store data regarding APS clients.
- The IMPACT database was revised to accommodate the new risk assessment tool.

Community Engagement:

APS community engagement efforts are necessary to enhance public awareness and community participation in an attempt to improve client's safety and well-being.

- Community Initiative Specialists positions were hired in each region to work in collaboration with the civic and volunteer communities. These staff work in partnership with volunteers in local communities and assist community organizations that are striving to develop diverse community boards in each region.
- Resource and External Relations Specialists were hired in each region to focus on coordination with the service and provider communities to increase access to services such as home repair and payment assistance with medication and utilities. Many APS clients do not have the means to locate these resources without APS assistance.
- Identified priority needs and created community action plans in each region to address community education and resource development.
- Developed a public awareness campaign to increase the public's understanding of abuse, neglect and exploitation of the elderly and adults with disabilities, to be delivered in collaboration with public and private partnerships.

Client Outcomes:

Outcomes for clients are enhanced as a result of the systemic reform of the APS program. New assessment tools, clinical expertise, and quality assurance provisions help ensure client safety and well-being.

- APS in conjunction with HHSC developed a risk assessment tool that evaluates five domains related to client safety and well-being. The tool assesses a client's living condition, medical status, mental status, financial status and social support system.
- Experts in exploitation and evidence-driven investigations were employed in each region. Investigations involving exploitation require advanced skills in financial accounting and legal documentation. Evidence-driven investigations require highly developed knowledge of procedures for evidence collection and interviewing procedures.
- Experts in self-neglect were employed in each region. These individuals have advanced skills in determining when to refer a client for a medical evaluation based on the client's behavior or physical surroundings. Specialists in self-neglect receive advanced training in order to deal with clients who hoard possessions or animals.
- HHSC contracted with the Center for Social Work Research at UT Austin to perform an independent evaluation of the risk assessment tool. The evaluation will provide APS management with information regarding the reliability and validity of the risk assessment tool.

Performance Management:

APS has developed a Performance Management System to monitor case quality. Performance data will be used to inform policy and training in order to improve case outcomes for clients.

- Five full-time case readers employed to review case quality in each region. Quality assurance data trends will be provided to APS management in order to inform decisions regarding policy and training.
- Mandatory supervisor review of all cases before closure to ensure that all aspects of an investigation and/or services delivered were adequately addressed by the caseworker.
- APS has developed employee performance measures for all APS staff. These measures will be utilized in staff performance evaluations in order to retain competent staff and take corrective action when staff are not meeting management's expectations.

APS Reform Initiatives in Progress

Training:

- APS is in the process of implementing the Senate Bill 6 requirement for annual training. All APS caseworkers will attend an annual training class that covers changes to program policy and enabling legislation.
- Training for facility staff is being updated in order to incorporate the BLAST model used for in-home training.
- APS will continue to examine various ways that web-based training can be utilized and evaluate the overall efficacy of web-based training in comparison to classroom training.

Staffing:

- APS is collaborating with the Higher Education Coordinating Board to improve degree programs aimed at adult protection.
- DFPS is working to enhance current retention efforts aimed at APS field staff.

Client Outcomes:

- APS is developing the Special Task Units manual required by Section 2.10, Senate Bill 6. The Special Task Units will exist in counties with a population greater than 250,000. The units will monitor and make recommendations regarding complex APS investigations that are referred to them for their review.

APS Reform Challenges

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita had a significant impact on APS staff resources. Over the course of both hurricanes, APS staff spent 3,139 hours serving 6,967 individuals. APS staff assisted elderly and disabled adults with access to food, clothing, and medical supplies. Staff assisted with placing elderly clients or disabled adults into long-term care facilities when needed to provide for the client's safety and well-being. APS staff were present in 39 shelters in 22 cities and towns around the state. Accommodating the needs presented by these natural disasters necessitated less staff attention to ongoing caseloads that were rising beyond projected levels.

APS direct delivery staff have experienced significant changes in the way they perform their job over the last year. The introduction of a risk assessment tool in concert with significant technological change, while very beneficial, requires adjustments on the part of each caseworker. These periods of adjustment have impacted staff productivity, temporarily altering their ability to process cases as efficiently as they have in the past. The APS program is evaluating the tablet PC implementation and examining the need for additional training and job aids.

In addition to the challenges cited above, reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation received by APS for June, July and August of fiscal year 2005 were 40 percent higher than November 2004 projections. Increased reports are resulting in higher average daily caseloads than were projected for fiscal year 2005 and the first quarter of fiscal year 2006. The surge in reports demands that caseworkers prioritize their efforts in order to meet the mandated initial contact within 24-hours policy. This in turn reduces the available time to document other cases and move them to the supervisor for review and closure. APS staff are working closely with HHSC staff to research proposals for managing high workloads.

