



Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network Second Quarter Summary Report

Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network (MRTQ PDN) promotes professionalism in the field of early childhood and out-of-school time (OST) programming through the provision of a statewide system of professional development. MRTQ PDN offers a variety of services, including:

- The MRTQ Registry;
- Core Knowledge, On-Demand, and Elective Training;
- Credentialing;
- Technical Assistance through:
 - On-site consultation;
 - Outreach;
 - The Warm Line;
 - Peer-to-peer networking through Communities of Practice (CoPs).

Additionally, MRTQ PDN provides support to programs of all settings regarding Quality for ME, Maine's Quality Rating System, Child Care Choices, and meeting the health and safety requirements for compliance with the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG).

In addition to the Quarterly Report submitted, which outlines the MRTQ PDN's progress toward our performance measures as described in the contract, the following are highlights of the work provided during the first quarter in promoting professionalism in our field, increasing quality of care, and providing a statewide system of professional development.

The MRTQ Registry

The Registry is the core of Maine's professional recognition system. The Registry uses members' work, education, early childhood credentials, and training histories to assign a level on the appropriate Career Lattice. After joining the Registry, members have a convenient way of tracking ongoing training and educational accomplishments. Practitioners who join the Registry can choose the appropriate career lattice based on their work setting which includes:

- License Exempt individuals providing care for up to two unrelated children;
- Direct Care in licensed family child care and center based settings;
- Family Education and Support for home visitors and family support individuals;
- Administration Management/Coordination for child care agency administrators and directors not providing direct care to children and youth;
- Public School for public school education technicians, teachers, and administrators.

During FY 2020, 2nd Quarter, **271 practitioners** joined the MRTQ Registry. This brings the current total of active MRTQ Registry Members 12,612.



During FY 2020, 1st Quarter, **355 practitioners** joined the MRTQ Registry.

Training and Credentials

MRTQ PDN's Training Plan is developed with consideration of training needed for early childhood professionals working towards credentials, attaining higher Steps with *Quality for ME*, and child care licensing. The training is scheduled in two semesters: January through June and July through December. Training registration is open for the two semesters on December 1st and June 1st, respectively, with notification through MRTQ PDN's weekly e-newsletter, *SHORTcuts*.

Training enrollment is monitored once a week and a spreadsheet is distributed to MRTQ PDN staff. The Training staff provide outreach to credential candidates who need specific training to complete a particular credential. When a training has filled to capacity and a wait list is developing, staff contact participants on the wait list to determine their training needs. Often times, staff are able to direct participants to an open training for enrollment. When a true need exists for a particular training, it is discussed among Training staff and the Director to consider offering an additional training to meet the need. The wait list participants are given priority to any additional training and then opened to the public for registration. The outreach is documented and saved in a binder for reference.

Some trainings are offered once a year, until the demand for those trainings increase. Early childhood professionals who have indicated they are working on a credential are sent an email reminding them of the upcoming trainings they need.

During the 2nd quarter, **619 participants** completed the 6-hour Health and Safety Orientation training, while **265 practitioners** participated in the 2-hour Annual Renewal Training.

