

LOCAL TELEPHONE INTERVIEW INVITATION

To: [DIRECTOR OF LOCAL APPROACH]

Subject: We invite you to join a conversation about [LOCAL APPROACH NAME]!

Dear [DIRECTOR OF LOCAL APPROACH]:

[IF APPROACH COMPLETED PROFILE] Thank you again for helping us learn more about [LOCAL APPROACH NAME] by confirming a profile about your coordinated services approach. As part of the Assessing Models of Coordinated Services for Low-Income Children and Their Families (AMCS) study, we are following up to invite you to participate in a conversation about your process for service coordination for families. We would like to invite staff from [LOCAL APPROACH NAME] to participate in a one-hour telephone interview so we can learn more about your coordinated services approach.

[IF APPROACH DID NOT COMPLETE PROFILE]. We recently contacted you about an important new project that the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is conducting, called *Assessing Models of Coordinated Services for Low-Income Children and Their Families*. We would like to invite you and staff from [LOCAL APPROACH NAME] to participate in a one-hour telephone interview so that we can include your work in this important study!

[IF APPROACH WAS NOT INVITED TO COMPLETE PROFILE]. We are interested in learning more about [LOCAL APPROACH NAME] as part of an important project that the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is conducting, called *Assessing Models of Coordinated Services for Low-Income Children and Their Families*. ACF has partnered with Mathematica to conduct this study. The goal of this study is to improve our understanding of approaches to coordinate early care and education with family economic security and/or other health and human services.

[ALL APPROACHES] We would like to talk with you or other staff at [LOCAL APPROACH NAME] about your experiences at [LOCAL APPROACH NAME] in order to understand how coordinated services approaches work, including topics such as partnerships, strategies for service delivery, staffing, and data sharing. If you would like to participate in this telephone interview, we ask that you identify a staff member, or a few staff (between two and five) who you think could provide information about the coordination process, from both the development of the coordinated services approach to the current operations. We appreciate that your work may have been affected by COVID-19 and we would also like to ask you some questions about any changes you have made in response. We are happy to discuss an approach to selecting staff to participate if that would be helpful.

We will call you in the next few days to answer any questions you have and discuss this opportunity. In the meantime, please contact me by email [EMAIL] or phone [PHONE] if you have questions or would like to discuss the study.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

LOCAL TELEPHONE INTERVIEW INVITATION FOLLOW-UP PHONE SCRIPT

PROTOCOL FOR LOCAL TELEPHONE INTERVIEW INVITATION

Interviewer instructions: *The goal of this telephone call is to follow-up on an email request to invite staff from state and local coordinated services approaches to participate in a telephone interview. Please ask to speak to the director of the coordination approach (or someone in the equivalent role). If that person is not available, please use the information below to briefly describe the study and the request and ask if there is anyone else to speak to or if the director of the coordination approach could return your call. Once you are speaking to the director, or other person who is able to address the request, please follow the protocol below.*

Telephone protocol:

INTRODUCTION

Hello, my name is _____ and I am from an organization called Mathematica. I am calling about a study called Assessing Models of Coordinated Services for Low-Income Children and Their Families. I'm following up on an email I sent last week inviting you to participate in a telephone interview about your approach to coordinating services for children and their families. Did you receive that email?

[IF NO]. I am sorry to hear you did not receive the email. I can tell you about the opportunity briefly now. Do you have about five minutes to talk now?

[If YES] I'd like to tell you a little more about the interview and see if you are interested in participating. Do you have five minutes to talk now?

[IF YES, OK TIME] Great. Thank you.

