NEW BEGINNINGS: THE FUTURE OF OKDHS

Director Ed Lake

February 11, 2013
OKDHS Mission

We help individuals and families in need help themselves lead safer, healthier, more independent and productive lives.
2012: A Year of Transformation

- Retirement of long-standing Director and two Chief Officers
- Two interim Directors
- Settlement of Children's Rights lawsuit
- Development of Pinnacle Plan
- Vertical reorganization of three divisions
- Retirements of long-term division leadership
- OKDHS Commission decision to close NORCE and SORC
- Hiring of a new Director
- SQ 765 change in agency governance
Reorganization gives us the opportunity to remake ourselves--not the time to “settle in.” It’s the time to accelerate change!

Listening sessions held in Jan. 2013 to hear from employees and key stakeholders:

- Lawton
- Enid
- Oklahoma City (2)
- Broken Arrow
- McAlester
Stakeholders:

- DHS needs to improve communication with providers and other partners; and between divisions that serve the same clients
- DHS needs better collaboration with outside partners that serve the same clientele
- Many groups want to help DHS fulfill mission, offered their continued support
- Providers need rate increases
- Customer service training is needed for all employees
- Forms and correspondence are not user friendly or easy to understand
- Many other program-specific recommendations
Employees:

- Pay raises are critical
- Post recession budget cuts and reorganization: Demand for services at all-time high with fewer employees. Current workloads and deadlines are unsustainable.
- Employees need manageable caseloads with reasonable expectations.
- More workers are needed--particularly in Child Welfare, Adult and Family Services
- Employees need a career path to move around within the agency. Give “burned out” employees other options within the agency to retain season, trained workers.
- Improve hiring process for new workers, bring them onboard faster
Listening Sessions

Employees:

- Want customer service training
- Supervisors need more management and leadership training
- Computer equipment is failing, causing work delays
- IT infrastructure is aging, systems do not work together
- Some DHS County Offices in poor condition, in need of repairs
- Many other program-specific recommendations
“We can’t PR our way out of this. We must perform our way to credibility, trust and respect.”

--Ed Lake, OKDHS Director
Strategic Approach to Change

- Systematically review the Department’s operations, finances, personnel system and methods.
- Improve employees’ working conditions: environmental, compensation, management, support, and involvement.
- Better involve partners meaningfully in policy/program development, planning and decision making.
- Expand implementation of “evidence-based” practices in all program areas to improve client outcomes.
- Enhance IT systems to better support operations and improve services and clients’ access to services.
- Improve transparency of and accountability for the Department’s actions:
  - Four citizen advisory panels
  - Governor’s Blue Ribbon Panel on Developmental Disabilities Services
  - Commission’s Special Child Death Review Committee
Current Priority Budget Needs

- Pinnacle Plan resources
- Developmental Disabilities Services provider rates
- Aging Services provider rates
- Child Care provider rates
- Employee compensation
- IT infrastructure and equipment
Questions ?
To view the full “Director’s Listening Session Topics”, go to the OKDHS website at www.okdhs.org.

To contact OKDHS Director Ed Lake:
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