

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

This summary report describes the results of the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) Marlboro County Quality Assurance Review, conducted May 12-16, 2014. The period under review was May 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. Seventeen cases were reviewed including 7 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	64% (7)	36% (4)	0% (0)
Safety 2 CHILDREN ARE SAFELY MAINTAINED IN THEIR HOMES WHENEVER POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE	41% (7)	6% (1)	53% (9)
Permanency 1 CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENCY AND STABILITY IN THEIR LIVING SITUATIONS	43% (3)	57% (4)	0% (0)
Permanency 2 THE CONTINUITY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS IS PRESERVED FOR CHILDREN	57% (4)	43% (3)	0% (0)
Well-Being 1 FAMILIES HAVE ENHANCED CAPACITY TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN'S NEEDS	30% (5)	41% (7)	29% (5)
Well-Being 2 CHILDREN RECEIVE APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR EDUCATIONAL NEEDS	80% (4)	0% (0)	20% (1)
Well-Being 3 CHILDREN RECEIVE ADEQUATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS	40% (6)	13% (2)	47% (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>	41% (7)	65% (11)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	24% (4)	0% (0)
<i>Not Applicable</i>	35% (6)	35% (6)
Total	100% (17)	100% (17)
<i>% Strengths</i>	63.6% (7)	100% (11)

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>	18% (3)	41% (7)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	53% (9)	59% (10)
<i>Not Applicable</i>	29% (5)	0% (0)
Total	100% (17)	100% (17)
<i>% Strengths</i>	25% (3)	41.2% (7)

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 (OPPLA)

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	18% (3)	29% (5)	35% (6)	6% (1)	12% (2)	0% (0)
Area needing improvement	0% (0)	12% (2)	6% (1)	0% (0)	23% (4)	0% (0)
Not Applicable	82% (14)	59% (10)	59% (10)	94% (16)	65% (11)	100% (17)
Total	100% (17)	100% (17)	100% (17)	100% (17)	100% (17)	100% (17)
% Strengths	100% (3)	71.4% (5)	85.7% (6)	100% (1)	33.3% (2)	NA

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	23% (4)	18% (3)	29% (5)	29% (5)	29% (5)	12% (2)
Area needing improvement	6% (1)	0% (0)	6% (1)	6% (1)	12% (2)	18% (3)
Not Applicable	71% (12)	82% (14)	65% (11)	65% (11)	59% (10)	70% (12)
Total	100% (17)	100% (17)	100% (17)	100% (17)	100% (17)	100% (17)
% Strengths	80% (4)	100% (3)	83.3% (5)	83.3% (5)	71.4% (5)	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
<i>Strength</i>	29% (5)	29% (5)	71% (12)	18% (3)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	71% (12)	71% (12)	29% (5)	70% (12)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	12% (2)
Total	100% (17)	100% (17)	100% (17)	100% (17)
<i>% Strengths</i>	29.4% (5)	29.4% (5)	70.6% (12)	20% (3)

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
<i>Strength</i>	23% (4)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	6% (1)
Not Applicable	71% (12)
Total	100% (17)
<i>% Strengths</i>	80% (4)

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>	35% (6)	24% (4)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	41% (7)	23% (4)
Not Applicable	24% (4)	53% (9)
Total	100% (17)	100% (17)
<i>% Strengths</i>	46.2% (6)	50% (4)

SECTION II: FOSTER HOME LICENSE REVIEW

As part of the Quality Assurance Review Process in Marlboro 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
- 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
- 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
- Reference

Areas noted as having occurred as required on the assessment are rated as *strengths*. Those *items* that were not met are rated as an *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 9.

Foster Home Licensing Findings for Marlboro County

Initial License Cases. Two foster care issuances for initial/standard license were reviewed. Neither case reviewed was rated as *area needing improvement* because all of the licensing requirements were met prior to authorization of the license. Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS.

Table 9. Summary of Ratings for Initial and Renewal Cases.