Significant Accomplishments for the Reporting Period

1st Quarter

- Tablet PCs distributed to all direct delivery staff in the APS in-home program.
- Tablet PCS distributed to all direct delivery staff in the APS facility program.
- Guardianship MOU developed between DFPS and DADS.
- Full roll-out of comprehensive Blended Learning for APS In-Home Skills Training (BLAST), which incorporates web-based training, classroom training and on-the-job training.
- Comprehensive training on use of tablet PC technology.
- Hired 25 new direct delivery staff appropriated for FY 2006. (57 FTEs were allocated in FY 2005)
- Implementation of comprehensive performance management standards.

Overview of APS Performance Management System

The Governor's APS Reform Reports and Senate Bill 6 cited a lack of effective performance management within the APS Program. According to the Governor's November 2004 report, one of the APS program's primary problems was a lack of accountability. Workers, supervisors and managers within the program did not receive sufficient feedback on job performance and there were not consequences for poor casework. In order to address the concerns stated above, APS staff worked with other divisions within DFPS to develop a meaningful outcome-based performance management system.

Some core assumptions drove the development of the APS performance management system.

- 1) Accountability should be driven by the mission of APS and centered on positive client outcomes;
- 2) Quality follows critical inquiry and a commitment on the part of staff at all levels;
- 3) Expectations of all employees need to be clearly defined and commonly understood;
- 4) Individual accountability should be accompanied with resources directed to building the capacity and skills of individual staff; and
- 5) Measuring performance is an ongoing, evolutionary process that should contribute to the improvement of investigation, service delivery and overall client outcomes.

APS employees from all levels were brought in from across the state to participate in development of consistent performance standards. The result is a system that balances quantitative data regarding timeliness and worker efficiency with qualitative information gathered from detailed case reading. Additional measures were applied to managers regarding effective deployment of program resources and community engagement.

Quantitative information is gathered via the IMPACT case management system. Five staff from state office are dedicated to reading cases full-time in order to gather the qualitative data used to manage performance. The cases are scored according to a consistent set of standards. These scores are tabulated and reported to regional and state office management. In addition to state office case readers, regional staff review cases in preparation for regional case readings, which involve staff from state office and the regions. Cases are scored using the same case reading standards and results are reported to regional and state office management.

Senate Bill 6 also provides guidance to the DFPS' Statewide Intake program (SWI), which serves as the initial point of contact for reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation of the elderly and persons with disabilities. Statewide Intake quality assurance activities include:

- 1) Developing and implementing effective techniques for evaluating the SWI program;
- 2) Reviewing IMPACT reports and call recordings to collect performance data, identify adverse trends, and determine compliance with policy, laws, regulations and service delivery standards; and
- 3) Providing written feedback via automated Quality Monitoring System regarding how intake workers meet performance standards in obtaining, assessing and documenting information obtained from reporters.

The performance management system has several components for measuring employee performance. The table below outlines measures that are used to evaluate caseworkers in the field, field supervisors, and statewide intake (SWI) staff. As of December 1, 2005, the six-month and annual performance evaluations for caseworkers include the measures described in the table. Annual evaluations for field supervisors and regional management will include the new performance standards. Overall program performance is discussed at monthly DFPS executive team meetings and the APS system is being used as a model for performance management in other DFPS programs.

Performance Measure

Job Specific Standards

Caseworker

Timeliness of 24-hour contact.	Caseworker will initiate each case within 24 hours. 94-95% is competent.
Timeliness of face-to-face contact.	Caseworker will make face-to-face contacts within policy timeframes for the priority. 89-91% is competent.
Timeliness of monthly status contact.	Caseworkers will contact client at least once a month while the case is open. 89-91% is competent.
Investigation Rating Scale from APS case reading. <i>(Scale is made up of 8 items captured in detailed analysis of individual cases)</i>	Caseworker will fully investigate allegations and all factors that present a threat to the client's health or safety. 80%-86% competent.
Process Compliance Scale from APS case reading. <i>(Scale is made up of 11 items captured in detailed analysis of individual cases)</i>	Caseworker will make all required contacts within timeframes and document all required case information. 80-86% competent.
Client Intervention Scale from APS case reading. <i>(Scale is made up of 10 items captured in detailed analysis of individual cases)</i>	Caseworker will appropriately assess and intervene in cases of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation in order to ensure that factors placing the client at risk are addressed.

Supervisor

Evaluations completed within timeframes.	Target percentage for a rating of competency is 90%.
Length of time for supervisors to approve cases.	Target percentage for a rating of competency is 90% of cases approved within 10 days of submission by the caseworker.

