

**EHS-CC Partnerships:
How State Policies Can Support Partnerships
March 20, 2014**

Sharon Yandian: Welcome to the second in the series of webinars that have been organized to give background and context for all stakeholders who may be interested in applying for the upcoming Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership grants.

I'm Sharon Yandian, the Director of PMPA at the Office of Head Start, here with my colleague Ginny Gipp, the TA Division Director at the Office of Child Care, and others, and you'll hear from many in this broadcast.

Before I introduce Shannon [Rudisill], I wanted to talk briefly about the Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships. As you know, this is a new \$500 million competitive grant opportunity to support the partnerships between new and existing Early Head Start programs and child care providers. It's a very exciting time.

Let me pause for a moment just to make sure that all lines—you know that all lines are muted to avoid the distraction of background noise.

Also, if you have any questions, you can type them into your question box. Please note that we won't be addressing questions live on today's webinar, but we will pass them on to our policy team for review so that they know what questions are coming in from the field.

We'll be posting the audio and the transcript of the slides from this webinar on line within a week and will distribute the link to those, as well as other resources, widely.

Again, we at the Office of Child Care and Office of Head Start are excited about the President's initiative for expanding high-quality comprehensive early learning opportunities and services for young infants and toddlers and their families who live in poverty. It will allow us to reach more young children and their families in communities all around the country.

It also is giving us an amazing opportunity to collaborate more fully across our Federal Offices of Head Start and Child Care.

I'd like to introduce—Shannon's going to provide a little more context for today's webinar entitled "How State Policies Can Support Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships." Shannon?

Shannon Rudisill: Hi, everyone. This is Shannon, and I wanted to take just a minute to explain how this fits in, because it's slightly different than some of the other topics that we'll be covering on the webinar series.

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So we wanted to talk today about the effects that State policies have on the success of partnerships, and it sits in with work that we've been doing over a period of years here at the Administration for Children and Families and particularly in the Office of Child Care.

So think about how we make child care policies work better for children, for families, and for providers, and that means Federal policies, State policies—talking both about what goes on with our child care subsidy system as well as the quality investments that we make in licensing and QRIS and professional development.

We've been thinking about, at the child level, how we ensure that the children in child care have access to high-quality care that has continuity of relationships for them, which are so important, all throughout the lifespan, but especially in those earliest years.

And for families, we've been talking about how we make it more family-friendly, because we know that sometimes our policies, and not just our policies but also our procedures, make it tough for families to get child care and keep it and to get help paying for child care and keep that help.

So too often, we put barriers in the way in terms of paperwork that might be duplicative or the need to appear in offices during work hours, and families don't have any paid leave or time off. So we've been talking about how to make everything more family-friendly.

And finally, we've been talking about providers and how we create a stable adequate funding stream for providers, because we know that part of a barrier to quality is either inadequate funding or instability of the funding stream that providers have. And if you've been on any webinars with us before about this, you know that when we talk about that, a lot of times we're talking about subsidies, the child care subsidies, and how frequently they come and go from families.

So where we think about children, families, and providers in all of those areas, we think that there is room for improvement in terms of the way that our policies and procedures help us realize our vision for what we hope will happen.

So this Head Start – Child Care partnership opens up an exciting new opportunity to realize this vision at the provider level. So that's one of the things that's so exciting to us about why we want to bring it together.

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We feel like, through the partnership, there is room to do more high-quality continuous care; there is room to serve families better and to create more stable financing for providers.

So on all three fronts, this is a real opportunity, and we feel like it's going to further this goal that we've been working on for several years.

As we've gone around talking to a whole lot of stakeholders, I'm losing count, but I've talked to Head Start providers, I've talked to child care providers, I've talked to large and small providers, folks who are in the labor movement, State associations for Head Start and child care. One thing that has come up over and over again is how policies and procedures, even though it happened in the State or local government, affect their ability to successfully put these funding streams together.

And since this whole partnership is about how we put these things together, it seemed appropriate to have one of these webinars be about policy. So if you didn't understand why are we doing the webinar about policy, hopefully that will help you understand.

We also learned this when we had our Early Head Start for Family Child Care Project, which I know you all have heard about through various webinars and our Web sites in the past.

