

South Carolina Department of Social Services
Child Welfare Quality Assurance Review: Florence County
Summary Report

This summary report describes the results of the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) Florence County Quality Assurance Review, conducted May 5-9, 2014. The period under review was November 1, 2013 to April 30, 2014.

DSS Child Welfare Quality Assurance Reviews are conducted using the *Onsite Review Instrument* (OSRI) finalized by the federal Administration for Children & Families (ACF) in July 2008. This instrument is used to review foster care and family preservation services cases. Twenty cases were reviewed including 10 foster care and 10 family preservation cases.

The OSRI is divided into three sections: safety, permanency, and child and family well-being. There are two safety outcomes, two permanency outcomes, and three well-being outcomes. Reviewers collect information on a number of *items* related to each of the outcomes. The ratings for each *item* are combined to determine the rating for the outcome. Outcomes are rated as being substantially achieved, partially achieved, not achieved, or not applicable. The *items* are rated as *strength*, *area needing improvement*, or not applicable. Ratings for each of the outcomes are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Child Welfare QA Onsite Reviews – Ratings by Outcome

Outcome	Substantially Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
Safety 1 CHILDREN ARE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, PROTECTED FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT	67% (2)	0% (0)	33% (1)
Safety 2 CHILDREN ARE SAFELY MAINTAINED IN THEIR HOMES WHENEVER POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE	55% (11)	15% (3)	30% (6)
Permanency 1 CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENCY AND STABILITY IN THEIR LIVING SITUATIONS	20% (2)	80% (8)	0% (0)
Permanency 2 THE CONTINUITY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS IS PRESERVED FOR CHILDREN	30% (3)	50% (5)	20% (2)
Well-Being 1 FAMILIES HAVE ENHANCED CAPACITY TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN'S NEEDS	45% (9)	35% (7)	20% (4)
Well-Being 2 CHILDREN RECEIVE APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR EDUCATIONAL NEEDS	89% (8)	0% (0)	11% (1)
Well-Being 3 CHILDREN RECEIVE ADEQUATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS	41% (7)	18% (3)	41% (7)

Results for outcomes and *items* are reported by the number of cases and the percentage of total cases given each rating. In addition, the percentage of *strengths* is calculated for each *item*. This percentage is calculated by adding the number of *strengths* and the number of *areas needing improvement*. The number of *strengths* is divided into this total to determine the *percentage of strengths*.

SECTION I: REVIEW FINDINGS

SAFETY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN ARE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, PROTECTED FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Two *items* are included under Safety Outcome 1. Ratings for the two *items* are shown in Table 2.

Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether responses to all accepted child maltreatment reports received during the period under review were initiated and face-to-face contact with the child made, within the timeframes established by agency policies or State statute.

Table 2.

Rating	Item 1	Item 2
<i>Strength</i>	10% (2)	10% (2)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	5% (1)	5% (1)
<i>Not Applicable</i>	85% (17)	85% (17)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)
<i>% Strengths</i>	66.7% (2)	66.7% (2)

Item 2: Repeat maltreatment

Purpose of Assessment: To determine if any child in the family experienced repeat maltreatment within a 6-month period.

SAFETY OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN ARE SAFELY MAINTAINED IN THEIR HOMES WHENEVER POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE

Two *items* are included under Safety Outcome 2. Ratings for the *items* are shown in Table 3.

Item 3: Services to family

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to provide services to the family to prevent children’s entry into foster care or re-entry after a reunification.

Table 3.

Rating	Item 3	Item 4
<i>Strength</i>	25% (5)	60% (12)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	30% (6)	40% (8)
<i>Not Applicable</i>	45% (9)	0% (0)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)
<i>% Strengths</i>	45.5% (5)	60% (12)

Item 4: Risk assessment and safety management

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess and address the risk and safety concerns relating to the child(ren) in their own homes or while in foster care.

PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENCY AND STABILITY IN THEIR LIVING SITUATIONS

Six *items* are included under Permanency Outcome 1. Ratings for the *items* are shown in Table 4.

Item 5: Foster Care reentries

Purpose of Assessment: To assess whether children who entered foster care during the period under review were re-entering within 12 months of a prior foster care episode.

Item 6: Stability of foster care placement

Purpose of Assessment: To determine if the child in foster care is in a stable placement at the time of the onsite review and that any changes in placement that occurred during the period under review were in the best interest of the child and consistent with achieving the child’s permanency goal(s).

Item 7: Permanency goal for child

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether appropriate permanency goals were established for the child in a timely manner.

Item 8: Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether concerted efforts were made, or are being made, during the period under review, to achieve reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives in a timely manner.

Item 9: Adoption

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made, or are being made, to achieve a finalized adoption in a timely manner.

Item 10: Other planned permanent living arrangement (APPLA)

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure:

- That the child is adequately prepared to make the transition from foster care to independent living (if it is expected that the child will remain in foster care until he or she reaches the age of majority or is emancipated).
- That the child, even though remaining in foster care, is in a “permanent” living arrangement with a foster parent or relative caregiver and that there is a commitment on the part of all parties involved that the child remain in that placement until he or she reaches the age of majority or is emancipated.
- That the child is in a long-term care facility and will remain in that facility until transition to an adult care facility.

Table 4.

Rating	Item 5	Item 6	Item 7	Item 8	Item 9	Item 10
Strength	0% (0)	25% (5)	50% (10)	5% (1)	10% (2)	5% (1)
Area needing improvement	0% (0)	25% (5)	0% (0)	0% (0)	20% (4)	15% (3)
Not Applicable	100% (20)	50% (10)	50% (10)	95% (19)	70% (14)	80% (16)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)
% Strengths	N/A	50% (5)	100% (10)	100% (1)	33.3% (2)	25% (1)

PERMANENCY OUTCOME 2: THE CONTINUITY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS IS PRESERVED FOR CHILDREN

Six items are included under Permanency Outcome 2. Ratings for the items are shown in Table 5.

Item 11: Proximity of Foster Care Placement

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that the child’s foster care placement was close enough to the parent(s) to facilitate face-to-face contact between the child and the parent(s) while the child was in foster care.

Item 12: Placement with siblings

Purpose of Assessment: To determine if, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that siblings in foster care are placed together unless a separation was necessary to meet the needs of one of the siblings.

Item 13: Visiting with parents & siblings in foster care

Purpose of Assessment: To determine if, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that visitation between a child in foster care and his or her mother, father, and siblings is of sufficient frequency and quality to promote continuity in the child’s relationship with these close family members.

Item 14: Preserving connections

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to maintain the child’s connections to his or her neighborhood, community, faith, extended family, tribe, school, and friends.

Item 15: Relative placement

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to place the child with relatives when appropriate.

Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to promote, support, and/or maintain positive relationships between the child in foster care and his or her mother and father or other primary caregiver(s) from whom the child had been removed through activities other than just arranging for visitation.

Table 5.

Rating	Item 11	Item 12	Item 13	Item 14	Item 15	Item 16
Strength	20% (4)	15% (3)	5% (1)	25% (5)	5% (1)	10% (2)
Area needing improvement	0% (0)	0% (0)	25% (5)	25% (5)	35% (7)	15% (3)
Not Applicable	80% (16)	85% (17)	70% (14)	50% (10)	60% (12)	75% (15)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)
% Strengths	100% (4)	100% (3)	16.7% (1)	50% (5)	12.5% (1)	40% (2)

WELL-BEING OUTCOME 1: FAMILIES HAVE ENHANCED CAPACITY TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN’S NEEDS

Four items are included under Well-Being Outcome 1. Ratings for the items are shown in Table 6.

Item 17: Needs and services of child, parents, & foster parents

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess the needs of children, parents, and foster parents (both at the child’s entry into foster care [if the child entered during the period under review] or on an ongoing basis) to identify the services necessary to achieve case goals and adequately address the issues relevant to the agency’s involvement with the family, and provided the appropriate services.

