

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

4th Quarter FY 2006 November 1, 2006

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 challenges and an overview of the new APS performance management system.

As of September 1, 2006, 100 percent of the APS reform items have been completed.

Significant Accomplishments for the Reporting Periods

4th Quarter

- The MH and MR Performance Management process was implemented during the fourth quarter including: designing, testing and activating a MH and MR quality assurance casereading database, developing a monthly and regional case review schedule, distributing guidelines, and working with state office policy staff to design a casereading consistency process. Beginning September 1, 2006 the Quality Assurance Specialists will read cases for all MH and MR caseworkers each month and enter scores into the casereading database for use by supervisors and managers to measure employee and program performance.
- In June 2006, the APS Community Satisfaction Survey was distributed to over 2,300 partners (judicial partners, law enforcement agencies, community service providers and APS volunteer board members) around the state and preliminary results indicate satisfaction with APS increased in most areas in comparison with the survey conducted in 2004. APS is continuing to analyze the data from the survey results in order to provide specific areas for improvement in all regions and a finalized report will be distributed in November.
- APS Special Task Units (STU's), mandated in Senate Bill 6 for counties with a population of 250,000, have formed to consult on complex cases in all 19 required counties. Fourteen of the nineteen STU's have met at least once and several counties have met more than once. Two counties in Region 2/9, Ector and Midland Counties, that were not required by law, also formed a STU, bringing the total number to 20.
- APS entered into a year round public awareness campaign with a new theme of "Protecting Vulnerable Adults is Everyone's Business". In addition to the kick-off of the new campaign in May in conjunction with Older Americans Month, APS is conducting three additional mini campaigns throughout the remainder of the year. Over the summer, APS released an article on the dangers of summer heat, and many of the APS offices partnered with local agencies to provide fans to the elderly and disabled.
- APS completed a feasibility study in two regions regarding the functionality of telemedicine technology. Caseworkers were trained to use videophone technology and provided tele-consultation (medical and mental health assessments) with medical personnel while in the client's home. The study concluded that while feasible, this approach is not practical due to the lack of available connectivity, the recommendation that medically trained personnel be present at the client's home during the evaluation and the lack of clarity in the video image.

- The Professional Development Division has updated and revised the web-based training modules used by newly hired In-Home caseworkers, based on feedback from field trainers and policy specialists. A program-specific advanced investigation training rolled out during the quarter, and an RFP was developed for creating a training module on conducting joint investigations with law enforcement. In order to meet the training needs of the additional 179 In-Home staff, additional Basic Skills Development classes have been added and will be delivered at multiple sites throughout the state in FY 2007.
- APS instituted “policy in a box” training for each worker. New policy is released on a quarterly basis. A power point is included which covers key elements of the new policy as well as handouts that accompany the power point. Supervisors are required to cover the new policy with their workers and send a list back to the professional development division certifying that the policy was reviewed.

3rd Quarter

- The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board conducted a survey of Texas colleges and universities that offer degrees in social work and psychology. The survey is intended to determine whether these institutions are currently providing instruction that develops the knowledge and skills necessary for successful employment in APS, and if not, how they will incorporate the skills and knowledge into their curriculum.
- A new community satisfaction survey was mailed to 2,450 APS stakeholders in May of 2006 to seek follow-up responses from participants of the original HHSC survey administered during APS Reform. These stakeholders include the judiciary, law enforcement, community service providers and community boards. Analysis of the data is underway, and a report will be produced in August 2006.
- APS released a new public awareness campaign in May, which coincided with Elder Abuse Awareness month. The theme of the new campaign is "Protecting Vulnerable Adults is Everyone's Business" and a new website was launched: www.everyonesbusiness.org. Community Engagement staff in each region participated in local activities promoting the new campaign, which included media events, proclamations in multiple counties and distribution of campaign materials. Community Engagement staff are routinely asked to participate in presentations to volunteer and civic organizations, as well as service providers and faith based organizations around the state.
- County officials in counties with a population of 250,000 or more were contacted to initiate development of Special Task Units (STU's). Professionals from a variety of disciplines are being selected and initial meetings have occurred in most of these counties to discuss difficult cases, coordinate agency efforts, increase community awareness and explore ways to improve services in the community.
- Tele-consultation is being piloted in two regions. Caseworkers trained in using a videophone recruit clients to receive a distance video conference with a physician specializing in geriatrics. Analysis of the pilot project data will be reported during the next quarter.
- Based on information gathered from the mobile technology survey, APS established “skilled users” in each region to support workers and develop training that addresses technology topics, best practices, tools and tips. While mobile technology has resulted in a significant cultural shift in caseworkers’ day-to-day activities, they are adapting well to the new work environment.
- DFPS worked closely with HHSC to secure additional staff in order to address the projected growth in intakes for the remainder of the current biennium and upcoming 2008-2009 biennium. These additional resources are expected to reduce caseloads and lower the number of pending investigations. Lower caseloads should improve case quality and lead to higher staff retention rates. The new positions, including 179 caseworkers, will be phased in beginning in September and concluding by August 2007 with most of the positions filled by March 2007.