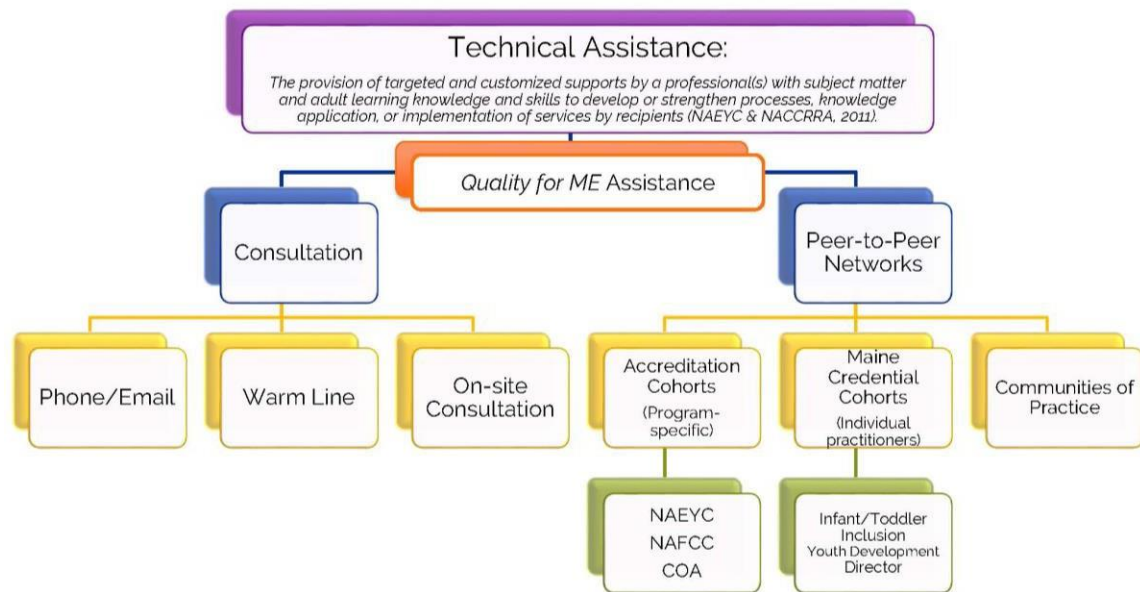
MRTQ PDN developed its own Health and Safety trainings for Child Care Subsidy Program providers to meet the CCDBG health and safety training requirements, including the Health and Safety Orientation 2019 (6 hours) and an Annual Renewal of CCDF Health and Safety (2 hours).

During the 2nd quarter, **298 participants** representing 15 Maine counties completed Core Knowledge Training. In addition, 91 elective trainings (including CoP and on-demand offerings) were offered, reaching **356 individual participants**.

In summary, **293 participants** representing all of Maine's 16 counties completed Core Knowledge Training during the 1st quarter. In addition, 45 elective trainings were offered reaching **225 individual participants**.

Technical Assistance

MRTQ PDN has created a statewide system to offer technical assistance (TA) services to early childhood and out-of-school time programs working to improve program quality. The TA System supports the reflective processes that practitioners need in order to apply the theories and information learned through education and/or training to improve or sustain best practices.



Communities of Practice Evaluation Data

MRTQ PDN evaluates Community of Practice evaluations twice annually. FY20 1st and 2nd quarter evaluation data are analyzed by the PDN to inform our TA staff and District Coordinators of the impact of the 30 face-to-face community meetings/statewide zoom



meetings. Community of Practice (CoPs) provide the opportunity for practitioners from a variety of settings to network with other practitioners in their community, provide input to future meeting topics, training needs, and to share resources/ideas.

CoP participants are asked to give feedback related to the following:

- The CoP they regularly attend;
- Why they decided to join a CoP;
- How the participant has benefited from attending the CoP;
- How the participants' program has benefited from attending the CoP;
- Contact with other CoP participants outside of the CoP meetings;
- Topics of Interest for future CoP meetings.

Evaluation Data from FY20 1st and 2nd quarters included a total of **118 CoP participants** reveal the following:

- Participants attend CoPs to meet face-to-face to network with others in the field, enhance their current knowledge, learn new ideas for their program and their practice from their colleagues, gain peer support from fellow participants and the CoP facilitator, and to gain professional development hours to meet their licensing/QRIS needs.
- Participants found the facilitators to be knowledgeable and skilled at managing a group, provided useful and relevant topics of discussion or training opportunities as requested by group participants.
- According to CoP participants, they as individuals and their child care programs benefit from the sharing of resources, activity ideas, sharing of knowledge with other leaders in the field, becoming more informed and updated in their practice, and the opportunity to network and be validated in their work.
- When asked, 90% of CoP participants would recommend attending CoPs to other child care practitioners.