Item 18: Child & family involvement in case planning

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made (or are being made) to involve parents and children (if developmentally appropriate) in the case planning process on an ongoing basis.

Item 19: Caseworker visits with the child

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the child(ren) in the case are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child and promote achievement of case goals.

Item 20: Caseworker visits with parents

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the mothers and fathers of the children are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the children and promote achievement of case goals.

Table 6.

Rating	Item 17	Item 18	Item 19	Item 20
Strength	50% (10)	40% (8)	80% (16)	5% (1)
Area needing improvement	50% (10)	50% (10)	20% (4)	55% (11)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	10% (2)	0% (0)	40% (8)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)
% Strengths	50% (10)	44.4% (8)	80% (16)	8.3% (1)

WELL-BEING OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN RECEIVE APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

One item is included under Well-Being Outcome 2. Ratings for the item are shown in Table 7.

Item 21: Educational needs of child

Purpose of Assessment: To assess whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess children’s educational needs at the initial contact with the child (if the case was opened during the period under review) or on an ongoing basis (if the case was opened before the period under review), and whether identified needs were appropriately addressed in case planning and case management activities.

Table 7.

Rating	Item 21
Strength	40% (8)
Area needing improvement	5% (1)
Not Applicable	55% (11)
Total	100% (20)
% Strengths	88.9% (8)

WELL-BEING OUTCOME 3: CHILDREN RECEIVE ADEQUATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

Two items are included under Well-Being Outcome 3. Ratings for the items are shown in Table 8.

Item 22: Physical health of child

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency addressed the physical health needs of the child, including dental health needs.

Item 23: Mental/behavioral health of child

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency addressed the mental/behavioral health needs of the child(ren).

Table 8.

Rating	Item 22	Item 23
<i>Strength</i>	30% (6)	30% (6)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	45% (9)	15% (3)
Not Applicable	25% (5)	55% (11)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)
<i>% Strengths</i>	40% (6)	66.7% (6)

Table 9. Florence County *Percentage of Strengths* on 23 Quality Assurance Items Across Two Reviews

Item	November 2013 (PUR 11-1-2012 to 10-31-2013)	May 2014 (PUR 11-1-2013 to 4-30-2014)
1. Timeliness of Initiating Investigations	88.9%	66.7%
2. Reoccurrence of Maltreatment	88.9%	66.7%
3. Services to Family	46.7%	45.5%
4. Risk Assessment and Safety Management	50.0%	60.0%
5. Foster Care Re-Entries	100.0%	N/A
6. Stability of Foster Care Placement	70.0%	50.0%
7. Permanency Goal for Child	60.0%	100.0%
8. Reunification, Guardianship, or Perm. Placement with Relatives	85.7%	100.0%
9. Adoption	0.0%	33.3%
10. Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement	100.0%	25.0%
11. Proximity of Foster Care Placement	87.5%	100.0%
12. Placement with Siblings	85.7%	100.0%
13. Visiting with Parents and Siblings in Foster Care	11.1%	16.7%
14. Preserving Connections	60.0%	50.0%
15. Relative Placement	60.0%	12.5%
16. Relationship of Child in Care with Parent	22.2%	40.0%
17. Needs and Services for Child, Parents, and Caregivers	40.0%	50.0%
18. Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning	31.6%	44.4%
19. Worker Visits with Child	60.0%	80.0%
20. Worker Visits with Parents	11.1%	8.3%
21. Educational Needs of the Child	44.4%	88.9%
22. Physical Health of the Child	40.0%	40.0%
23. Mental Health of the Child	46.2%	66.7%

SECTION II: FOSTER HOME LICENSE REVIEW

As part of the Quality Assurance Review Process in Florence County, ten Foster Home Licenses were randomly selected from the list of all licenses issued for the county during the period under review. These licenses are reviewed using the *South Carolina Department of Social Services Quality Assurance Foster Home License Review Instruments*. There is one instrument for issuance of initial licenses and another instrument for the renewal of licenses. Each instrument contains a section of deficiencies, namely agency oversight, data entry, and qualitative issues. Deficiencies noted in this section may not invalidate the license but still require attention and correction by county management. Each instrument includes the appropriate agency, state, and federal requirements.