That was a project where we put consultants in Early Head Start programs to work with surrounding family child care, and change really happened at the provider level. But some of the most savvy partnerships also carved out a role for a liaison or an expert to think through how policies affected what was going on in the classroom and to really have a strong relationship with the policymakers at the State and local levels. That we're making policies that have honestly affected how well the partnership was working.

So our goal today is to raise awareness of the importance of policy in the success of the partnerships and ask you to think through how you might be able to join together across programs and policy to work on these issues.

And we're doing this in what I think is an interesting way. We're going to start off thinking really at the child and the classroom levels, because I think policy can be very abstract. So when we had our prep call, we're just starting right in some of the things we value most about Early Head Start, for example, assignment of a primary caregiver, which is a feature of Early Head Start that we really value in terms of the relationship.

So you're going to hear from two TA providers that we have at the Office of Child Care. You're going to hear from our quality center, and you're going to hear from our subsidy and accountability center.

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And we're going to start at the child level thinking about licensing policies, QRIS policies, primary caregivers, group size ratio, and teachers. And then we're going to slowly kind of go out in a concentric circle to think about families and think about how the subsidy policies affect a family's ability to get and keep a subsidy.

And then, we're going to think about payment practices and going out one more concentric circle to the provider and how payment practices affect the provider's ability to do a good job and that there are payment practices and policies that States can adopt to make that easier.

So hopefully, as we go through today with our experts that we're really happy to have on from our TA network, you'll be able to sort of follow that thread and see how the policies and practices we have affect kids, affect their families, and affect providers.

And we really are not taking questions on these webinars. It would be a little overwhelming because we're doing so many of them. But this is something that we have an open line of communication with you about overall. We're always out talking and listening about this. So I hope you won't hesitate to contact the Office of Child Care and Office of Head Start and let us know what more you need to work on this topic.

So I will say we have three experts joining us today, Nancy vonBargen, the Project Director from our National Center on Child Care Quality Improvement, who is a particular expert in the area of licensing and quality rating and improvement systems and program standards; Carol Pearson, the Director of our National Center on Child Care Subsidy and Accountability; and Sue Wilson, who is a Senior TA Research Associate at that same center.

And they've been out in a lot of States with us over the years doing self-assessments of policies, trying to think through a way if we can align things better for families and providers and for kids.

So first, we'll hear from Nancy. Nancy?

Nancy vonBargen: Thank you, Shannon, and I'm happy to share your talk on continuity of care.

So as Shannon said, years of research have shown that infants and toddlers need secure relationships during this period of rapid development, and they need relationships that are nurturing, responsive, and predictable. So continuity of care can be accomplished in several ways.

And could we go back one slide? There. Thank you.

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So it can be accomplished with a primary caregiver responsible for establishing a relationship with each child and his or her family, and when possible, the primary caregiver stays with that child from birth to 3 years.

So this not only allows teachers to know individual children's needs and backgrounds, but they're also able to develop long-term relationships with the family.

So States, Territories, and Tribes have many policy and funding and regulatory strategies that they can use to promote continuity of care. Regulatory approaches can be the most effective because they're mandatory for all early education programs, unless exempt by State law, and they impact the largest number of providers and children.

So the primary function of child care licensing is to protect children from harm, but we know that many States are also focusing on overall child well-being and children's readiness for school.

And in the last few years, more than half the States have made changes to their licensing regulations for child care centers, giving States a wonderful opportunity to incorporate the latest information on infant-toddler care, from safe-sleep practices to language development and continuity of care.

Some States may also want to determine if their requirements pose barriers to continuity of care in how they define mixed-age groups.

As you are aware, there have been many successful quality improvement efforts to support providers in improving the quality of care. Initiatives like strengthening families, early learning guidelines for infants and toddlers, the classroom assessment scoring system or CLASS, and there's been great progress in using QRIS, quality rating and improvement systems, as a framework for those efforts.

A QRIS builds on the requirements found in licensing. It defines higher levels of quality and helps parents understand the elements of quality as well as evaluate the care their child is receiving.

Then, with a comprehensive professional development system, continuity of care can be addressed in multiple ways.

For example, primary caregiving skills can be included in a State's core knowledge and competencies. The National Center for Child Care Professional Development Systems and Workforce Initiatives analyzed State core knowledge and competency documents in March 2012, and they found 14 States that mentioned continuity of care. And of those 14, 6 States

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specifically referenced continuity of care for infants and toddlers in their CKCs.