Child Care Choices

Child Care Choices offers families:

- The ability to search for child care by location, age of child, type of program, and rating with *Quality for ME/QRIS*.
- Compliance history for all licensed programs and monitoring results for non-relative, license exempt individuals and programs.
- Information on the Child Care Subsidy Program.
- A description of *Quality for ME/QRIS*.



- Maine data and the consumer education statement as required by the Child Care Development Block Grant.

MRTQ PDN staff and University of Maine Psychology Department staff meet monthly to discuss potential integrations to Child Care Choices (CCC), including:

- LE Provider Monitoring;
- Child Care Choices Marketing;
- Development of a Provider Portal in CCC;
- Quality Rating Improvement System needs and revisions.

Traffic to Child Care Choices Website

Comparison data over the past 2 years for the same 6 month period shows that traffic to Child Care Choices increased in 2019.

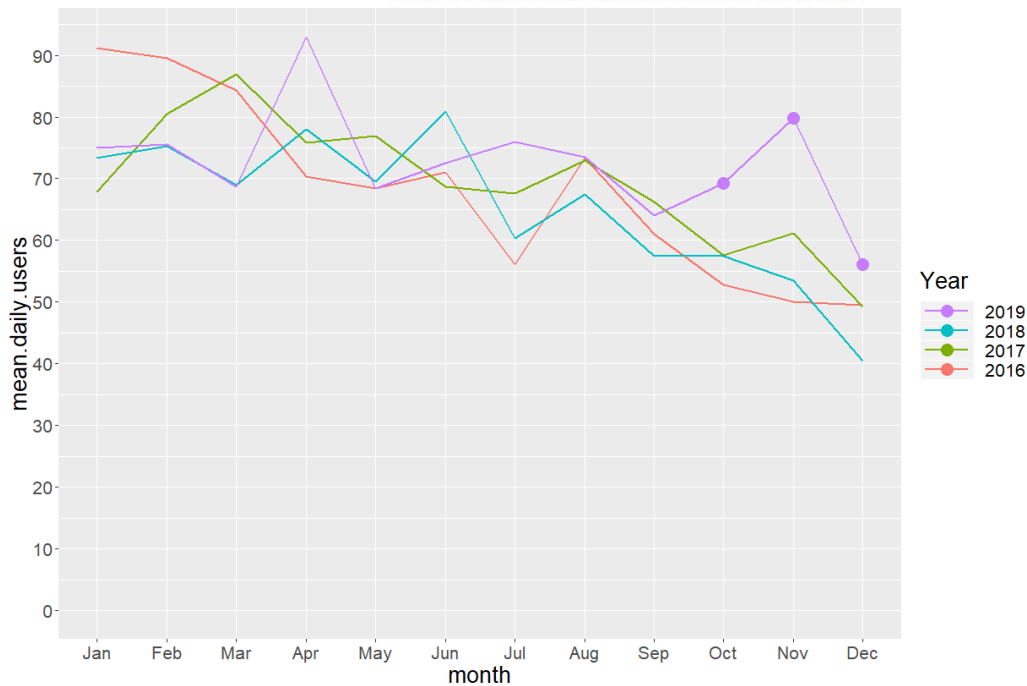
- July-Dec 2018: 56.1 users/day
- July-Dec 2019: 69.8 users/day

FY20, 2nd quarter searches on CCC from unique IP addresses

of searches from unique IP addresses, by month, during the last quarters of FY20 was:

- October: 1036
- November: 1301
- December: 817

Traffic in the quarter ending 12/31/2019 (highlighted in figure below with a dot showing data for each of those six months) was higher than in previous years.



During the 2nd quarter of FY 2020, the MRTQ PDN developed a marketing plan to promote Child Care Choices to parents including a 30 second radio advertisement featured on a local radio station of Portland Radio Group. The MRTQ PDN will continue to monitor the CCC traffic to determine the effectiveness of this type of advertisement. As seen in the visual above, there was a significant spike in traffic during November 2019 which may reflect the CCC radio advertisement.

The PDN will continue to monitor and re-visit future CCC marketing.

