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[00:00:00]: [Music Introduction]

FEMALE NARRATOR [00:00:02]: This is the Child Welfare Information Gateway Podcast, a place for those who care about strengthening families and protecting children. You'll hear about the innovations, emerging trends and success stories across child welfare direct from those striving to make a difference. This is your place for new ideas and information to support your work to improve the lives of children, youth, and families.

TOM OATES [00:00:33]: Well, welcome back to the Child Welfare Information Gateway podcast, so glad you're able to take the time to join us each month. And we're recording this in the spring of 2020, where most of the nation is taking precaution to mitigate risk and exposure to the Coronavirus. And again, we hope you're safe, healthy and taking what time you can to care for yourself and your families. This episode continues our conversations surrounding the Family First Prevention Services Act and how child welfare agencies and jurisdictions are developing their Title IV-E prevention plans. Now, in early March of 2020, the Children's Bureau hosted a webinar titled Title IV-E Prevention Plan Implementation Updates and this was to share the lessons and experiences from two jurisdictions - Washington, D.C. and Utah - whose prevention plans had been developed and approved by the Children's Bureau.

[00:01:28]: Now, the webinar could only handle about 500 participants, so lots of you were not able to be part of the conversation which is why we're sharing the audio from that webinar here on the podcast. Now, part 1 shared the portion of the webinar where participants learned the perspectives and approaches from D.C. and Utah in developing their plans. So, hey, go ahead and listen to that episode, check it out, it's live and now available on Apple podcasts, GooglePlay, Stitcher, Spotify and SoundCloud. This is part two, the second half of the webinar. Here, the Children's Bureau shared a series of tips to aid jurisdictions as they developed their plans with their stakeholders and partners and the representatives from D.C. and Utah also answered questions from those folks who were able to attend the webinar.

[00:02:15]: So, the tips are addressed by a few folks that you're gonna hear from - Dori Sneddon and Cara Kelly from the Children's Bureau's Central Office; Tina Naugler, she's the Director of Regional Programs for the Children's Bureau. You'll also hear Dr. Jerry Milner, the Associate Commissioner of the Children's Bureau and Elaine Stedt, she is the director of the Children's Bureau's Office of Child Abuse and Neglect. And of course, you'll also hear Brenda Donald, the Director of Washington, DC's Child and Family Services Agency; and Cosette Mills, the Federal Operations Administrator from the Utah Division of Children and Family Services. So, they will answer questions that were posed by webinar participants. So, without further ado, here is Part Two of the Title IV-E Prevention Plan Implementations Update webinar, starting off with Dori Sneddon kicking off tips to support jurisdictions as they develop their prevention plans.

DORI SNEDDON [00:03:11]: Today we'll be providing tips in the areas of service selection, child safety, continuous monitoring and evaluation, as well as a review of resources related to the independent systematic review process and the Title IV-E clearinghouse. And finally, we'll briefly discuss the review process in working with the office and members of the integrated team. So, first I'll provide a few tips related to service selection. So, the first technical tip in this area addresses allowable programs and

services. Allowable programs or services include two categories. The first are those that have been rated by the Title IV-E clearinghouse as promising, supported, or well-supported and this information is provided on the clearinghouse website. The second category of allowable programs or services are those that have been approved, having approved designation through the independent systematic review process and this information is provided on the Children’s Bureau Title IV-E Prevention Program website.

[00:04:12]: To note adaptations of EBPs are allowable, they have to have their own review and approval to meet one of the two criteria above. Tip two is one that Cosette mentioned, it’s a technical tip in the areas based on feedback that CB has commonly provided to submitted plans - and that’s that the prevention plan should include information about the book, manual or other available documentation for each program or service which the state is requesting claiming reimbursement. This is basically a reference and for programs that have been approved or rated by the clearinghouse, this information is directly available on the clearinghouse website, it’s pretty straightforward.