Initial License review criteria include the following *items*:

- Applications
- Autobiography information
- Financial information
- Child factor's checklists
- Initial home assessment studies
- References
- Information related to firearms and ammunition in the house
- Pet vaccination information
- Background checks
- Convictions
- Required trainings
- Medical reports
- Fire inspections/re-inspections
- Disaster Preparedness Plans
- DHEC/Lead inspections
- Alternative caregiver forms
- Central registry check on alternative caregiver, if applicable
- A review of any conflicts noted between file documents and CAPSS
- Discipline Agreements
- Completion and issuance of the 1513 prior to the license being issued
- Guidelines regarding in-ground swimming pools

Renewal License review criteria include the following *items*:

- Convictions
- Training hours
- Medical reports if a new household member has been added or if there is a change in foster parent's medical status
- Updated home studies
- Discipline Agreements
- Fire inspections and drills
- Quarterly home visits
- Disaster Preparedness Plans
- FBI checks, if applicable
- Guidelines regarding in-ground swimming pools
- 1513 completed prior to issuance of the license
- Any amendments to the license, if applicable
- Documentation regarding if there are more than five children in the home
- Annual firearms location update
- Information concerning the alternative caregivers
- Safety checks of alternative caregivers
- A review of child protective service allegations
- Pet vaccination information
- A review of any regulatory infractions
- A review of any conflicts noted between file documents and CAPSS

Possible *deficiencies* found in Initial and Renewal cases include:

- Updated home studies
- Discipline Agreements
- Fire drills
- Quarterly home visits

- Disaster Preparedness Plans
- Information concerning the alternative caregivers
- Alternative caregiver forms
- Applications
- Autobiography information
- Financial information
- Child factor’s checklists
- Initial home assessment studies
- References

Areas noted as having occurred as required on the assessment are rated as *strengths*. Those *items* that were not met are rated as *area needing improvement (ANI)*. If the issue is not applicable, it is rated N/A.

Additionally, the percentage of *strengths* is also calculated for each *item*. This percentage is calculated by adding the number of *strengths* and the number of *ANIs*. The number of *strengths* is divided into this total to determine the percentage of *strengths*. Results of the review are noted in Table 10.

Foster Home Licensing Findings for Florence County

Initial License Cases. Three foster care issuances for initial/standard license were reviewed. One of the cases reviewed was rated as *area needing improvement* because all of the licensing requirements were not met prior to authorization of the license. Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. Issues identified that led to the rating of *ANI* for the one case include:

Background Checks:

- There was no documentation in the file to support that a sex offender registry check was completed on all appropriate individuals.

Renewal License Cases. Five of seven cases reviewed were rated as *area needing improvement* because all of the licensing requirements were not met prior to authorization of the license renewal. Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. Issues identified that led to the rating of *ANI* for five cases include:

Table 10. Summary of Ratings for Initial and Renewal Cases.

Rating	Initial	Renewal
<i>Strength</i>	2 (66.7%)	2 (28.6%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	1 (33.3%)	5 (71.4%)
Total	3 (100%)	7 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	2 (66.7%)	2 (28.6%)

Background Checks:

- There was no documentation in the file to support that central registry, SLED, sex offender registry checks, and/or FBI checks for all individuals were completed or were completed in a timely manner.

Fire Safety:

- All annual records for fire inspection verification were not located in the case file.

Deficiencies found in Initial and Renewal Cases. Deficiencies were noted for eight of the ten files reviewed. Issues identified by the reviewers include:

Initial Case Deficiencies

Safety:

- Documentation in CAPSS and case file did not support that quarterly home visits were n completed.