[PROCEED WITH "ABOUT THE STUDY AND INTERVIEW"]

[IF NO, NOT OK TIME] No problem, is there a better time for me to reach you? [IF YES, PLEASE CONFIRM ALTERNATE TIME]. I will call you back then. Thank you very much. [IF NOT INTERESTED AT ALL/REFUSES, SKIP TO "IF DECLINED" AT END]

ABOUT THE STUDY AND LOCAL TELEPHONE INTERVIEW

The Assessing Models of Coordinated Services study is being conducted for the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The goal of the study is to learn more about how states and communities are coordinating services to serve children and their families. We would like to talk with you or other staff at [LOCAL APPROACH NAME] about your experiences at [LOCAL APPROACH NAME] in order to understand how coordinated services approaches work, including topics such as partnerships, strategies for service delivery, staffing, and data sharing. In light of COVID-19, we would also like to ask you a few questions to understand how your work may have been and/or continues to be affected. We will use this information to help inform others in the field about how coordinated services can best support families. We estimate that the telephone interview will take one hour. If you would like to participate, we would ask you to identify a few staff (between two and five) who you think could provide information about the coordination process, from both the development of the coordinated services approach to the current operations.

SCHEDULING THE LOCAL TELEPHONE INTERVIEW

We would like to schedule the interview between [DATE] and [DATE] [REFER TO TIME PERIOD]. When would be a good time for you and your staff? We can follow-up after this call by email if that is best.

IDENTIFYING LOCAL TELEPHONE INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Prior to the interview, we would like to ask that you please provide an organizational chart, if you have one, and a list of people who will participate in the interview. Both of these documents will help us to prepare for the conversation and make the interview as efficient as possible. We can email you a reminder about this as well as a form to complete to identify the interview participants. [CONFIRM EMAIL ADDRESS]

CLOSING

[IF AGREED] Thanks so much, I look forward to speaking with you or your colleagues on [DATE]. I will follow up with a request for staffing information prior to that call.

[IF DECLINED]. Thank you for speaking with me. We have enjoyed finding out about your coordinated services approach and we wish you continued success.

AMCS LOCAL TELEPHONE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Thank you for your willingness to speak with me today about [Local approach]. My name is [Interviewer 1], and I work for Mathematica. My colleague, [Interviewer 2] has also joined us today.

Let me first provide some background. As we have mentioned in previous communication, the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation at the Administration for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, contracted with us to study how states and communities coordinate different types of services for children and families. When we talk about coordinating or integrating services, we mean providing families with high quality early care and education, and simultaneously addressing additional family needs, like income supports, health and mental health services for children and their families, job search and training, and other types of health and human services.

[If Local approach was identified through the scan] In the fall, we conducted a nationwide scan of coordinated services approaches in operation, which is how we came to learn about [local approach]. A few months ago, we sent a profile with information we gathered on [local approach]. [If approach confirmed profile] We appreciate [name(s)] verifying the information to help us learn more about your work and prepare for this call. [If approach did not confirm] Today, we would like to walk through that profile with you and ask some additional questions so that we can learn more about your work.

[If Local approach was identified by a State approach] We learned about [Local approach] from [State approach] and we are looking forward to learning more about your approach to coordinating services for children and their families today.

We are not evaluating [local approach]. Instead, we are gathering information across several state and local approaches, to better understand how coordination looks in different settings. [If a group is on the call: We know that we have a group of people on the phone with us today, so as we ask questions perhaps the person who is most familiar with the topic can chime in first. However, if others have anything to add, please do not hesitate to speak up.] We have a lot to cover in our discussion today so I may have to move our conversation along at times.

Your participation in this interview is voluntary, and what you say today will be considered private to the extent provided by law. Information will be summarized across interviews and your name(s) will not be associated with your comments in any reports. The reports might list and describe coordinated services approaches that contributed information, but we will not quote you by name or title. You may refuse to answer any question and may stop the interview at any time. If it is ok with you, we will take notes over the course of the interview so that we can remember the information we collect. *Do you mind if we also record the conversation? It will help us ensure we accurately capture our discussion today. [If yes, start recording.]* Our notes and the recording will be stored on a secure drive, and destroyed when this project is over.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget control number. The Office of Management and Budget number for this information collection is 0970-0356 and the expiration date is 06/30/2021.

Do you have any other questions? If not, then I'll get started.

We are primarily interested in the usual way that [Local approach] operates. However, we recognize that COVID-19 has likely affected your work. Throughout the interview, we will ask you about the influence of COVID-19 on particular aspects of your work, but otherwise encourage you to share how [Local approach] operated prior to COVID-19.