Statewide Intake

Appropriateness of worker interaction with caller.	A target for this measure is under development.
Prioritizes reports of abuse and neglect accurately.	A target for this measure is under development.
Documentation of intake information is accurate and complete.	A target for this measure is under development.
Appropriateness of decision to accept an intake or investigation.	A target for this measure is under development.

To address concerns about consistency in program management, standardized performance expectations have been developed for each position in the program and are delivered through performance evaluations. In addition to qualitative and quantitative measures of case quality and client outcomes, performance evaluations also include an individual supervisor's assessment of skills or "performance dimensions." The supervisor is responsible for assessing the employee's professionalism, initiative, planning and organization, decision-making, flexibility and adaptability, communication and interpersonal skills. To insure appropriate program cultural change, in the months of December 2005 and January 2006, all APS supervisors and field managers received hands on orientation and training on the new performance management system.

Overview of APS Performance During the Quarter

The chart below provides an overview of the APS program's statewide performance on indicators for the first quarter of FY 2006, along with their benchmarks. It is important to note that the LBB Performance Measures are calculated using the date the worker completes the investigation. As a result of APS Reform, supervisors are required to approve closure of all investigations and service delivery cases. For this reason, APS Program has begun calculating the number of APS investigations, number of confirmed investigations and days per investigation using the date the supervisor approves closure. The average number of days between a worker completing a case and the supervisor approving the case for closure is five days.

Performance Indicators	Performance Benchmarks for FY 2006	FY 2005 Actual	FY 2006				
			1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	YTD
Number of APS Reports of adult abuse/neglect/exploitation (LBB PM 01-01-01.02 OP)	88,771*	80,623	20,262				
Average Hold Time Statewide Intake Phone Calls (English) (LBB PM 01-01.01 OC)	5.0	5.2**	6.1***				
Number of Completed APS Investigations (LBB PM 01-03-01.01 OP)	77,963*	67,023	21,095				
Average Days per Investigation Stage	50.0*	51.3	60.1				
Number of Confirmed APS Investigations (LBB PM 01-03-01.02 OP)	53,346* (69.7%)	45,392 (67.7%)	14,512 (68.8%)				
Average Days per Service Delivery Stage	60.0*	50.1	62.0				
Average Daily Caseload per Worker	47.6*	48.9	58.5				

* Number based on projected forecast update (as of November 2005).
 ** FY 2005 ABEST updated 4th Quarter (as of November 7, 2005).
 *** 1st Quarter as of December 2005.

Client-Centered Performance Measures

The chart below provides an overview of employee performance indicators for FY 2006 along with their benchmarks. All of these indicators are new and were not calculated in FY 2005. The Risk Assessment data is derived from two case reading items that pertain directly to risk assessment. These items are also included in the overall Investigation Compliance Scale.

Performance Indicators	Performance Benchmarks	FY 2005	FY 2006				
			1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	YTD
Statewide Intake							
Appropriateness of worker interaction with caller.	Under development		93.3%				
Prioritizes reports of abuse and neglect accurately.	Under development		95.7%				
Documentation of intake information is accurate and complete.	Under development		93.5%				
Appropriateness of decision to accept an intake for investigation.	Under development		98.3%				
Investigation							
Percentage of cases initiated within 24 hours.	94-95%		94.4%				
Percentage of cases in which the initial client face-to-face visit occurred within the appropriate timeframe.	89-91%		72.6%				
Investigation Compliance Scale.	80-86%		88.6%				
Risk Assessment							
Thoroughness of problem identification.	80-86%		94.3%				
Adequacy of supporting documentation.	80-86%		92.8%				
Delivery of Protective Services							
Client Outcome Compliance Scale.	80-86%		89.6%				

Staffing

The chart below provides current and historical information on average filled FTEs, vacancies and turnover. These indicators provide regional and state office management additional information, which can be used to inform variations in performance. It is important to note that vacancy rate calculations and turnover calculations are cumulative for FY 2005.

Staffing Performance Indicators	FY 2005	FY 2006				
		1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	YTD
In-home Caseworkers						
Year-to-Date Average Filled FTEs*	345.8	394.0				394.0
Turnover**	22.4%	5.9%				5.9%
In-home Supervisors						
Year-to-Date Average Filled FTEs*	50.1	56.8				56.8
Turnover**	15.8%	0.0%				0.0%
All In-home Program						
Total FTEs Appropriated	618.6	650.6				650.6
Year-to-Date Average Filled FTEs*	548	619.6				619.6
Turnover**	18.9%	4.7%				4.7%
Vacancy Rate	9.3%	4.8%				4.8%
<p>* Average filled FTEs for FY 2005 includes additional positions allocated for APS Reform in FY 2005</p> <p>** Turnover for FY 2006 is the cumulative total for all three months of the quarter.</p>						