[00:04:58]: And finally, the third tip in this area is related to claiming. We heard from D.C. and from Utah the importance of really thinking about the needs in your state and the larger prevention continuum. Once the Title IV-E agency has identified programs and services that they want to include in their prevention continuum, there are multiple strategies to take in developing their Title IV-E Prevention Program Plan. Similar to D.C.’s approach, states can provide a broad picture of the overall prevention continuum to include both programs and services for which the agency is requesting claiming, as well as programs in the larger prevention continuum. The tip here and kind of the important point is just that the agency has to really closely follow the preprint and be clear about which programs and services the agency is requesting for reimbursement.

[00:05:56]: And at this next slide is really just a reference for kind of an ease of reference. We’re providing really specific information, just how to locate the book, manual or available documentation for each program or service, as discussed on the previous slide and then also, how to find the status of submitted independent systematic release to claim transitional payments, also just discussed on the previous slide. Just to note, CB, our website on the Title IV-E Prevention Plan includes all links to relevant documents. Next, I’ll provide some technical tips on safety monitoring. So, this next area of prevention plans is monitoring child safety. The tips included are in two areas, the first is monitoring child safety during the 12-month service period and the second is re-examination of a child prevention plan.

[00:06:55]: Tip one is that the prevention plan should include information specific as to how the Title IV-E agency will complete periodic risk assessments during the 12-month period. For example, this could include instruments or protocols used for monitoring child safety, time periods or intervals for assessment and the relationship with the contracted providers in assessing child safety. Next tip two, the Title IV-E Prevention Plan should include information on how the child’s prevention plan will be re-examined if the state determines the risk of the child entering the foster care system remains high despite the provision of services. This may include determinations regarding appropriateness of intervention and decisions regarding case closure.

[00:07:42]: Monitoring child safety of children within the prevention context may differ from the existing child safety measurement strategy and include coordination with contractors that are implementing evidence-based programs. These relationships in measuring and assessing safety are important and should be discussed in the prevention plan. Next, I’ll turn it over to Cara Kelly to discuss tips related to continuous monitoring.

CARA KELLY [00:08:07]: This area of continuous monitoring is commonly known as continuous quality improvements or CQI. Many Title IV-E agencies will be implementing new programs and services for the first time through the prevention program plan. Hence, an important component in developing a prevention plan includes information as to how the proposed evidence-based programs and services will be implemented into the Title IV-E agency's existing CQI infrastructure. The technical tips in this area follow the three main categories. The first technical tip in the area of monitoring and implementation is to ensure that information is provided in the plan regarding the implementation strategy for each plan proposed program or service with special consideration for implementation needs with rural communities, tribal partners and contractors that may be implementing the evidence-based programs.

[00:08:54]: The second technical tip in this area is to address in the plan how the Title IV-E agency will ensure fidelity to the practice model for each program or service. In the area of outcomes, the first technical tip is to describe how the agency will determine CQI outcomes will be achieved. For example, outcomes such as safety, permanency and well-being, as well as individual and programmatic level outcomes is appropriate. The second tip in this area is to describe mechanisms for gathering, organizing and tracking information and results over time in the agency's CQI system. That could include information regarding the use of instruments or administrative data, adaptation to the state SACWIS system or CWIS system or coordination with community partners. The final area is to develop a continuous feedback loop. The tip in this area is to provide information in the plan as to how the Title IV-E agency will use the information learned during CQI in driving change for the organization in order to improve outcomes for children and families.

[00:09:54]: It's important to differentiate CQI from program evaluation, as the two are closely related, however, each have distinct components and should be differentiated in the prevention plan. Next, I'll describe the evaluation component of the prevention program plan. The requirement of a well-designed and rigorous evaluation falls in the two main categories. In the area of a well-designed and rigorous strategy, the first tip is to ensure the proposed evaluation meets the legislative requirements of well-designed and rigorous and that the proposed strategy is comprehensive. We'll discuss the components of a well-designed and rigorous evaluation in more detail on the next slide.

