

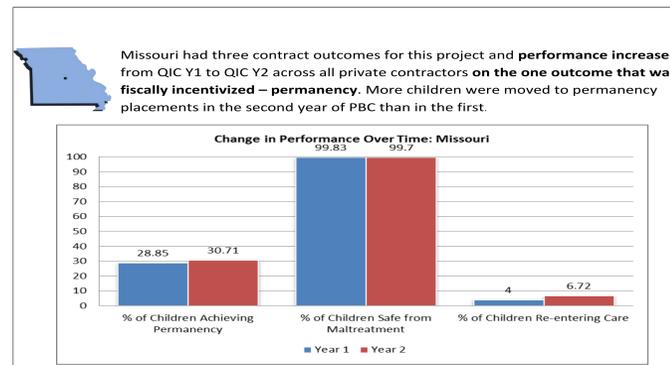
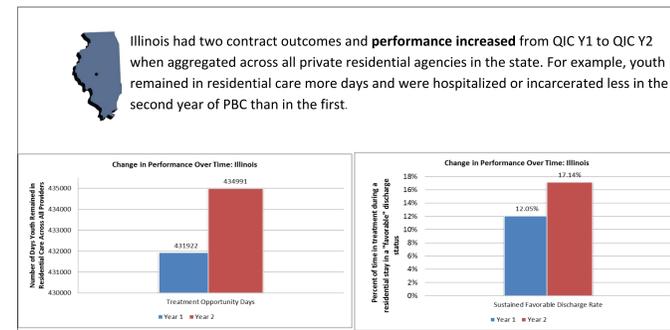
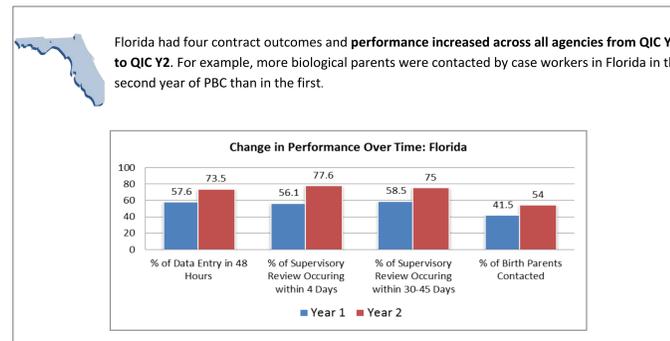
Overview

The overarching goal of the Quality Improvement Center on the Privatization of Child Welfare Services was to inform the field and the Children's Bureau about the most current research, knowledge, and practice related to how public child welfare agencies contract with private providers for some or all of their core services. After an initial comprehensive needs assessment and knowledge gap analysis conducted by the QIC-PCW team in 2005-2006, performance-based contracting (PBC) and quality assurance (QA) systems were selected as the primary focus of further in-depth study and evaluation. Through a competitive RFP process, three demonstration sites were selected, each of which were implementing PBC/QA through a public-private partnership in some aspect of their child welfare service system. In September 2007, the QIC-PCW and its partners began the national cross-site evaluation of these three demonstration sites. This executive summary highlights findings from the final report of that three year evaluation.

Performance-Based Contracts and Quality Assurance Systems: A Model for Delivering Child Welfare Services

- Performance-based contracting is a mechanism by which public agencies can move toward a more quality and data driven monitoring approach with accountability built into it. In turn, private agencies are given the freedom to determine how services are best delivered to meet contract expectations while achieving fiscal goals.
- PBC is even more directly linked to contract monitoring and ongoing Quality Assurance (QA) efforts since private agency performance is tied to payment. Therefore, contracts are either being rewarded or penalized based on their compliance with performance standards.
- A successful PBC that leads to improved outcomes for children and families requires more than just collaboration and a contract. The ways in which the public agency changes policies or procedures, such as contract monitoring, to adapt and support this new contractual relationship are important (Collins-Camargo, McBeath & Ensign, in press).
- Equally important are the ways in which private agencies create innovative strategies or systems to help them achieve their contract outcomes and provide quality services (McBeath & Meezen, 2010). These kinds of supports may evolve over time as new data is used in a continuous quality improvement process.

