



*Responses to questions :*

**Q1.** Could you please provide a short explanation that we can share with our Boards and other funding sources of the reasons that the DHR is moving to continuum contracting.

**R1.** DHR wants to include continuum contracting in its mix of contractual services as a way to improve: 1) moving children to permanency in a more timely manner; 2) providing wrap-around services to families; and 3) providing a more seamless service delivery for children who must be in out of home placement.

**Q2.** What are the anticipated consequences of this new method of contracting for community based agencies?

**R2.** Several consequences might be anticipated, but it is impossible to say with certainty since community based agencies are independent businesses. Some possibilities are subcontracting agreements between different agencies, expansion of services by some agencies, closing or reconfiguring by some agencies of their services.

**Q3.** A basic assumption is that providers of care need a financial incentive to move children "down" the continuum is one that I disagree with and evidence to contradict this assumption is readily available. What is the belief of the department regarding the necessity of providing financial incentives in order for agencies to "step down" children?

**R3.** DHR is not providing an "incentive to move children". Children are moved when all parties agree through the ISP process that a child and family are ready for the move. DHR is simply structuring the funding to reinforce permanency for children in a home with whatever services are necessary.

**Q4.** If the funding for the continuum contracting is designed to "reward" movement down the continuum and "punish" keeping children at the intensive end of the continuum, then it appears that only those programs who offer the entire continuum will be able to have funding averaged out over all service to retain solvency. This will have a major impact on a provider's ability to partner with other agencies and/or subcontracting or being a subcontractor. What advice can you provide agencies in order for them to adjust to these issues?

**R4.** See answer to number 3.

**Q5.** In reading information from the child welfare league their view of a continuum does include shelter care and assessment. The proposed model for Alabama excludes those services. In my county the DHR, the police department and the juvenile court have all indicated the increasing need for shelter/assessment services. How will those children receive those services under this proposal?

**R5.** It is not necessary for all services to be in all continuums. If Alabama chooses, shelter care might remain as a stand alone, temporary service for children in need (e.g. late nights, weekends, etc.). There is a school of thought (also here in Alabama) that Assessment homes are not necessary and cause children unnecessary moves in care. Assessment as a process is necessary for children in care. It may be that the two are getting confused. The Multidimensional Assessment Tool (MAT) will be administered and will replace the need for an assessment residential facility.