[00:10:31]: In the area of evaluation waivers, the tip is to ensure that the Title IV-E agency requests a waiver of evaluation requirement only for programs or services that have been rated as well-supported by the Title IV-E clearinghouse. Programs that have been approved well-supported designation through the independent systematic review process are not eligible for a waiver of the evaluation requirement. Next, for every program or service that the agency submits a waiver for, the plan must provide evidence of the effectiveness of the practice to be compelling. Compelling evidence can include for instance, the description of how each well-supported program or service has demonstrated effectiveness with the child welfare population in your state or jurisdiction or information demonstrating that the evidence of effectiveness crosses more than one target domain, such as across child safety and child well-being. It's important to note the continuous monitoring strategies we discussed earlier remain a requirement for each program or service even if the request to waive the evaluation requirement has been approved.

[00:11:29]: We'll now move onto the evaluation strategy itself. The following area is very brief in the interest of time and provides a high-level overview of some of the important components of an evaluation strategy. In the area of evaluation components, the tip is that the proposed evaluation strategy for each program or service included in the prevention plan should be rigorous and well designed - but what does that mean? For example, the proposed strategy should include research questions that are specific to each program or service being evaluated. These should map to the

proposed outcomes of the evaluation. The target population should also be summarized to include information on items such as demographic characteristics or risk factors, eligibility or screen criteria and information as to why the population was targeted for the evaluation.

[00:12:18]: The proposed research design and methodology is up to the discretion of each individual Title IV-E agency and should logically map to the proposed research questions and outcomes. The design should be rigorous and provide details as to the type of design proposed. For example, whether a quasi-experimental design or a randomized control trial are proposed. The evaluation design should also include a data collection plan. This plan could include the procedures and protocols to collect and compile data, the intended respondents for each data collection method and the frequency at which data collection will occur. Information on the sampling strategy should be included, as well, and provide information on sampling methodology and inclusion and exclusion criteria. In addition, the evaluation plan should also include a data analysis strategy that describes whether quantitative or qualitative data will be used and information regarding the proposed analytic strategy.

[00:13:13]: Finally, the evaluation strategy should clearly articulate the study limitations for each proposed evaluation strategy to include any potential weaknesses or limitations of the selected research design, data collection or analysis methods. A second important tip in this area is to ensure that the evaluation strategy is aligned from beginning to end - from the proposed research questions to the design, data collection and analytic strategy. While you are developing your evaluation strategy, we want to encourage you to utilize ACF resources, including the Evaluation Plan Development Tip Sheet and the Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation. Information about these documents will be provided at the end of the webinar.

[00:13:54]: We'll now move on to discussing the independent systematic review process. The independent systematic review process provides a time limited opportunity for states to claim transitional payments for services and associated costs until the prevention service clearinghouse can review and rate a program or service. The prevention service clearinghouse makes the final determination about whether a program or service is assigned a promising, supported or well-supported rating. During the development of the independent systematic review, there's several resources available from ACF, including program instruction 19-06 and the Title IV-E Clearinghouse Handbook of Standards and Procedures. A list of the approved independent systematic reviews and those currently under review are available on the CB website discussed earlier and are provided here on the slide.

[00:14:41]: In the area of submission and approval, the tip is to ensure that the independent systematic review is submitted as part of the Title IV-E prevention program plan. The review can only be approved as part of the Title IV-E agency's prevention plan. Next, we'll talk briefly about the prevention services clearinghouse website. The Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse website is an excellent resource to obtain information about programs that have been rated by the Title IV-E clearinghouse, to access descriptions of programs and services, as well as to obtain information about the review process. The website also has a number of frequently asked questions. The frequently asked questions include the working list of programs and services currently under review. The frequently asked questions list is updated regularly and includes questions regarding reviews, adaptations and timelines.

[00:15:31]: The clearinghouse continues to review programs and services and ratings for new programs and services will be released on a rolling basis. The prevention services clearinghouse recently released another batch of programs and services, so please visit the clearinghouse website for more information about these new releases. If you're interested in receiving regular updates on activities occurring at the

clearinghouse, you can sign up on the website to receive regular emails regarding updates on activities. I'll go ahead now and turn it over to Tina Naugler, Director of Regional Programs, to discuss the review process for the Title IV-E Prevention Program Plan.