I'd like to first confirm who is on the call today, and get familiar with each of your voices as we start our conversation. Would you each please briefly introduce yourself with you name, job title or role in [local approach]? Thank you for sharing staffing information with us ahead of the interview. [**Interviewer Note:** Review the model staffing information. Confirm that the individuals listed on the staffing information form are on the call and make note of any staff who are not present or who are present, but were not listed on the staffing information chart].

[**Interviewer Note:** Review the local model profile. For fields that are missing information, please first prompt the interviewees to respond/fill in that information before starting the interview questions].

[**Interviewer Note:** As you go through the interview protocol, you will see references to lines in the model profile that these questions are expanding upon. Refer to the information from that line in the model profile as you ask these questions.

A. Development of Approach

We'd like to learn more about how [local approach] was developed.

- Can you tell us a little more about how the [local approach] was developed? [Probe: Was it a response to a challenge in the community? Was there a community investment? A push from an advocacy organization? Sometimes, changes to the ways of doing work and delivering services have “champions”, or individuals whose enthusiasm and vision is a driving force behind the change - Were there any local champions?]
 - Expanding on **line 5** in model profile
- How long did it take to get [local approach] “up and running” (e.g. how long was it from the time partners started convening to the time families were receiving coordinated services)?
 - Expanding on **line 1** in model profile
- What role do state agencies play in supporting collaboration and integrated services?
 - Expanding on **line 6** in model profile
 - Has that role change as a result of COVID-19?
- How do federal, state and/or local policies affect your ability to provide coordinated services to families, including things like combining funding streams, building and maintaining partnerships, or other aspects of coordination? [PROBE: For example, there can be different eligibility criteria for service funding streams?]
 - Expanding on **lines 6, 15, 16, and 23** in model profile
 - Are there any federal, state and/or local policies that have affected your ability to provide coordinated services to families during COVID-19?

- **[Interviewer Note:** Prepare this question by referring to **line 7** of model profile]. We understand the [local approach] has changed in [FILL IN X, Y, Z] ways over time. Were any of these changes to [local approach] a result of new or different partnerships or partner organizations?
 - Expanding on **line 7** in model profile
 - Have you made additional changes as a result of COVID-19?
- Have you encountered any challenges in developing the coordinated services approach? How have you worked to overcome these challenges?
 - Have you encountered any challenges directly related to COVID-19?
- Is input from families used to design, refine or govern [local approach]? If so, please describe. *Is your coordinated services approach a product of human-centered design, or design thinking? Human-centered design is a framework that develops solutions to problems by involving the perspective of the user [families] in all steps of the problem-solving/design process.*

B. Partners in Coordination

A component of providing coordinated services to children and families includes building partnerships. Next, we'd like to discuss how you engage with partners to coordinate services for children and families.

- **[Interviewer Note:** Prepare this question by referring to **lines 14 and 15** in the model profile.] We understand that the lead agency or coordinating body is [FILL IN FROM LINE 14] and that some important partners are [FILL IN FROM LINE 15]. How were partners identified and how did the partnerships develop?
 - Expanding on **lines 14 and 15** in model profile
 - Have you formed any new partnerships as a result of COVID-19?
- Are partnerships formalized in some way, such as through a formal governance structure or MOU? If so, what is included in the [agreement/MOU]? [PROBE: Does it include blending of funds?]
 - Expanding on **lines 14 - 16** in model profile
- How do the [local approach] partners communicate?
 - Expanding on **lines 14 - 16** in model profile
 - Has your communication changed as a result of COVID-19?
- What are the roles of the partners that are involved with [local approach]?
 - Expanding on **lines 14 - 16** in model profile
 - Have the roles of any partners changed as a result of COVID-19?
- Who is involved in decision-making? [If a group/multiple organizations] Does this group meet regularly? What are they responsible for? How are decisions made? How are disagreements resolved?
 - Expanding on **lines 14 - 16** in model profile
 - Have there been changes to the way you make decisions as a result of COVID-19?
- How did you build and maintain buy-in among partners?
 - Expanding on **line 16** in model profile
- Are there entities you are not partnering with but that you wish you could involve (or that you plan to involve in the future)?