Renewal Case Deficiencies

Alternative Caregiver:

- Documentation in CAPSS and case file did not indicate that an alternative caregiver/babysitter was identified.

Fire Drills:

- Documentation verifying that fire drills were conducted within 24 hours of a child’s placement was not located in the case file.

Safety:

- All Discipline Agreements were not located in the case file or were not signed.
- All Disaster Preparedness Plans were not located in the case file.
- Documentation did not support that quarterly home visits were completed.

SECTION III: CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICE NO ACTION REPORTS REVIEW

A review of ten no action reports was completed to determine whether agency policy and procedures were followed for a no action report. The reports were randomly selected from the list of reports on which no action was taken by the county during the period under review. The *South Carolina Department of Social Services Quality Assurance Review No Action Reports Instrument* was used to conduct the review. This instrument includes a description of the allegation and eleven questions regarding the no action decisions and processes (see Table 11).

Table 11. Summary of Item Ratings for No Action Reports Review

	Yes	No	NA	Total
1. Illegal substance use alleged AND reason for safety threatened with harm	1	9	0	10
2. Use of CAPSS and/or other systems for prior involvement	9	1	0	10
3a. Maltreatment tab in CAPSS completed	10	0	0	10
3b. Explanation given why allegation did not meet legal definition of maltreatment	2	6	2	10
4. Safety factors documented on Intake Assessment not discovered by intake worker	0	10	0	10
5. Assessment made utilizing SCDSS Risk Matrix	8	0	2	10
6a. Risk Matrix results included statements contradictory to allegation	6	2	2	10
6b. Risk Matrix results failed to include all statements that support allegation	7	1	2	10
7. Contact with necessary collaterals prior to screen-out decision	3	0	7	10
8. Another intake referral on same perpetrator and/or child within 12 months	4	6	0	10
9. Intake Supervisor ensured consultation with another supervisory-level authority	1	3	6	10

*Note: A single case may have more than one issue identified.

The percentage of *strengths* is also calculated for the cases reviewed. This percentage is calculated by adding the number of *strengths* and the number of *ANIs*. The number of *strengths* is divided into this total to determine the percentage of *strengths*. Findings of these reviews are noted in Table 12.

Table 12. Summary of Ratings for No Action Reports Review

Rating	Were agency policy and procedures followed?
<i>Strength</i>	3 (30%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	7 (70%)
Total	10 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	3 (30%)

In seven of ten cases, agency policy and procedures were not followed according to documentation in the file. Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. Issues identified that led to the rating of *ANI* include:

- The agency failed to include all pertinent statements supporting the allegation made by the reporter in their documentation on the risk matrix.
- Information included in the agency documentation did not appropriately reflect the documentation of the family’s history with the agency.
- The Risk Matrix documentation did not include all issues/risk factors known to be present in the home, as documented in CAPSS dictation, such as domestic violence or a lack of basic needs.

- Selections in the Risk Matrix documentation were inconsistent with information provided by the documentation of the allegation and/or the documentation of the history with the agency.
- There was a lack of information and/or documentation to support results of the Risk Matrix documentation.
- The report documentation contradicted the agency's documentation. Although there was a history of substance abuse documented in the file and the intake referral documentation identified observable evidence of active substance abuse, no current problem was documented on the risk matrix document.
- The agency documented that the allegation did not meet the legal definition of maltreatment but provided no explanation in their documentation as required.
- The documentation did not support that a complete search of CAPSS was completed on the mother and father as required.

SECTION IV: CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES UNFOUNDED REPORTS REVIEW

Five unfounded reports were reviewed to determine whether agency policy and procedures were followed. The five unfounded reports were randomly selected from the list of all reports unfounded by the county during the period under review. The review was conducted using the *South Carolina Department of Social Services Quality Assurance Review Unfounded Report Instrument*. This instrument includes a description of the allegation and items regarding three primary areas (see Table 13):

- Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment,
- Repeat maltreatment, and
- Risk assessment and safety management.

