



Opportunities Exchange

The Role of Early Childhood Stakeholder Organizations in State CCMS Initiatives

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INTRODUCTION

While each state will partner with community-based organizations differently, there is a set of roles and responsibilities that are typically contracted out as states undertake these complex CCMS initiatives. These include:

- Communications and promotional activities designed to ensure child care provider awareness of and participation in the state's CCMS program
- Support line and specific resources designed to answer provider questions and assist providers in: 1) selecting from various CCMS options; and, 2) completing an application to participate in the program
- Individual and small group coaching and training tied to use of CCMS.

AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

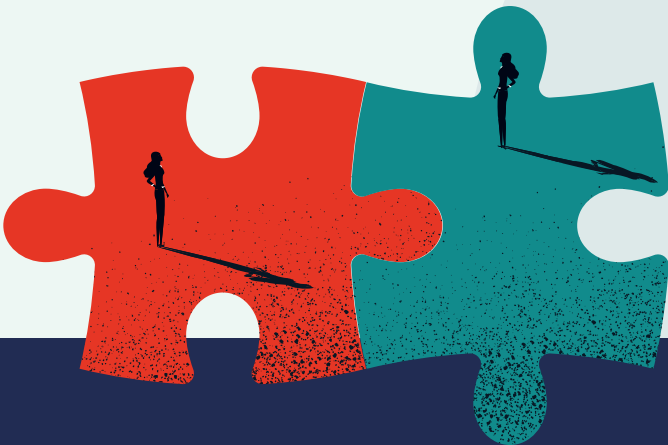
Awareness activities should include multiple types of messaging (electronic print via website pages, email messages, and social media postings, and webinars) that is focused on:

- What the project is and why it is important to both providers and to the sponsoring agency
- What is CCMS
- Who is eligible to participate
- How to apply
- Where to learn more
- How to get help with the application and with the CCMS.

The messaging should cover both logistics AND the “why” or the value proposition for providers to participate. These messages must be **delivered in multiple ways** (synchronous and asynchronous) to consider provider convenience and in **multiple languages**. Messaging should be **differentiated for various audiences** (types of providers and key stakeholder organizations that interact with providers) and delivered by a **variety of trusted individuals, organizations and vendors**. Providers will likely need repeat exposure to the “why” and to the opportunity to participate, so it is best to plan for a phased and ongoing approach to messaging.

A comprehensive awareness campaign will include:

- Informational webinars with an overview of the program for providers and key ECE stakeholders
- Webinars to allow each CCMS vendor to introduce their product and company
- Posting of webinar slides and recordings
- New webpage on state website specific to CCMS initiative





and with robust FAQs, links to vendor information and resources, and links to support line/help desk

- New webpage on state's community partner website specific to CCMS initiative and PDFs offering an overview of the CCMS program and focusing on the value of program participation/use of CCMS for provider business and program practices
 - CCMS & Child Learning & Development
 - CCMS & Licensing Compliance
 - CCMS & Parent Engagement
 - CCMS & Managing Enrollment
 - CCMS & Financial Recordkeeping
 - CCMS & Cash Flow
 - CCMS & Human Resources
 - CCMS & Attendance & Meal Tracking

APPLICATION SUPPORT

Each CCMS initiative will have a different application process, however, it is likely that a state will benefit from the services of a community-based partner in order to assist providers in understanding all the components of and deadlines for the application, and successfully completing the application process. Providers will likely have questions and concerns about ongoing costs for the CCMS, data sharing, and other “what if” scenarios that may not be fully specified in the application and its release/signature form. For those states that approve more than one CCMS vendor, providers may need to select the CCMS that they intend to license as part of the application process.

Comprehensive application support will include:

- Application guide in multiple languages
- Application guide video
- Vendor selection guide
- Data migration guide
- Support line/help desk

In order to prepare the support line/help desk team to address provider questions as the project rolls out and continues to evolve, the community partner will need two-way feedback mechanisms with the state. This will include meetings and data sharing. The state should convene project meetings with the community partner on a weekly cadence during planning and the first several months of implementation, and then shift to monthly meetings thereafter. Meetings can be used to discuss, review and finalize the slides, guides, website content and other elements of the public-facing promotional activities. The meeting agendas should also include reports from the community partner regarding the types and frequency of provider questions and points of confusion, which can then be used to update the FAQ section of the CCMS web page. Finally, data regarding the number of applications received and completed, the software selected, and other relevant data should be reviewed and discussed during these meetings.