- Expanding on **line 15** in model profile
 - Were any of these partners identified as a result of your experience with COVID-19?
- What do you see as the benefits of partnering with organizations to deliver coordinated services?
 - Expanding on **line 15 and 16** in model profile
 - Have you noticed any unique benefits of partnering during COVID-19?
- [If not addressed in section A]: What barriers or challenges have you encountered through building partnerships and implementing coordinated service delivery? How have you addressed these challenges?
 - Expanding on **line 16** in model profile
- Does the [local approach] receive any funding specifically aimed at helping to support the coordination of services or to help you collaborate with partners?
 - Expanding on **lines 9 - 16** in model profile

C. Services

We'd like to learn more about how services are coordinated and your role in coordinating services for children and families

- What types of outreach does [local approach] and partners conduct to identify eligible families?
 - Expanding on **line 17 and 22** in model profile
 - Have you changed your outreach approach as a result of COVID-19?
- Has [local approach] resulted in any changes in the availability of high quality early care and education services for families? If yes, was this an explicit goal of [local approach]?
 - Expanding on **line 18** in model profile
- Can you describe how a typical family uses your services and moves through [local approach]?
 - Expanding on **line 21** in model profile
 - Has that changed as a result of COVID-19?
- Are there different eligibility criteria for different services? If yes, have there been any attempts to streamline eligibility across services?
 - Expanding on **line 22 and 23** in model profile
 - Have any eligibility rules changed as a result of COVID-19?
- Are there federal or state barriers for eligibility and enrollment? Has [local approach] worked to change eligibility criteria for families?
 - Expanding on **line 23** in model profile
- How do [local approach] staff work with families to address multiple needs for both children and adults?
 - Expanding on **line 21** in model profile
 - Has that changed as a result of COVID-19?
- Once a family is enrolled, how long are they eligible to receive services? How is that determined? [PROVE: Is it determined by duration? Progress?]
 - Expanding on **line 21** in model profile

- o Has that changed as a result of COVID-19?
- What is the protocol for transitioning families out of [local approach] [PROBE: For example, graduated phase-out]
 - o Expanding on **line 21** in model profile
 - o Has that changed as a result of COVID-19?
- Has the capacity of any partners or services changed over time? How and why has it changed?
 - o Expanding on **line 9** in model profile
 - o Has that changed as a result of COVID-19?

D. Data Systems and Use

We're also interested in learning about how coordination approaches measure progress for children and families. We'd like to talk about your data system and how you use that data.

- **[Interviewer Note:** Prepare this question by referring to line 26 in the model profile.] We understand that you collect **[FILL IN FROM LINE 26]** data. Do you collect any other data? How do you store and organize these data?
 - o Expanding on **line 26** in model profile
 - o Have you collected any additional data as a result of COVID-19?
- Who uses the data?
 - o Expanding on **line 28** in model profile
 - How do you use data to inform service delivery? To monitor service receipt? To assess the quality of services? To measure progress toward outcomes and goals for families?
 - Has that changed as a result of COVID-19?
- How do you facilitate data sharing among partners? Are there differences in the types of data collected by partners? Do you have any data sharing agreements with partners?
 - o Expanding on **line 27** in model profile
- Have there been challenges in sharing data across partners (e.g. security concerns, systems not talking to each other)?
 - o Expanding on **line 29** in model profile
- Does the [local approach] receive any funding specifically aimed at supporting data collection or data sharing?
 - o Expanding on **line 29 and lines 9 - 13** in model profile

E. Size

- Has the number and/or make up of types of children and families [local approach] serves changed over time? If so, how and why has this changed?
 - o Expanding on **line 9 and 17** in model profile
 - Has it changed due to resources or funding? Demand? Eligibility criteria?
 - Has this changed as a result of COVID-19?

F. Closing

Thank you for taking the time to share your work and experiences with us today. This discussion has been very helpful in learning more about [local approach]. Do you have any questions before we conclude?

We appreciate your time.