Table 13. Summary of Item Ratings for Unfounded Review

	Yes	No	N/A	Total
1A. Investigation not initiated in accordance with timeframes and requirements	0	5	0	5
1B. Face-to-face contact not made in accordance with timeframes and requirements	0	5	0	5
1C. Delays in investigation initiation or face-to-face contact beyond control of agency	0	0	5	5
2A. At least one substantiated or indicated maltreatment report	0	5	0	5
2B. One substantiated or indicated maltreatment report within six months before or after	0	0	5	5
2C. Repeat maltreatment involving the same or similar circumstances	0	0	5	5
3A. Initial assessment of risk to the children and family in the home	5	0	0	5
3B. Ongoing assessment(s) of risk to the children and family in the home	1	3	1	5
3C. Safety concerns that were not adequately or appropriately addressed by the agency	2	3	0	5

*Note: A single case may have more than one issue identified.

The percentage of *strengths* is calculated for each decision to unfound. This percentage is calculated by adding the number of *strengths* and the number of *ANIs*. The number of *strengths* is divided into this total to determine the percentage of *strengths*. Findings of these reviews are noted in Table 14.

Table 14. Summary of Ratings for Unfounded Review

Rating	Were agency policy and procedures followed?
<i>Strength</i>	2 (40%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	3 (60%)
Total	5 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	2 (40%)

Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. Reasons that three unfounded cases reviewed violated agency policy and procedures include:

- Documentation of the risk assessments with children in the home were inadequate or were not ongoing.
- There was no documentation to support that sex offender and central registry checks on all appropriate individuals were not completed prior to the decision to unfound the case.
- The agency documented a Danger Statement in CAPSS but unfounded the case.
- Documentation did not support that the physical environment of the home was assessed given the only documented face-to-face contact occurred at the agency office.

Documentation did not include verification that the agency followed-up with all appropriate collateral contacts to ensure service provision prior to making the decision to unfound.

SECTION V: FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES REVIEW

A review of five allegations was completed to determine whether agency policy and procedures were followed for reports referred to Family Support Services (FSS). The reports were randomly selected from the list of reports referred to a Community-Based Prevention Services Provider by the county during the period under review. The *South Carolina Department of Social Services Quality Assurance Review Community-Based Prevention Services Assessment Instrument* was used to conduct the review. This instrument includes a description of the allegation and twelve questions regarding the referral to the FSS Community-Based Prevention Services Provider and processes (see Table 15).

Table 15. Summary of Item Ratings for Assessment

	Yes	No	NA	Total
1. Illegal substance use alleged AND reason for safety threatened with harm	1	4	0	5
2. Use of CAPSS and/or other systems for prior involvement	4	1	0	5
3a. Maltreatment tab in CAPSS completed	5	0	0	5
3b. Explanation for allegation not meeting the legal definition of maltreatment	1	2	2	5
4. Existing Safety Factors not seen by intake worker or documented	0	5	0	5
5. Assessment made utilizing SCDSS Risk Matrix	5	0	0	5
6a. Results of SCDSS Risk Matrix contradicted allegation made by reporter	3	2	0	5
6b. Risk Matrix did not include statements that supported allegations	3	2	0	5
7. Agency contacted collaterals for Community-Based Prevention Services	0	3	2	5
8. Additional intake referral made on same perpetrator AND/OR child	0	5	0	5
9. Family received community-based prevention services	0	0	5	5
10. Community-based provider entered an account in CAPSS	5	0	0	5

*Note: A single case may have more than one issue identified.

The percentage of *strengths* is also calculated for the cases reviewed. This percentage is calculated by adding the number of *strengths* and the number of *ANIs*. The number of *strengths* is divided into this total to determine the percentage of *strengths*. Findings of these reviews are noted in Table 16.