Professional development systems also can teach providers how to promote continuity of care, such as strategies for managing multiage groups.

Course work specific to caring for infants and toddlers needs to be included in college early childhood teacher prep programs, and credentials have been established to provide specific knowledge and skills related to caring for infants and toddlers.

And at the bottom of this slide, you'll see a link to an excellent resource. It's the infant-toddler continuity of care assessment tool, and it can help you examine current practices to support strong attachments among families, staff, and children.

The Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships project provides such an exciting opportunity for us to improve both the alignment of standards across programs but also to raise the bar on quality for all programs. And while there are obviously challenges to alignment, there are many benefits. Just using consistent language would be a big step forward for the early care and education profession.

So benefits could include consistent practices and outcomes across programs for children and families during different periods of their lives. So a family using an Early Head Start center for the 1st years of their child's life can expect similar quality from a four-star licensed center when their child is a preschooler.

We frequently talk about shared training and professional development opportunities across sectors, but having common qualifications across programs that build on consistent core knowledge and competencies will make this much more feasible.

Findings from monitoring visits that are based on similar or aligned requirements will be more meaningful when they can be shared across sectors, and that could improve efficiency and potentially reduce duplicative monitoring visits to high-quality programs.

And maybe most importantly, as providers are able to see one clear path to meeting requirements and there are clear expectations regarding their education and training, it's likely that the number of providers who choose to participate in these quality initiatives will increase.

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So comparing and then understanding the standards across systems is really important to help us move toward a more seamless system that supports families.

In looking across all categories of standards, we have found it helpful to look at comparisons of State and Early Head Start standards in three categories, and by comparable, we mean that the categories are covered, although specific requirements may be different. And of course, that's going to vary very much from State to State.

So first, there are licensing requirements that are comparable to Early Head Start performance standards. In areas such as ratios, which we'll look at more closely; health and safety; nutrition; physical facilities; and transportation, these are standards that most licensed child care providers are already meeting.

Secondly, there are QRIS standards that are comparable to, or may even exceed, Early Head Start performance standards. Some of those areas may be in child assessment, family engagement, and staff qualifications. So States may find that child care providers at higher QRIS levels may already be meeting many of these Early Head Start performance standards.

Lastly, there will be some Early Head Start performance standards that are not included in most State licensing or QRIS standards. In caring for children with disabilities, licensing may address some basic safeguards, but because Head Start requires that programs serve children with disabilities, they are much more specific. Head Start has a much greater focus on comprehensive services that are not often addressed in State licensing requirements.

However, several States are including family support criteria in their QRIS standards that require providers to develop and implement a written plan for referring families to appropriate community services.

In the area of transitions, Head Start has seven different performance standards on supporting children's transition between programs, but State licensing requirements generally do not address this.

We did find 15 States that have QRIS standards that address transitions, so that's really encouraging. However, these may be the areas that even a high-quality child care provider would need additional resources to meet Early Head Start performance standards.

Today, we're going to use that framework to look at how States are addressing several Early Head Start performance standards that impact continuity of care for children.

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The most common one that Shannon mentioned is around the consistent or primary caregiver for infants and toddlers. But the quality of care that babies receive is also significantly impacted by the qualifications of the teachers in the classroom as well as by how much attention each baby receives.

The responsiveness of teachers, how much a baby is held, comforted, and talked to, is very much a function of staff-child ratios and group size. This is especially true within infants and toddlers, whose physical needs can be demanding.

So here you have another resource that I hope you'll refer to, promoting continuity of care in infant-toddler settings. What can State and Territory leaders do. And this resource provides more examples of strategies to address these approaches.

So first, we'll look at the issue of primary caregiving where a single caregiver has the primary responsibility for establishing and maintaining a relationship with the child in his or her family.

The primary caregiver also works to promote continuous caring relationships for the child through the coordination of care, services, and staffing so that when she is not present, the child is still cared for within a system of trusted, familiar adults.

The Head Start performance standard is to encourage the development of secure relationships in out-of-home care settings for infants and toddlers by having a limited number of consistent teachers over an extended period of time.

And we found 23 States with licensing requirements that require that centers assign a primary consistent caregiver to each child under age 3.