Rating	Initial	Renewal
<i>Strength</i>	2 (100%)	2 (25%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	0 (0%)	6 (75%)
Total	2 (100%)	8 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	2 (100%)	2 (25%)

Renewal License Cases. Six of eight 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 six cases include:

Background Checks:

- There was not documentation 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.

Firearms:

- Documentation did not verify that ammunition was stored in a separate, locked location away from the firearms.

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

Initial Case Deficiencies

Documentation:

- There was no documentation to support the three references required per policy for each foster parent. Two home studies were located in the case file with conflicting recommendations regarding the age of children for which the home should be licensed.

Renewal Case Deficiencies

Alternative Caregiver:

- An alternative caregiver/babysitter was not identified in the file documentation.

Fire Drills:

- There was no documentation in the case file to verify that fire drills were conducted within 24 hours of a child's placement.
- There was no documentation in the case file to verify that quarterly fire drills were conducted while children were placed in foster homes.

Documentation:

- Discrepancies existed between information documented in the case file and information documented in CAPSS.

Safety:

- All Discipline Agreements were not located in the case file.
- All Disaster Preparedness Plans were not located in the case file.
- Documentation did not provide verification that quarterly home visits were either timely or completed at all.

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. 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 10).

Table 10. 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	2	8	0	10
2. Use of CAPSS and/or other systems for prior involvement	7	3	0	10
3a. Maltreatment tab in CAPSS completed	8	2	0	10
3b. Explanation given why allegation did not meet legal definition of maltreatment	3	3	4	10
4. Safety factors documented on Intake Assessment not discovered by intake worker	2	8	0	10
5. Assessment made utilizing SCDSS Risk Matrix	7	2	1	10
6a. Risk Matrix results included statements contradictory to allegation	7	0	3	10
6b. Risk Matrix results failed to include all statements that support allegation	6	2	2	10
7. Contact with necessary collaterals prior to screen-out decision	4	4	2	10
8. Another intake referral on same perpetrator and/or child within 12 months	3	7	0	10
9. Intake Supervisor ensured consultation with another supervisory-level authority	0	3	7	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 11.

Table 11. Summary of Ratings for No Action Reports Review

Rating	Were agency policy and procedures followed?
<i>Strength</i>	0 (0%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	10 (100%)
Total	10 (100%)
% <i>Strengths</i>	0 (0%)

In all ten cases, there were agency policy and procedures that were not followed.

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 documentation of the results of the Risk Matrix included statements that were contradictory to the documentation of the allegation made by the reporter.
- The documentation of the results of the Risk Matrix failed to include statements that supported the documented allegations made of the reporter.
- The Risk Matrix documentation did not include all issues known to be present for the family, such as a child’s lack of Medicaid.
- The Risk Matrix documentation did not accurately reflect all safety factors reported to be present due to alleged substance abuse in the home.

- There was no documentation to support that thorough search of the CAPSS system for family history occurred as required.
- All indicated safety and/or risk factors documented in the file were not identified when completing the Risk Matrix assessment documentation.
- Although the allegation did meet the legal definition of abuse according to the documentation, the intake worker documented in the maltreatment tab that it did not.
- The intake worker documented that the report met the legal definition of abuse but failed to accept the report for investigation.
- The intake worker documented that the family had a history with the agency but failed to include a narrative regarding this history in the documentation as required by policy.
- The report was determined to be no action without documenting necessary collateral contacts.
- The agency failed to document the use of law enforcement as a collateral to attempt to make contact with a family and to determine whether the family had a history with law enforcement.

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 12):

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

Table 12. 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	1	4	0	5
1C. Delays in investigation initiation or face-to-face contact beyond control of agency	1	0	4	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	4	0	5
3C. Safety concerns that were not adequately or appropriately addressed by the agency	2	2	1	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 13.

Table 13. Summary of Ratings for Unfounded 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. Reasons that all five unfounded cases reviewed violated agency policy and procedures include:

- Documentation of risk assessments with children in the home was inadequate and/or not ongoing.
- There was no documentation to support that a thorough assessment including a forensic interview for alleged sexual abuse, was conducted.
- There was no documentation to support that the agency thoroughly assessed all family members for drug use.
- Documentation did not mention whether a diligent search was conducted to locate family members involved in the report.
- Background checks documented by the agency were inadequate.