Quality Rating and Improvement System, Quality for ME

At the end of FY 2020, 2nd quarter, the enrollment of child care programs in Maine's quality rating and improvement system, *Quality for ME*.

Of 1647 total active programs 953 (57.86%) programs were enrolled in *Quality for ME*.

Of 870 FCC active programs 429 (49.31%) programs were enrolled in *Quality for ME*.

- 319 (36.66%) were at Step 1;
- 52 (5.97%) were at Step 2;
- 48 (5.51%) were at Step 3;
- 10 (1.14%) were at Step 4.



Of 777 Center or Nursery active programs 524 (67.43%) programs were enrolled in QRIS

- 293 (37.70%) were at Step 1;
- 63 (8.10%) were at Step 2;
- 45 (5.79%) were at Step 3;
- 123 (15.83%) were at Step 4.

Quality Rating and Improvement System Revisions

Staff from MRTQ PDN, OCFS, and the Maine Department of Education (DOE) revisited the proposed revisions to the standards of Quality for ME during FY19. Over the past year, the cross-agency team has done a comprehensive review of the proposed standards, based on the two reports submitted to OCFS in 2015 and 2016.

During FY20, 2nd quarter:

- Revised standards were finalized for center, family child care/license exempt, and out-of-school time settings to pilot in January 2020.
- Pilot Memorandum of Agreements for practitioners who want to take part in the QRIS Revision pilot was developed.
- Pilot zoom meetings and facilitators have been scheduled for FY 20, 3rd quarter.

The cross-agency team continues to meet and has developed the following steps for implementation:

- Recruit participants for a pilot of the revised standards (10-15 programs of each type, from around the state) in fall 2019;
- Complete the pilot from January – May 2020;
- Integrate suggestions from the pilot and create needed supports during summer and fall of 2020;
- Work with OCFS and the Legislature to update the rules and statutes regarding the quality rating and improvement system;
- Roll out the completed revisions statewide in early 2021.

Collaborations

MRTQ PDN staff collaborate statewide with a wide variety of organizations, including:

- Maine Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services;
- Maine Department of Education;
- MaineAEYC;



- Family Child Care Association of Maine (FCCAM);
- Maine Head Start Directors;
- Maine Early Childhood Higher Education Committee;
- Educare Central Maine;
- iLookOut;
- Child Care Licensing;
- And many others.

In the 2nd quarter of FY20, on October 4th and 5th the MRTQ PDN co-sponsored the **1st Annual Statewide Early Childhood Education Conference: Connecting ECE Birth through Eight across the State**. In addition to the conference, **MRTQ PDN presented the 2019 Recognition Celebration on the night of October 4th**.

Highlights of the 2019 conference include:

- Registrations met capacity of the facility 450 participants, 125 attending the 2 days.
- The Bangor location attracted participants from all Maine Counties.
- Attendees represented a variety of settings and organizations including high school students from Maine's CTE's, representatives from Higher Education, OCFS and Child Care Licensing.
- Participants completing evaluations enjoyed learning from the wide variety of presentations.
- Invitees recognized by the MRTQ PDN appreciated the opportunity to be honored.
- **The 2nd Annual Statewide ECE Conference will be held in Bangor for October 23 & 24 2020.**

During the summer and fall of 2019, MRTQ PDN collaborated with MaineAEYC, FCCAM, OCFS, DOE, and Educare Central Maine on the **2019 Statewide Early Childhood Education Conference: Connecting ECE Birth through Eight across the State**. Staff and volunteers from all of the agencies came together to put on the first of its kind statewide conference for over **250** participants. The conference was held on Friday and Saturday, October 4th and 5th, 2019. In addition to the conference, **MRTQ PDN presented the 2019 Recognition Celebration on the night of October 4th**.

During the 1st quarter a planning team from MRTQ PDN, MeAEYC, FCCAM and Washington County Community College collaborated to offer a conference in mid-October to Washington and Hancock county ECE practitioners. Simultaneously in York County a planning team comprised of the York County Coalition members, MRTQ PDN, and MeAEYC met to plan and offer a conference in York County.