So here you can see that many States already address this standard, and hopefully, many more will as they update their licensing requirements.

The success of continuity of care hinges in part on the capacities of the individual infant-toddler staff to meet the needs of children and to positively engage and support their families.

So State, Territory, and Tribal leaders have the opportunity to strengthen those capacities through professional development and workforce initiatives.

The Head Start Act requires a minimum of a CDA credential and training in early childhood development, with a focus on infants and toddlers.

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We found 17 States' licensing standards that include specific qualifications for infant-toddler staff in centers. About half of those States require a State or national credential or college course work related to infant-toddler care. Unfortunately, the remaining States only require experience or clock hours of training.

In looking at QRIS standards, nine States' QRIS standards include specific qualifications or training for infant-toddler staff in centers.

The National Center on Child Care Professional Development Systems and Workforce Initiatives found that of the States that specify qualifications, either in licensing or in QRIS standards, 16 have State-specific infant-toddler credentials or certificates.

So this is an area where many State program standards could be improved and increased resources, such as scholarships, made available.

It's going to be important for you to look at your State standards to see how they compare, and it would also be helpful to determine if your State's infant-toddler course work and training address continuity-of-care concepts for both caregivers and for program directors so that the workforce has a shared understanding of the importance of implementing and supporting these strategies.

Moving to the issue of ratios, you can see from this chart that the Early Head Start performance standard is a ratio of one teacher for four infants and toddlers. That's on the far right.

A majority of States require that same ratio for infants. You can see that 33 States require a 4:1 ratio for 6-week-olds, and 32 States require a 4:1 ratio for 9-month-olds.

And then, positively, in both of those age groups, there are also three States that exceed that standard with a 3:1 ratio.

However, far fewer States require that ratio for toddlers and 2-year-olds. The most common ratio for an 18-month-old is 6:1 and for a 27-month-old 8:1.

In a further analysis, we found only five States with licensing requirements that meet the Early Head Start ratios across the entire 0–3 age group. But of the 15 States whose licensing requirements do not match the ratios for any age group, 8 of those States include improved ratios in their QRIS.

So you may want to check both the licensing and the QRIS standards for your State to see if they come close to the Early Head Start standard.

In looking at group size, this chart shows a comparison of State Early Head Start standards on group size for child care centers. So the Early Head Start performance standard calls for a maximum group size of eight, and there are 20 States that meet that standard for infants, plus the one State that exceeds it with a group size of 6. But for toddlers, the most common group size is 12.

And then, moving to family child care ratios, this will be the last area that we'll cover. The Head Start performance standard says that when there is one family child care provider, the maximum group size is six children, and no more than two of the six may be under 2 years of age.

So while many States allow more than six children, nearly all States that license family child care homes set limits on the number of infants and toddlers allowed in the group. And a common limit that is consistent with the Head Start standard is that there can be no more than two children under age 2 with one provider.

Because States vary so greatly in how they address ratios and group size in family child care, we have provided a link to a document that does give you a State-by-State summary for your convenience.

So in closing, I would say that primary caregiving models, minimizing transitions for children, teachers with a strong understanding of infant-toddler care, and low staff-child ratios and group size are all important, not only for children and their families but also because they support greater job satisfaction and retention of the infant-toddler workforce.

The Quality Improvement Center is available to assist States in their efforts to analyze and improve their State program standards, and we look forward to learning from you, from the States, and from your partners on how to best improve quality through standards.

Now, we're going to take a look at how State subsidy policies can also have an impact on continuity of care. So I'll turn it over to Carol Pearson and Sue Wilson with the Subsidy Center.

Carol Pearson: Thank you, Nancy. So in this next section, we're going to continue our discussion of the ways that CCDF policies can support partnerships, and we'll discuss how States can align Early Head Start and CCDF policies to encourage that stability and continuity of care. They can streamline administrative procedures and identify opportunities to support the partnerships and providers.

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Now, in this presentation, we may be referring to States very frequently, and Nancy did a really good job of always including Territories and Tribes when she was speaking just now. So we may slip into shorthand and say States occasionally, but we are always including Territories and Tribes in all our policy discussions here today.

And the way we thought we would organize the presentation about subsidy policies is to identify the top 10 ways that CCDF can support these Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships.