- There was no documentation that background checks were conducted on all appropriate individuals.
- Documentation did not reflect that the agency made face-to-face contact with all children as required.
- Safety concerns present in the home were not adequately addressed in documentation prior to case closure.

SECTION V: FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES REVIEW

A review of five allegations was completed to determine whether agency policy and procedures were followed for reports made 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 Screen-Out Report 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 14).

Table 14. Summary of Item Ratings for Assessment

	Yes	No	NA	Total
1. Illegal substance use alleged AND reason for safety threatened with harm	0	5	0	5
2. Use of CAPSS and/or other systems for prior involvement	4	1	0	5
3a. Maltreatment tab in CAPSS completed	4	1	0	5
3b. Explanation for “no” in maltreatment tab	0	1	4	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	4	1	0	5
6b. Did results fail to include statements to support allegations made by reporter	3	2	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	1	4	0	5
9. Family received community-based prevention services	0	1	4	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 15.

Table 15. Summary of Ratings for FSS Review

Rating	Were agency policy and procedures followed?
<i>Strength</i>	1 (20%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	4 (80%)
Total	5 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	1 (20%)

Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. In the four cases reviewed agency policy and procedures were not all 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 failed to include all statements documented as being made by the reporter that supported the allegation.
- There was no documentation to indicate that the agency made all appropriate collateral contacts prior to making the decision to refer the intake.

- Documentation did not support that the CAPSS system documentation was thoroughly checked prior to the decision to refer the intake.
- The maltreatment tab documentation within the Intake Assessment was not thoroughly completed.

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 Screen-Out Report Instrument* was used to conduct the review. This instrument includes a description of the allegation and ten regarding the referral to the VCM Community-Based Prevention Services Provider and processes (see Table 16).

Table 16. 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	3	2	0	5
3a. Maltreatment tab in CAPSS completed	5	0	0	5
3b. Explanation for allegation not meeting the legal definition of maltreatment	0	0	5	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	5	0	0	5
6b. Risk Matrix did not include statements that supported allegations	1	4	0	5
7. Agency contacted collaterals for Community-Based Prevention Services	0	5	0	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	4	1	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 17.

Table 17. 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 five cases reviewed, agency policy and procedures were not all followed. Issues identified that led to the rating of *ANI* include:

- The intake worker did not document all safety factors noted in the documentation of the report.
- The results of central registry checks for all family members were not included in documentation.
- The Risk Matrix failed to include statements that supported allegations or included statements contradictory to the documented allegations made by the reporter.

- Documentation did not support that all collaterals were contacted.
- The Risk Matrix documentation did not identify the family's full history with the agency noted in the CAPSS 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 Marlboro County during the review conducted May 12-16, 2014. The period under review was May 1, 2013 to April 30, 2014.

Positives:

Item 2 (Repeat Maltreatment), Item 5 (Foster Care reentries), Item 8 (Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives), 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)* - 9 of 12 (75%) applicable cases rated as ANI
 - Concerted efforts were not made by the agency to provide appropriate services to prevent the child(ren) from entering foster care. (8 cases) The following did not receive services:
 - Father (2 cases)
 - Paramour (3 cases)
 - Mother (5 cases)
 - Child (1 case)
 - Ongoing assessments were not conducted with the following: (3 cases)
 - Family (1 case)
 - Paramour (1 case)
 - Step-father (1 case)
 - Alternative caregiver (1 case)
 - Paramour's mother (1 case)
 - Paternal grandmother (1 case)
 - Paramour's child (1 case)
 - The agency failed to seek court intervention when individuals were not-compliant with recommended services for safety. (4 cases).