2nd Quarter

- Tablet PC users were surveyed to gather information on the strengths and challenges associated with the new technology.
- APS and DFPS IT developed a cultural change management plan, including an intranet site for tablet PCs, web-based training, job aides, and identification of skilled users to work with employees in small groups.
- The Special Task Unit manual and tool kit was completed and distributed to community engagement staff in each region. Staff are meeting with local government officials in counties with a population of 250,000 or more to facilitate compliance with Senate Bill 6.
- APS staff met with staff from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and received a commitment from them to work with institutions of higher education to offer curricula related to protective services for elderly and disabled adults through the social work and psychology departments.
- The DFPS Center for Policy, Innovation and Professional Development refined and integrated the blended-learning training for newly hired APS in-home caseworkers by aligning the content with training goals and objectives, as well as program expectations. Blended learning incorporates web-based training, classroom training and on-the-job training. Improved pre- test/post-test scores indicated preliminary success in achieving measurable learning through this training alignment.
- Center for Program Coordination staff trained APS supervisors in each region on the new APS Performance Management System. APS supervisors now have daily reports available on-line to monitor caseloads and case quality.

1st Quarter

- Tablet PCs were distributed to all direct delivery staff in the APS in-home program.
- Tablet PCs were distributed to all direct delivery staff in the APS facility program.
- A Guardianship MOU was developed between DFPS and DADS.
- Full roll-out of comprehensive Blended Learning for APS In-Home Skills Training (BLAST).
- Comprehensive training on use of tablet PC technology was conducted.
- Twenty five new direct delivery staff appropriated for fiscal year 2006 were hired. (57 FTEs were allocated in FY 2005.)
- Comprehensive performance management standards were implemented.

APS Reform Challenges

APS still faces challenges in managing workloads, which remain higher than the target projected for FY 2006. The FY 2006 YTD average daily caseload per caseworker was 51.3. With the addition of 179 new caseworker positions in FY 2007, it is projected that the average daily caseload will be reduced to 42.3 by the end of FY 2007.

While retention of caseworkers continues to be a challenge for APS, turnover rates for caseworkers improved from 22.4 percent in FY 2005 to 19.9 percent in FY 2006. Regional Directors have developed and are implementing plans for improving recruitment, recognition and retention of staff in their regions.

Overview of APS Performance During the 4th Quarter

The chart below provides an overview of the APS Program's performance on indicators for all four quarters of FY 2006, along with their benchmarks. While the number of intakes, completed investigations, and confirmed investigations did not meet the FY2006 benchmarks, they all increased over FY2005. Because of this increase, durations of investigations and service delivery increased, resulting in the average daily caseload being higher than the target. The additional caseworkers being deployed in FY 2007 are expected to reduce caseloads and decrease duration of investigations and service delivery thereby decreasing the average daily caseload. Together this is expected to improve the quality of investigations and service delivery to APS clients.

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	88,771*	80,623	20,262	19,434	19,623	22,695	82,014
Average Hold Time Statewide Intake Phone Calls (English)**	5.0	5.2	6.1	7.1	8.8	5.8	7.1
Number of Completed APS Investigations	77,963*	67,023	21,095	17,414	18,396	17,850	74,755
Average Days per Investigation Stage	50.0*	51.3	60.1	69.9	65.5	48.4	61.0
Number of Confirmed APS Investigations	53,346* (69.7%)	45,392 (67.7%)	14,512 (68.8%)	11,939 (68.6%)	12,767 (69.4%)	11,995 (67.2%)	51,213 (68.5%)
Average Days per Service Delivery Stage	60.0*	50.1	62.0	63.3	69.3	72.8	66.9
Average Daily Caseload per Worker***	45.9	50.8	59.1	49.4	46.8	50.6	51.3
* Number based on projected forecast update (as of November 2005). ** LBB measure calculated on the 7th day of the first month following the end of the quarter. *** FY 2006 daily caseloads have been recalculated based on the FY 08-09 Caseload Performance Measure Methodology.							