Percent Change in Performance on Contract Outcomes



Necessary Components: Finding What Works

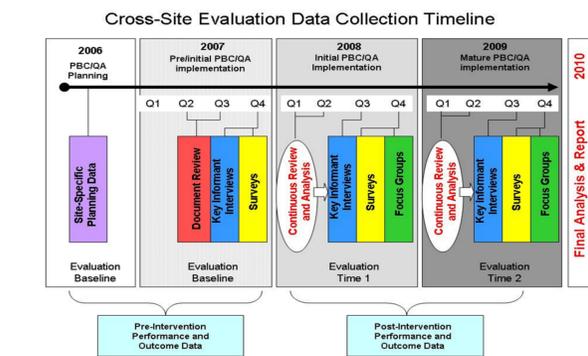
Across sites, several common elements were identified as being critical to the successful implementation of PBC/QA. How those elements played out in an individual site varied and the level of significance each one played cannot be known. Instead, general themes emerged across sites.

Common Elements for Success	
Political	Right Time and Support for Change
Leadership	Right Leaders Driving Change & Staying Involved
Collaboration	Inclusive Planning Process Between Public & Private
Planning	Sufficient Time to Plan
Communication	Formalized, Transparent Communication Structure
	Meaningful Feedback to All Levels
Practice	Support for Practice Change
Data	Having and Using Reliable Data
QA/QI	Restructuring QA/QI Process to Support PBC
Outcomes	Selecting Right Outcomes and Building a Contract Around Them

Lessons Learned: Tips for the Field

In keeping with the goal of the QIC-PCW of sharing information and knowledge with the field so that others may learn from their experience, the demonstration sites identified several key lessons learned while developing and implementing PBC/QA within their public-private partnership. These take-away messages may assist other states or agencies as they study other models of service delivery or are in the process of planning and implementing PBC/QA.

Lessons Learned Across Sites	
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planned collaboration and communication process structures are critical Performance-based contracting is an evolutionary process that takes time If phasing in, need structured plan for new sites using lessons learned from experienced Use a fidelity checklist for implementation
Public/Private Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put equal emphasis on reform in both the public and private sectors All providers are different entities - they don't operate the same. May need to be more direct and prescriptive with the private sector
Contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboratively choose right outcomes to match overall system goals Develop a longer term plan than the current contract Marry finance to outcome development at the start Need fluid peer record review across sectors Avoid a dual case management system across partners Be flexible in contracts and allow innovation
Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop or modify data collection/tracking system that is robust Must have reliable and accurate data to measure outcomes/performance



Planning Process: Public-Private Partnerships in Collaboration

- Given the complex relationship between public and private partnerships within a PBC system, each site identified the collaborative planning process as one of the most important factors in the success or failure of their efforts. The structure of the decision making process was different across sites; sites took an inclusive approach when negotiating PBC and designing QA systems.

In Florida, the lead CBC developed a supervisor roundtable between the lead agency and the private providers to work on PBC/QA activities together.

In Illinois, an existing public-private decision-making committee (CWAC) and data team was used to plan and implement PBC/QA.

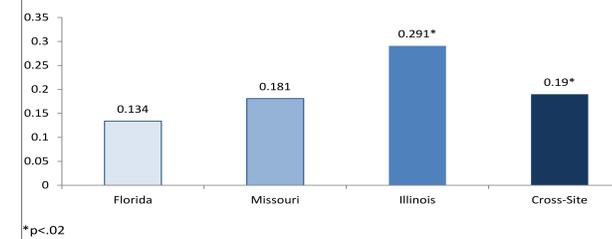
In Missouri, they used an existing meeting that included CEOs of the private providers and key public agency staff to plan and implement activities.

- Survey data showed that there was general agreement in all sites that those involved in the planning and implementation of this initiative had the right level of collaborative communication structure, process, purpose, goal, environment, and partners.
- Finally, undertaking this level of system change requires sufficient time to plan since it affects all levels of an organization or agency. Each site emphasized that sufficient time is needed to ensure that all parties understand the outcomes being measured, how they are measured, and how these contracts affect each side fiscally. Additionally, time is needed upfront to make sure the right data is available to measure each outcome or to make the necessary changes to guarantee accurate and reliable data to inform the system as a whole.