- *Item 4 (Risk assessment and safety management)* - 10 of 17 (58.8%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
 - Initial assessments were not conducted either with the individual or in the home in which the child resided: (4 cases)
 - Child (3 cases)
 - Father (1 case)
 - Alternative caregiver (1 case)
 - Step-father (1 case)
 - Paramour's mother (1 case)
 - Ongoing assessments were not conducted with the following: (4 cases)
 - Child (4 cases)
 - Mother (1 case)
 - Father (1 case)
 - Background checks were not completed for the following individuals: (3 cases)
 - Alternative Caregiver (2 cases)
 - Paramour (1 case)
 - Grandmother (1 case)
 - The mother was not provided appropriate services to address issues of risk and safety related to the case. (1 case)
 - A diligent search was not conducted to locate the father. (1 case)
 - Safety concerns known to be present in the home were not appropriately addressed for the children. (1 case)
 - The following documentation related to risk and safety was not located in the file and/or was not completed: (2 cases)
 - Signature on Safety Plan (1 cases)
 - Alternative Caregiver Form (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) Cases that detailed specific periods of times include the following timeframes:
 - 168 months (1 case)
 - 38 months (1 case)

- *Item 16 (Relationship of child in care with parents)* – 3 of 5 (60%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*

- Concerted efforts were not made by the agency to promote, support, and maintain positive relationships between the child and family. (3 cases)
Specific relationships affected include:
 - Child and father (2 cases)
 - Child and mother (1 case)
- A diligent search was not conducted to locate the father. (1 case)
- *Item 17 (Needs and services of child, parents, & foster parents) – 12 of 17 (70.6%) applicable cases rated as ANI*
 - Initial assessments were not conducted with the following: (4 cases)
 - Father(s) (7 cases)
 - Mother (2 cases)
 - Child (2 cases)
 - Stepfather (1 case)
 - Paramour (1 case)
 - Ongoing assessments were not conducted with the following: (4 cases)
 - Father (5 cases)
 - Mother (1 case)
 - Paramour (1 case)
 - A diligent search was not conducted to locate the father. (4 cases)
 - Service needs to include referrals were not addressed at all and/or in a timely manner. The following individuals were impacted: (3 cases)
 - Mother (2 cases)
 - Paramour (2 cases)
 - Father (1 case)
 - Follow-up to ensure service engagement was not conducted. The following individuals were impacted: (2 cases)
 - Mother (1 case)
 - Father (1 case)
 - The agency failed to seek court intervention when individuals were non-compliant with services. (1 case).
- *Item 18 (Child & family involvement in case planning) – 12 of 17 (70.6%) applicable cases rated as ANI*
 - The agency failed to make concerted efforts to involve the following people in the case planning process: (12 cases)
 - Father(s) (7 cases)
 - Mothers (6 cases)
 - Paramour (3 cases)

- Stepfather (1 case)
 - Children (1 case)
 - A diligent search was not conducted to locate the father. (5 cases)
- *Item 20 (Caseworker visits with parents)* – 12 of 15 (80%) applicable cases rated as ANI
 - The frequency of the visits was insufficient according to agency policy requirements. (12 cases)
 - The agency specifically did not meet with the following:
 - Father(s) (9 cases)
 - Mother (8 cases)
 - Paramour (3 cases)
 - Stepfather (1 case)
 - The quality of the visits was insufficient. (9 cases)
 - A diligent search was not conducted to locate the father. (3 cases)
- *Item 22 (Physical health of child)* – 7 of 13 (53.8%) applicable cases rated as ANI
 - Records were not located in the case file. (4 cases)
 - Medical (4 cases)
 - Dental (2 cases)
 - Children were not assessed for the following needs: (4 cases)
 - Physical health (3 cases)
 - Dental (2 cases)
 - Collateral contacts were not made to ensure that children received indicated treatment. (2 cases)
- *Item 23 (Mental/behavioral health of child)* – 4 of 8 (50%) applicable cases rated as ANI
 - Services were not provided to meet the mental health needs of children. (4 cases) Cases that mentioned specific services include:
 - Family and/or individual counseling (2 cases)
 - Forensic interview (1 case)
 - The children were not assessed for mental/behavioral health issues. (1 case)
 - Collateral contacts were not made to ensure that children received indicated treatment. (1 case)