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Organizational Change Process

DIVISION OF MILWAUKEE CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

The Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS) of the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) has approximately 185 State employees, responsible for the delivery of child protective services and ongoing case management services through contract agencies in Milwaukee County. DMCPS performs intake and investigative functions, while ongoing casework is managed by partner agencies in the community.

The majority of DMCPS staff work in the Access Section (hotline) and the Initial Assessment Bureau (IAB). Within the IAB was a constellation of Initial Assessment Specialists (IAS), mentors, supervisors, and program directors, who are led by the Bureau Director. While the number of Access and IAB positions fluctuated, in 2018 there were a total of 91 first and second shift IASs and 20 Access workers who were centrally located within one building in the heart of the urban community they serve. While DMCPS has internal hiring, training, and data personnel who perform human resources functions, human resources (HR) was housed in the state office external to DMCPS.

DMCPS was unable to require a specific college degree due to state policy for the IAS, thus the following options meet the minimum qualifications for that position: 1) a four-year degree in social work/related human services field, 2) 60 college credits in human services related courses plus two years human service work experience, or 3) a combination of education and work experience totaling at least four years. In past years they also required a social work certification, but this requirement was eliminated because there were not enough

applicants to fill the large number of vacancies. DMCPS workers are not union represented, although a chapter of AFL-CIO is available if they choose to become a member.

QIC-WD Project Overview

DMCPS implemented ARC (Availability, Responsiveness, Continuity), an intervention designed to improve its organizational culture and climate (OCC). [A mixed-methods study](#) was implemented to examine the impacts of ARC on the OCC. Staff who were in the Access and IAB sections, with support of the continuous quality improvement unit and a leadership team, participated in the implementation and evaluation of ARC.

Turnover

In 2016, the overall turnover rate for IAS only, including both external turnover and internal movement, was just under 49% (N=39), with a little over 11% due to internal movement and 37% due external turnover. In 2017, the annual rate dropped to just under 42% (N=34), with approximately 7% due to internal movement, and 36% due to external movement. Data from DMCPS further indicated that the majority of staff left within the first 2 years, with an average tenure of about 1.6 years for voluntary leavers and about 1 year for involuntary leavers. Anecdotally, members of the project's implementation team indicated that retention seemed to stabilize when tenure hits the 3- to 4-year mark. There is a trend for IAS workers to transfer to Access when positions become available.