Outcomes: Promoting Performance and Achieving Goals

Overall, data from this cross-site evaluation showed that on almost all outcomes in all sites, agencies showed an improvement in performance and demonstrated that they consistently improved their ability to meet their contract targets from QIC Project Year 1 to QIC Project Year 2. Regardless of the outcome or how it was measured, this improved performance was consistently positive.

Percent Change in Performance Aggregated Across Outcomes



The following graph shows the standardized percentage of change from QIC PY1 to QIC PY2 across all outcomes aggregated within site. Positive values above 0 indicate increased performance on all outcomes from Year 1 to Year 2. Negative values below 0 indicate that performance decreased.

RESULTS: Regardless of the outcome or how it was measured, performance increased over time relative to 0 (mean/no change) in all sites. This increase was significant for Illinois and for the aggregated outcomes across all three sites.

Demonstration Sites: Florida, Illinois Missouri

In the January 2007, three demonstration sites were selected to participate in the QIC-PCW. These three sites had previously privatized their child welfare service delivery system and were now implementing Performance Based Contracting and Quality Assurance (PBC/QA) systems within some aspect of their service system.



Between 1999-2005, Florida transitioned all ongoing case management services to private community-based care lead agencies who often subcontract with private case management agencies. Florida's PBC contract under the QIC targets children in foster care and is located in Judicial Circuit 5 (Ocala and surrounding counties) and Kids Central (CBC).

Outcomes

- Accurate data entry within 2 days of case receipt
- Face to face supervisory meetings within 4 days of case receipt & again at 30-45 days
- Contact with biological parents



Illinois sought to expand its use of PBC to providers of residential care in 2007 for the QIC project. The overarching goals for residential care were to incentivize shorter lengths of stay in residential settings while improving client stability and functioning, allowing for expanded availability of residential care beds for children at earlier stages of their need.

Outcomes

- Sustained Favorable Discharge Rate (SFDR)
- Rate of Treatment Opportunity Days (RTOD)



Missouri contracted with private agencies to provide case management services through incentivized contracts and used performance-based contracts for its out-of-home care population in 2005. For the QIC, the state has focused on improving the long-term maintenance supports and QA processes of its performance-based foster care case management contracts in three regions of the state (Kansas City, St. Louis, and Springfield)

Outcomes

- Safety
- Foster care re-entry
- Permanency

Summary

- Taken together, data from this evaluation furthers our understanding of how collaborations between the public and private sector can be inclusive and supported by key organizational factors that improve performance and outcomes over time. The evolving nature of public/private child welfare partnerships requires constant collaboration on all aspects of contract development, refinement, monitoring, as well as systemic and practice improvements designed to foster better outcomes for children and families.

- As federal and state entities move toward accountability and performance frameworks for distributing funds through grants or contracts, future research is necessary to rigorously design and evaluate these approaches to effectively assess the true impact of each change made within a performance-based system. Based on this evaluation and lessons learned from this project, several areas of future study emerged:

Author's Note

This work was funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau through the National Quality Improvement Center on the Privatization of Child Welfare Services. This Executive Summary and the National Cross-Site Evaluation Final Report were prepared by Teri A. Garstka, Ph.D., consultant for Planning and Learning Technologies, Inc., in partnership with the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville. Contributors include Karl Ensign MPP, Melissa Neal Dr. PH, Brian Yoder, Ph.D., & Elizabeth Lee, M.A. The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent positions of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Contact Information

Cross-Site Evaluator	QIC-PCW Project Director	QIC-PCW Project Manager
Teri A. Garstka, Ph.D. Research Associate Institute for Educational Research and Public Service University of Kansas 1122 West Campus Road Lawrence, KS 66045 Phone: 785-864-3329 garstka@ku.edu	Crystal Collins-Camargo MSW Ph.D. University of Louisville Kent School of Social Work 210 Oppenheimer Hall Louisville, KY 40292 Phone: 502-853-3174 crystal.collinscamargo@louisville.edu	Jennifer Hall, MSW University of Kentucky College of Social Work Training Resource Center 1 Quality St, Suite 700 Lexington, KY 40507 Phone: 859-257-2186 jhall2@uky.edu



For more information or a copy of the final cross-site evaluation report, please visit this website:
<http://www.uky.edu/SocialWork/qicpcw/>