So we're kind of going to do a reverse David Letterman. You all are familiar with the David Letterman Show—the Top 10 reasons. Well, rather than saving the best for last, all these top 10 policies are very important, so we are going to review them and anchor them to a 10-point presentation just to help you remember some of the key points.

And I just want to mention that we have developed a two-page handout that will be placed amongst the resources that will go up on the Web site within a week. So you don't have to take meticulous notes on this, but we'll have a handout for you a week from now.

So I'm going to turn it over to Sue Wilson to talk about these top 10 subsidy policies.

Sue Wilson:

Thanks, Carol. Hello, everyone. As Carol has said, we selected what we think are the policies and practices in the Subsidy Program that most affect the success of the Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships, and we'll give you some strategies for working with the CCDF agencies in designing your proposals. You'll see that they have some real flexibility in how they operate the subsidy programs.

So let's look at policy number one in our count-up list. That is to establish eligibility. So this is the really big one, so we'll start there.

States can align their subsidy policies to make most Early Head Start families eligible for child care. That's the good news. Eligibility for CCDF is based mainly on family income and requirements to be working or in school. There are Federal rules and then there are States—then the States have options for further policymaking.

In regard to income, the income requirement, both Early Head Start and CCDF serve families below the Federal poverty level. So there's a significant overlap in the target families for both programs.

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CCDF can also serve a broader income range. In fact, they can go up to 85 percent of State median income. That's about 200 percent or 300 percent of the poverty level, depending upon the State.

But if a family comes in for CCDF eligibility with an infant or toddler and they're living below the poverty level, they can competently be referred to an Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership. The subsidy program can also refer families off of their waiting list, if they have one, to an Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership by using this simple income screen that we'll show that they are probably going to be eligible.

As to the activities requirements, States have to define employment, education, and training activities, but they have a lot of flexibility, again, in doing that. States can allow a broad range of these activities, such as high school completion or skills training or on-the-job training, in addition to employment.

Each State sets those rules, so you should be working together to see if the policies can allow families to be eligible for both Early Head Start and subsidy.

I want you to take note that States do not have to limit the authorized hours of care to a parent's work schedule, and they can actually authorize care through Early Head Start even if a parent works the night shift or part-time during the day or a flexible schedule. And that's, of course, a common situation among the families.

Let's go to number two. Policy number two—serve vulnerable populations. We want to serve vulnerable populations and vulnerable families. So States can offer special eligibility considerations for populations, such as homeless and migrant families.

They're allowed to define families that fall under a heading of protective services, and they have leeway to include not only children in the child welfare system, which you would expect, but for the purposes of CCDF eligibility, these other vulnerable populations, like homeless and migrant families, can be included as well.

To make this work, CCDF also allows States to be able to waive the work, training, and education requirements that we just talked about and, in some cases, even the income requirement for these families.

The effect of using this policy option is that they're able to include some other families as eligible for child care subsidies. This is a way of drawing that circle of eligibility a little bigger.

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Then, you're looking at number three. Our policy number three is to allow job search. Allowing job search is one of those approved activities, a policy that certainly supports continuity of care.

States can allow a parent to continue eligibility and subsidy payments after a job loss. It's often called gap eligibility, because we're filling the gap, and that's in our subsidy speech.

OCC promotes this policy, and it actually encourages States to adopt a period of job search that's responsive to the needs of the family. More States are taking up this option.

So think about it. When families are able to retain their eligibility during a period of searching for a job, they can take considerable stress off the family. They can help them in getting back into the workforce, and it certainly supports the children's development. So it's a win-win-win.

Imagine how it would help to have your child stay with that trusted high-quality provider at that time in your family's life.

Lead agencies can specify the length of time that a family is allowed to receive child care during this period. I can't stress enough that these are very relevant policies to consider, with implications for the family, the child, and the provider, and now for these partnerships.

Number four, refer dually eligible families. What we mean by that is families eligible for both child care and under the Early Head Start rules as well. Through the CCDF eligibility process, States can refer dually eligible families to Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships. These processes will vary in every State and community.

In some cases, parents may come through the subsidy agency door, in which case the agency can expand outreach to families in multiple ways and also the application process.

States are taking steps to make the eligibility process more family-friendly. They're doing things like extending office hours, setting up call centers, and allowing applications to be submitted in a variety of methods; some by mail, on line, phone, in person, or all of the above.