TINA NAUGLER [00:16:05]: Great, thank you. So, this is a great opportunity to share with everyone Children's Bureau's integrated team process for the IV-E Prevention Plan. We have a great teaming approach in which the CB Regional Office Program Specialist and the CB Central Office Specialist under the OCAN Team and the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation Specialist all work together as a team to review prevention plan submissions. The teaming approach allows us to utilize all of our expertise to ensure comprehensive review and a thorough feedback to all of you. So, while we have this teaming approach for plan submissions, the regional office remains the main point of contact for jurisdictions working on their prevention plans, so if you have any questions or concerns before or after plan submission, you should always reach out and contact your regional office with any questions you may have.

[00:16:59]: So, when you're ready to submit a prevention plan, please submit those through your regional office and as Utah mentioned, it's really important that communication, we use it frequently during the process and we really want to work closely with all of you on your prevention plan submissions and questions. So, I'll turn you over to Jerry.

JERRY MILNER [00:17:25]: Okay. So, we are at the point now where we will take questions and answers for those folks on the line who would like to ask questions.

ELAINE STEDT [00:17:39]: So, at this time, we have the phone lines muted but we have gathered questions from the chat function. So, if Brenda wouldn't mind starting us off with reading the questions that have been submitted and then providing a response.

BRENDA DONALD [00:17:56]: Great, thank you. Several people have written to ask if they could get copies of our plan, which we have shared widely. You can go on our website at www.cfsa.dc.gov and our plan is on there and if people have questions, we have a place where you can ask questions and certainly can reach out to me or members of our team. Someone asked how does D.C. envision linking motivational interviewing directly to children on prevention plans as prevention candidates and, again, our approach to motivational interviewing is that it's fundamental to case management, since it is focused on engaging families better and that it something that we all have to do. But, our hope is that it gets approved as a well-supported service for, that we can use for case management claiming purposes. So, we will, we're using it for everything, our kids in care, as well.

[00:19:06]: There is several questions about how to get everyone who needs to be at the table to the table. And this is where differences in jurisdictions and relationships really come to bear. But, I think part of it is really helping people to understand that prevention is everybody's responsibility and if we don't as jurisdictions and multiple systems invest in prevention in collaborative way, then we're all gonna see our kids ending up in the deep ends of the system, which is not good for them, not good for any community. And so, really helping key stakeholders to understand that this is not just a child welfare issue, it's a child and family wellbeing. And, you know again, that depends on where you start in your particular jurisdiction, but, that's really, really important is helping to communicate that. I'm gonna bounce a question to you, Cosette, 'cause there's some questions just for Utah and some for both of us. But, this one says given that Utah offers extended foster care aged 21 and reentry into foster care until 21, is Utah considering whether to include older youth in its candidacy definition?

COSETTE MILLS [00:20:37]: We limited the candidacy up to age 18, we did not put it up to age 21.

BRENDA DONALD [00:20:46]: And, I'll answer that, D.C. has always had kids until age 21. Candidacy for us is under age 18 because you cannot come into foster care, you couldn't be at risk of coming into foster care if you were older than 18. However, we do include the children and therefore their parents, children of foster youth. So, a foster youth who has aged out is part of a family with a child who is part of our target population. So, that was very, very specific, but we think really important. Cosette, there's another question, this is for both of us but I'll bounce it to you first - it asked about what stage in the planning process was your child welfare policy updated and disseminated to staff?

COSETTE MILLS [00:21:44]: I mean, the development of it occurred as we went along. We actually, so we finalized it just shortly before we submitted the plan because the policy didn't have to be attached to the preprint, so we had finalized the policy prior to submission of the plan itself and then with that, had a rollout to our staff throughout the state, you know, to educate them on the policy itself.

BRENDA DONALD [00:22:21]: That's similar to the District. Another question is about engaging judges in the courts. I look to David Kelly who is in the room, who was always a big advocate for that. I would say we did invite our judges to be part of, our presiding judge over the family court, to be part of the planning process and our courts found that they are not, they're so interested - I shouldn't say interested - but their jurisdiction is not so much on the prevention side, even though of course, it is in terms of some of the other elements of the act, we fortunately in the District have very, very few kids in congregate care, so, our focus really has been on our front porch and front yard, which does not really come to the attention of our courts. So, there it's about the kids who are going home and permanency kinds of services if we can shorten length of stay by having robust services on the backend, that's pretty much where our courts are involved, but Utah may be different.