Table 16. Summary of Ratings for FSS Review

Rating	Were agency policy and procedures followed?
<i>Strength</i>	2 (40%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	3 (60%)
Total	5 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	2 (40%)

Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. In three cases reviewed, agency policy and procedures were not followed. Issues identified that led to the rating of *ANI* include:

- The results of the Risk Matrix documentation included statements that were contradictory to the documentation of the allegations made by the reporter.
- The Risk Matrix documentation did not include all statements documented in the report from by the reporter, which supported the allegation documentation.

- There was no documentation to support that the agency made collateral contacts assessing the welfare of the child.
- The agency failed to document consideration and/or investigation of the CPS history of all adults living in the home.
- There was no documentation to support that the family's history, as documented in CAPSS, was considered in making the decision to refer the report as required.
- The agency failed to document all safety factors and/or risk factors related to the intake documentation.

SECTION VI: VOLUNTARY CASE MANAGEMENT REVIEW

A review of five allegations was completed to determine whether agency policy and procedures were followed for reports referred to Voluntary Case Management (VCM). The reports were randomly selected from the list of reports referred to a Community-Based Prevention Services Provider by the county during the period under review. The *South Carolina Department of Social Services Quality Assurance Review Community-Based Prevention Services Assessment Instrument* was used to conduct the review. This instrument includes a description of the allegation and twelve questions regarding the referral to the VCM Community-Based Prevention Services Provider and processes (see Table 17).

Table 17. Summary of Item Ratings for Assessment

	Yes	No	NA	Total
1. Illegal substance use alleged AND reason for safety threatened with harm	2	3	0	5
2. Use of CAPSS and/or other systems for prior involvement	5	0	0	5
3a. Maltreatment tab in CAPSS completed	4	1	0	5
3b. Explanation for allegation not meeting the legal definition of maltreatment	1	2	2	5
4. Existing Safety Factors not seen by intake worker or documented	3	2	0	5
5. Assessment made utilizing SCDSS Risk Matrix	5	0	0	5
6a. Results of SCDSS Risk Matrix contradicted allegation made by reporter	4	1	0	5
6b. Risk Matrix did not include statements that supported allegations	2	3	0	5
7. Agency contacted collaterals for Community-Based Prevention Services	1	2	2	5
8. Additional intake referral made on same perpetrator AND/OR child	0	5	0	5
9. Family received community-based prevention services	0	0	5	5
10. Community-based provider entered an account in CAPSS	5	0	0	5

*Note: A single case may have more than one issue identified.

The percentage of *strengths* is also calculated for the cases reviewed. This percentage is calculated by adding the number of *strengths* and the number of *ANIs*. The number of *strengths* is divided into this total to determine the percentage of *strengths*. Findings of these reviews are noted in Table 18.

Table 18. Summary of Ratings for VCM Review

Rating	Were agency policy and procedures followed?
<i>Strength</i>	0 (0%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	5 (100%)
Total	5 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	0 (0%)

Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. In all five cases, agency policy and procedures were not all followed. Issues identified that led to the rating of *ANI* include:

- The Risk Matrix documentation included statements that were not supported by the report documentation.
- The Risk Matrix documentation failed to include statements that supported allegations and included statements contradictory to the documentation of the allegations made by the reporter.

- The Risk Matrix documentation included statements that were contradictory.
- There was no documentation to indicate that the agency made all necessary collateral contacts.
- All safety and/or risk factors related to the intake were not identified in the file documentation.

APPENDIX 1. SUMMARY OF ISSUES CAUSING AN AREA NEEDING IMPROVEMENT (ANI) RATING FOR APPLICABLE CASES

The following is an overview of strengths and weaknesses that were found in the cases for Florence County during the review conducted May 5-9, 2014. The period under review was November 1, 2013 to April 30, 2014.

Positives:

Item 7 (Permanency goal for child), Item 8 (Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives), Item 11 (Proximity of Foster Care Placement), and Item 12 (Placement with siblings) were identified as *strengths* of the agency; all applicable cases reviewed were rated as *strength* with no *area needing improvement (ANI)*.