States can also customize a way of identifying families in completing the applications for this partnership initiative, especially using some community partners. They have a lot of flexibility in how they do this.

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Having a parent liaison designated by the State agency can also help families and the partnerships. It's a great practice because it helps parents navigate the sometimes daunting subsidy system successfully.

Our policy five is to align the length of eligibility. Once a family is enrolled in the subsidy program and in the Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships, then we certainly want to keep them in the program. So the most direct way of ensuring continuous subsidy eligibility is for a State to establish a policy that as long as the child is enrolled in Early Head Start, they can be considered eligible for a CCDF subsidy. A few States are doing this.

Another approach is a broader subsidy policy. Under that, many State subsidy programs are moving to a 12-month eligibility for most of their families. This would help keep families in the Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships also eligible for a year.

Taking this tact of 12-month eligibility, States can further allow for continuity by aligning a begin-and-end date of the eligibility period with the Early Head Start enrollment date. For example, if the normal enrollment in Early Head Start is September, the State could set their eligibility period for a family to start in September and end in August and be within that 12-month period.

And in August, they would probably have to take another look at the family, but at least they would have a full year.

Finally, lead agencies can use their requirements for families to report changes in circumstances if they have such policies.

As Shannon said earlier, a lot of times, it's the procedures, not just the policies, that make the difference. And so, this is a good example.

Clearly, the most supported policy in this list for Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships is the first one, of establishing eligibility while the family is enrolled in Early Head Start.

Okay. We're halfway through our list.

Number six, waiving parent fees. Of course, eligible families pay no fees to purchase space in Early Head Start. However, CCDF-eligible families generally do pay fees to the provider based on a sliding scale under the subsidy programs.

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But State lead agencies may eliminate or waive this requirement for all families whose incomes are at or below the poverty level or for a specific subpopulation living below poverty.

Using that policy option will align the two programs pretty well, and the subsidy program will pay the full rate to the provider without a family copay.

Number seven policy—establish contracts. Contracting between the State lead agency and the Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership can be a really powerful tool. It allows access to CCDF funding, it can align policies, and it can streamline administration.

States can even use contracts to actually delegate eligibility determination to the partnership contractor.

Using contracting for direct early care and education services, the State will also be able to make it easier to implement alignment of CCDF eligibility policies to match the Early Head Start policy. They can negotiate reimbursement rates and payment rules when those are significant.

Contracts, of course, normally include a scope of services and responsibility, so the parties can specify and formalize those procedures for good setup.

Currently, approximately 17 States have grants and contracts, but many of them are extremely limited in the number of providers and slots that are covered by them. The rest use exclusively certificates or vouchers.

So there's a lot of room for growth in this area, and we think that probably the partnerships are going to push this practice further.

Number eight seeks to pay provider rates that support quality. You know that eligible CCDF children receive vouchers or certificates that authorize certain rates to be paid to their selected providers for a designated period of time.

Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships will want to leverage the revenue that they can get from the subsidy program. So let me explain how subsidy rates work a little bit.

States set their provider payment rates by type of provider, like centers or family child care homes, and by the age of the child, so the different—you can imagine a table of those rates. So there'll be base rates for infants and toddlers for the type of provider that you're talking about.

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OCC encourages States to establish their base rates to be—to adequately support providers at some level of quality. A good number of States do offer higher rates to higher quality child care providers. These are often called tiered reimbursement.

Early Head Start providers are high quality, so some States pay higher rates to these quality providers in order to accept more CCDF kids and to sustain those providers.

The last practice on this slide harkens back to our discussion on contracting a moment ago. If a State contracts with the partnerships or providers, they can actually negotiate the rates. They can allow them to pay at a different rate to Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships and to other subsidy providers.

Number nine is supporting providers with payment policies. Almost as important as the rates that are paid by the subsidy program is that States can be very intentional in designing sustainable payment practices.

For example, States can design attendance policies to work effectively with their Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships. And just as important, the child care providers, there's a principal of being fair to providers, but no exact rule on how they fashion those attendance policies. One way is for a State to align their rules with Early Head Start that requires an average daily attendance of 85 percent for center-based programs.

OCC encourages States to be reasonable and fair in setting those policies. Subsidy programs should also make sure to have timely payment policies and practices. Such a practice will surely encourage child care providers to participate in the subsidy program and in the proposed partnerships. We would also urge States to help providers by identifying a provider liaison at the Subsidy Administration.