The support line/help desk team and any community partner coaches may need initial and ongoing training specific to the CCMS program, to the CCMS vendor options, and to the value proposition for providers that use CCMS in order to fulfill their role.

PROVIDER COACHING TIED TO CCMS

In order for the State to realize the benefits of their investment in CCMS licenses, providers need to fully utilize the software systems. This requires the state to define what “full use” of the CCMS means to them—how will the state measure success for this program? Once the goals are established, providers will need training and ongoing coaching to realize those goals. Providers will need to learn about all the features and functions that are available, understand how and why to use them, and to analyze data within the CCMS to move toward best business practices. The training and coaching should be offered with credit hours for participating providers that can be counted toward their quality rating and other annual requirements.

Training designed to help providers understand the benefits of CCMS use and to move



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forward in full implementation of a CCMS could be offered remotely or in person to all interested providers in the state. The topics could be aligned with the CCMS promotional materials (e.g. CCMS & Child Learning & Development, CCMS & Licensing Compliance, CCMS & Parent Engagement) or with other early childhood initiatives or priorities. The community partner should track registration and attendance at the event, and survey all participants regarding their change in knowledge and intention to change practices based on training content. Further, the community partner should document training participants' participation in the CCMS program (yes/no and if yes, level of CCMS use based on dashboard metrics) at baseline and at 30- and 60-days following the training date. Analysis of the comparative data can inform changes to the training topics and format, and might lead to follow-up or "coaching quick checks" designed to encourage training participants to push ahead with CCMS use.

Comprehensive Coaching tied to CCMS will include: individual coaching tied to automation and small group coaching. Individual coaching tied to automation focuses first on state-defined metrics for success and engaging providers in understanding and using those key elements of the CCMS. Once the provider has completed the basic onboarding with the CCMS vendor and met the minimum usage expectations of the state, coaches can begin to analyze the data in the CCMS with the provider to dig deeper into operational, and financial matters. The broader business coaching aligned with CCMS use should also be guided by specific goals that the State has determined in collaboration with the community partner and both process and outcome data should be collected and reported quarterly. These might include:

- Coach caseloads
- Coaching visits and type (remote or in person)
- Coaching topics
- Level of CCMS use at baseline and at coaching completion (as measured via CCMS dashboards)
- Has annual operating budget at baseline/completion and percentage change

Small group coaching can be targeted to specific groups of providers based on their use of the CCMS functions, their level of bad debt as evidenced in the CCMS dashboard, and other segmentation (region, provider type, etc.). Small group coaching can also be pushed out based on training series that include assignments and coach review of assignments with participants. Training series might include the following: in home tax preparation, improving cashflow, and ensuring full enrollment.

The basic steps that are required to develop, promote and evaluate the small group coaching include:

- Determine topic
- Develop slide decks, assignments, and pre/post assessment
- Schedule training
- Secure translation of slides, assignments and assessments
- Secure training credits in QRIS
- Promote training
- Register participants
- Collect baseline data from participants
- Facilitate trainings
- Mark attendance and assignment completion
- Coach to assignment content
- Collect "post" assessment data
- Issue training certificates
- Analyze participant change in knowledge and implementation of CCMS (via CCMS dashboard)

While local coaches will already have trusting relationships with providers, be knowledgeable about state licensing and quality rating systems and likely have had some experience with business operations and even CCMS, they are unlikely to have used CCMS as an integral element of their coaching practice. In order to prepare coaches to coach specifically on how and why to fully use a CCMS and on how to use the coaching dashboards available in CCMS, coaches will need initial and ongoing training. Training can evolve from an initial focus on the functions and features within each CCMS to the CCMS dashboards and how to use them to monthly case studies that use data pulled from the CCMS dashboard to inform discussion. 