COSETTE MILLS [00:23:42]: Yeah, thanks, Brenda. We did get involved with our court improvement program very early on as soon as the law passed. Also, of course, participated in some of the strategic planning meetings together in Washington, D.C. and we have worked closely with those partners - obviously, heavier relationship related to QRTP - but, they did have an interest and I think particularly because for, where, if the in-home services clients were in child welfare, then there were many cases where we would have court jurisdiction. And so, as we developed these we, you know, included those partners in the discussions and in the planning, in the vision and also in training. We've, they invited us to come and, you know, once we got the plan pulled together and the QRTP provisions, we have gone out and done presentations to judges, to guardian ad litem, to parental defense so that they would know what was happening in Utah and would be aware of it and also have opportunities to give feedback as we moved along the way. Also, we, where legislation was required, they were involved, as well.

DAVID KELLY [00:25:02]: This is David from the Children's Bureau, I would just add that we've seen, in a number of states during our visits, judges and attorneys for parents and children be very actively involved in discussions around planning and identifying both populations of needs and specific needs within populations. By virtue of their position on the bench, judges have kind of a unique experience to look back over the life of the cases that come before them and see all the missed opportunities and are really, I think well positioned to help identify what might have been helpful to families and, you know, some of those are very clearly evidence-based services and then others are more community-based supports. So, they're useful and whether you choose to do a kind of a broader based planning approach or kind of a more narrowly tailored one.

BRENDA DONALD [00:25:58]: There's another question regarding the use of the transition grant's funds and specifically the question is how can stakeholders be involved and it's a great question. In D.C. we're, back to our planning group, we're bringing them back to the table to help us think about now, we have some additional resources, what are some gaps we need to fill in? And so, we have our plan and our candidate population and the services for those target groups and then we also have our upstream prevention in D.C. is in the form of family success centers, but there are lots of other gaps. And, so this, as far as we see, is an opportunity to fill in some gaps because we believe we assembled the right group of folks around the tables representing the right organizations and key stakeholders, they're the ones that will help us to determine what those gaps are. Because, it's a very exciting time for us in the District because now we can not necessarily go further upstream, but we can go deeper upstream. Cosette, did you have any, have you all started focusing on the transition?

COSETTE MILLS [00:27:17]: We have. And I would say it's very similar. I went back to our initial planning group, have been doing more in-depth analysis looking at where are the gaps from our waiver, what are we, you know where are we in startup of new services and how can we help invest these funds to help make it less difficult for providers to get on board, so what costs can we pick up now over a period of time. We are still early on in the planning to decide exactly where we're going to target, but again, think this is a wonderful opportunity.

BRENDA DONALD [00:27:56]: And there's one question about the changes that we made to our SACWIS systems for the client level prevention plan requirements and the question is about integrating, did we integrate into existing case practice documents and are therefore requiring case workers to complete information for all children regardless if they are eligible for the IV-E Prevention Program? And, for us I think the answer would be yes because we have a pretty, we were able to have a pretty broad definition for our candidacy population and knowing that even if, kids may come in and out of the system or touch the system in different ways and so we decided that everyone would have the prevention plan, it would be the same plan that contracts.

DORI SNEDDON [00:28:35]: Okay, great. Thank you. So, we have a couple of questions about the clearinghouse. Yeah, one of the questions was what website was it that we could request to receive email updates? So, the www.preventionservices.abtsites.com on 'Learn More', it has a link for you to join our email list, so please, we welcome you to join and then you will receive email updates. We've also gotten a few questions about how to recommend a program or service for review - we have an FAQ on the website itself on how to recommend a program or service for review. Just as an overview, clearinghouse uses an inclusive process for this and so programs and services are identified through public calls on an annual basis, the first public call was in fall of 2019 and then the clearinghouse takes all of those recommendations, I believe we got over 400 unique submissions, so that's even more recommendations, I'm sure, in there. And those are logged and kept by the clearinghouse. There were also recommendations in response to the 2018 federal register notice and federal partners and other key stakeholders, as well as an environmental scan of the literature.