So we're saving the money discussion for last. Policy number 10 is about layering funding. Inherent in designing the financing of partnerships is the concept of layering funding. It's often called blending or braiding; we keep changing the word. But partnerships will want to budget subsidy payments layered with Early Head Start funds and with partnership funds and others.

The guidance on this is that States can layer Early Head Start and CCDF subsidy funds for the same child as long as there is no duplication and payments for the same exact service.

In implementing their policies, States should avoid designating a Head Start part of the day versus a child care part of the day and only paying for the wraparound hours. In other words, they can consider the entire program day

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as child care. Early Head Start funds can pay for comprehensive services and provider support and to enhance the program.

This is an option that some States, communities, and programs are already implementing. The Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships offer an opportunity for using this funding strategy, and we encourage you to explore it further.

Well, we have roller-skated through a lot of policies. I hope you are able to pick up some good ideas to pursue in your State. It's been my pleasure, and I'm going to turn the microphone back over to Ginny Gipp at OCC.

Ginny Gipp:

Okay. Thank you, Sue; all very good information both from the Quality Improvement Center and from our Subsidy and Accountability Center.

So now, I have the very exciting job of talking to you about where to go for more resources and a few final details.

As you can see in this slide, we have our child care TA Web site, and that is where you can go to find more resources. For example, there were a few documents that were mentioned specifically embedded on some of these slides. You can find those as you go to this Web site, and we'll leave this Web site (<https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov>) up for a minute so that you all can write it down.

This site will also have a transcript and recording of this webinar and the PowerPoint. Sharon talked about that when she opened up the webinar. Don't go looking for them tomorrow because you won't find them because we have to make sure they're 508-compliant and so forth. So within the next week, you should be able to find them there.

And we have more research listed here. These, we really wanted to provide because these are Federal resources that have been developed over the last few years, and we wanted to make sure that the early childhood stakeholder community, not just State child care programs, were aware of these documents.

As I said, they are policy guidance, and they are in the form of either policy interpretation questions, which is the one at the bottom, the Head Start – Child Care Eligibility PIQ, or policy interpretation question, or an information memorandum, which is the first one mentioned, the Policies and Practices That Promote Continuity of Child Care Services and Enhance Subsidy Systems.

So for any of you who want to go deeper in learning more about child care and how some of these policies work, please go to those. You will be able to

EHS-CC Partnerships: How State Policies Can Support Partnerships

find those on the Web site that you just had the link for, and you should be able to find those very soon.

For more information on the Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships, visit <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ecc/early-head-start-child-care-partnerships>.

- Other Policy Guidance: Policies and Practices That Promote Continuity of Child Care Services and Enhance Subsidy Systems: (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/resource/im2011-06>)
- Head Start/Child Care Eligibility PIQ: (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/resource/piq-cc-99-02>)

Next, this is really important. We just want to make sure everyone is aware of the steps and how to apply. And in this webinar series, and this is the second webinar, we will be holding webinars through March 31st, and you are getting announcements about all of those, we want to make sure that it's very clear that only the applicant organization needs to register with grants.gov.

So if you are a partnering organization but you are not going to be applicant, you need not apply. Only the applicant organization needs to apply.

So all the information you'll need will be at grants.gov, but [inaudible] obtain things that you hear every now and then, what we do here federally. We have the DUNS number, which is the Data Universal Numbering System. That's where you can find out information about how to get that number, and that's where you register in the system for award management, the SAM, for eligibility requirements. And then there is a register-and-get-ready document that will help you and give you some more information about how to go about applying: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/register-and-get-ready>.

We are not having a question-and-answer component to these calls, so this e-mail, which hopefully you'll write down, if you have any questions you want answered, this is an important e-mail for you. This is where you would send any followup questions: ehs.ccpartnerships@acf.hhs.gov.

And then, finally, we want you to stay tuned because the next webinar we're holding is on Comprehensive Services, Part One, Curriculum and Assessments, and it will be held this coming Monday, March 24, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. eastern daylight time.

So with that, we want to thank you all so much for being on this call, and we hope you will join us next Monday afternoon from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. eastern daylight time. Have a good day. Bye-bye.