Concerns:

Information detailing those *items* rated as *area needing improvement* was obtained by reviewers through case file review, which includes the use of CAPSS, and through case related interviews. This information was detailed on the CFSR OSRI as support for rating selection. The following examines the *items* that had the highest negative ratings.

- *Item 3 (Services to family)* - 6 of 11 (54.5%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
 - The agency did not make concerted efforts to provide appropriate services to prevent the child(ren) from entering foster care. (5 cases) The following did not receive services:
 - Father (3 cases)
 - Mother (2 cases)
 - Family (2 cases)
 - Paramour (1 case)
 - The agency failed to conduct ongoing assessments with a household that included a mother, father, and caregiver. (1 case)

- *Item 9 (Adoption)* – 4 of 6 (66.7%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
 - The agency did not make concerted efforts to achieve adoption in a timely manner. (4 cases) A case that provided specific reasoning noted the following issue:
 - The TPR packet was not completed by the agency during the PUR. (1 case)

- *Item 10 (Other planned permanent living arrangement)* – 3 of 4 (75%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
 - Efforts were not made by the agency to provide the target child with an appropriate range of independent living skills. (2 cases)
 - Concerted efforts were not made to achieve the goal of OPPLA in a timely manner. (1 case)

- *Item 13 (Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care)* – 5 of 6 (83.3%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
 - The frequency of the visits was insufficient according to agency policy requirements. (5 cases) Specific members of the family that were impacted include:
 - Mother (4 cases)
 - Father (3 cases)
 - The quality of the visits with parents was not sufficient. (1 case) Specific reasoning from the case noted the following issue:
 - Visits were coordinated around medical appointments and took place in the doctor’s office lobby. (1 case)

- *Item 15 (Relative placement)* – 7 of 8 (87.5%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
 - The agency failed to make concerted efforts to identify, locate, and evaluate relatives as potential placements for the target child. (7 cases) Potential placements included:
 - Paternal relatives (4 cases)
 - Maternal relatives (7 cases)

- *Item 16 (Relationship of child in care with parents)* – 3 of 5 (60%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
 - The agency did not make concerted efforts to promote, support, and maintain positive relationships between the child and family. (3 cases) Specific relationships affected include:
 - Child and father (3 cases)
 - Child and mother (2 cases)

- *Item 18 (Child & family involvement in case planning)* – 10 of 18 (55.6%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
 - The agency failed to make concerted efforts to involve the following people in the case planning process: (10 cases)
 - Father(s) (9 cases)

- Mother (4 case)
 - Paramour (1 case)
 - The agency did not conduct diligent searches to locate fathers. (3 cases)
- *Item 20 (Caseworker visits with parents) – 11 of 12 (91.7%) applicable cases rated as ANI*
 - The frequency of the visits was insufficient according to agency policy requirements for the following people: (11 cases)
 - Father(s) (11 cases)
 - Mother (7 cases)
 - The quality of the visits with the following people was insufficient: (4 cases)
 - Father(s) (4 cases)
 - Mother (3 cases)
 - The agency did not conduct diligent searches to locate the following parents: (3 cases)
 - Father(s) (3 cases)
 - Mother (1 case)
- *Item 22 (Physical health of child) – 9 of 15 (60%) applicable cases rated as ANI*
 - Records were not located in the case file. (9 cases)
 - Dental (7 cases)
 - Medical (5 cases)
 - Children were not assessed for the following needs: (4 cases)
 - Dental health (3 cases)
 - Physical health (2 cases)
 - The agency failed to confirm that appropriate dental health services for the target child were provided. (1 case)
 - The agency failed to confirm that appropriate physical health services for the target child were provided. (4 cases) Cases that provided specific reasoning noted the following issues:
 - The follow-up regarding a baby’s positive drug screening was inadequate. (2 cases)
 - No physical health assessment was provided to a child with observable sustained injuries caused by physical abuse. (1 case)