[00:30:22]: Just so you know, all of that is kept and we look at it often, the clearinghouse looks at it in order to determine who, what programs and services will be reviewed next. You should note that particular consideration is given to programs and services recommended by state and local government administrators and rated by other clearinghouses, such as CEBC or HomeD, recommended by federal partners and/or evaluated as part of any grant supported by the Children's Bureau, such as the Title IV-E Child Welfare Demonstration or the regional partnership grant. Thanks for those questions. Okay, great,

there's one other question for D.C. and/or Utah. The question is would you be able to discuss how and/or when you began to engage IT staff to discuss system implications?

BRENDA DONALD [00:31:16]: This is D.C., we started a parallel process with our implementation workgroup, so they were pretty much at the table, or at another table, day one. So, early in the process.

COSETTE MILLS [00:31:32]: Yeah, I would say that's true for Utah, as well. We had business analysts from our CWIS team participating in the workgroups right from the beginning so that they would be, know the conversations and directions we were going and be able to help - 'cause the time frame was really short for the SACWIS, or CWIS system programming, so, yeah we involved them right from the start, as well.

ELAINE STEDT [00:32:03]: On the slide deck now, you see resources that are available from the Children's Bureau and just to note that the Children's Bureau has created a specific page for Title IV-E Prevention Plan. On that page, we provide regular updates as to when states have, or tribal jurisdictions have submitted a plan, as well as submission through the transitional payment PI process. At this time we will just acknowledge that there have been additional questions that have been submitted through the chat box that we will address at a later date, but I wanted to go ahead and turn it over to Jerry Milner for closing comments.

JERRY MILNER [00:32:44]: Okay, once again, we just wanna thank everybody for taking the time and for having the interest to participate in this webinar. It's very important for us to be able to have this time with you to share some of our own lessons learned here about how best to support you and your efforts to develop and to implement prevention plans that are going to serve our children and our families in the best possible way.

TOM OATES [00:33:17]: So again, I encourage you to listen to Part One, where Brenda Donald and Cosette Mills shared their journeys. The two jurisdictions' plans are different in approaches and programs, so it's really informative. Also, check out the episode we produced focused on the Family First Implementation Guide. We chatted with members of some of the organizations who collaborated on creating this dynamic, evolving document meant to support jurisdictions and states as they develop their plans and tries to answer some of the questions that will come up along the way. Now, if you head to this episode's web page at www.childwelfare.gov, we've shared links to many of the resources mentioned during the webinar, including links to both D.C. and Utah's information, along with the Children's Bureau's Title IV-E Prevention Program website, the link to the specific Program Instruction – that's PI 18-09 - also links to the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse, and the Children's Bureau's page with the status of submitted independent systematic reviews to claim transitional payments. Really important for funding a lot of the programs and the work involved

[00:34:26]: But, a big reminder here to check out all of our episodes – you can subscribe to the Child Welfare Information Gateway Podcasts on Apple podcasts, GooglePlay, Spotify, Stitcher and SoundCloud. We appreciate a high review and a rating from you to help promote this across the child welfare field. Of course, you can check out Child Welfare Information Gateway at www.childwelfare.gov for information, tools, contact information, data and information on laws and policies all surrounding adoption, foster care and the prevention of child abuse and neglect. Again, please stay safe during this time, and thank you for your tireless work and for being a part of our community here on the Child Welfare Information Gateway podcast. I'm Tom Oates, have a great day!

FEMALE NARRATOR [00:35:17]: Thanks for joining us for this edition of the Child Welfare Information Gateway podcast. Child Welfare Information Gateway is available at www.childwelfare.gov and is a service of the Children’s Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families. The views and opinions expressed on this podcast do not necessarily reflect on those of Information Gateway, or the Children’s Bureau.