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 were new and were not calculated in FY 2005. APS is meeting or exceeding the benchmarks for all measures of statewide intake, investigation, risk assessment and delivery of protective services, with the exception of initial client face-to-face contact and thoroughness of problem investigation. Management believes that this is primarily related to higher caseloads and a stricter interpretation of the documentation necessary for problem identification.

Performance Indicators	Performance Benchmarks	FY 2006				
		1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	YTD
Statewide Intake						
Appropriateness of worker interaction with caller	90-92%	93.3%	93.4%	95.9%	93.4%	94.0%
Prioritizes reports of abuse and neglect accurately.	90-92%	95.7%	94.8%	95.6%	94.2%	95.1%
Documentation of intake information is accurate and complete	89-91%	93.5%	92.4%	95.2%	95.0%	94.1%
Appropriateness of decision to accept an intake for investigation	92-94%	98.3%	97.8%	97.9%	98.7%	98.1%
Investigation						
Percentage of cases initiated within 24 hours	94-95%	94.4%	94.2%	95.5%	95.0%	94.8%
Percentage of cases in which the initial client face-to-face visit occurred within the appropriate timeframe *	89-91%	84.1%	83.9%	86.0%	87.1%	84.3%
Investigation Rating Scale	80-86%	88.6%	90.9%	90.5%	89.4%	90.0%
Risk Assessment **						
Thoroughness of problem identification	80-86%	94.3%	92.4%	87.7%	78.3%	86.6%
Adequacy of supporting documentation	80-86%	92.8%	93.1%	94.9%	95.3%	93.6%
Delivery of Protective Services						
Client Intervention Scale	80-86%	89.6%	90.7%	90.4%	89.0%	90.0%
* The Data Warehouse reports calculating Initial Face-to-Face Contact compliance have been changed to reflect policy and all quarters have been updated accordingly.						
** The Risk Assessment data is derived from two case reading items that pertain directly to risk assessment and are also included in the overall Investigation Rating Scale.						

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 2006.

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	404.7	413.5	411.2	405.9
Turnover**	22.4%	5.9%	4.1%	4.8%	6.0%	19.9%
In-home Supervisors						
Year-to-Date Average Filled FTEs*	50.1	56.8	60.9	58.8	60.3	59.2
Turnover**	15.8%	0.0%	1.7%	3.4%	0.0%	5.1%
All In-home Program						
Total FTEs Appropriated	618.6	650.6	650.6	650.6	650.6	650.6
Year-to-Date Average Filled FTEs*	548	619.6	639.9	650.5	657.8	642.5
Turnover**	18.9%	4.7%	3.3%	4.5%	4.4%	15.9%
Vacancy Rate	9.3%	4.8%	1.6%	0%	-1.1%	1.3%
<small>* Average filled FTEs for FY 2005 includes additional positions allocated for APS Reform in FY 2005 ** Turnover for the quarter indicates the results for that quarter only, whereas YTD turnover indicates the cumulative status for all completed quarters. The average of active employees changes very little from quarter to quarter but the number of terminated employees cumulates.</small>						

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 no consequences for poor casework. In order to address these concerns, APS staff worked with other divisions within DFPS to develop a meaningful outcome-based performance management system.

The following 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 by 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.

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. 80%-86% competent.

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

Obtains and assesses detailed information from callers	Intake worker obtains necessary information and assesses it for the correct program. Target for competency is 90-92 %.
Prioritizes reports of abuse and neglect accurately*	Intake worker chooses the correct priority based on information obtained and risk to: child(ren); elderly or adults with disabilities. Target for competency is 90-92 %.
Documentation of intake information is accurate and complete*	Intake worker records information correctly on each section of the intake according to policy/procedure requirements. Target for competency is 89-91 %.
Accurately distributes and relays reports within appropriate time frames	Intake worker routes the intake or additional information to the correct destination workload within established time frames. Target for competency is 92-94 %.

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, 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 Statewide Intake 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 an automated Quality Monitoring System regarding how intake workers meet performance standards in obtaining, assessing and documenting information obtained from reporters.

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.

The performance management system uses several components for measuring employee performance. The following table outlines measures that are used to evaluate In-Home caseworkers, field supervisors, and statewide intake 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.

Previous 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, 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.

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. The 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 risk assessment tool.

Community Engagement:

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

- Community Initiative Specialists 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 developed new 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.