CONNECTIONS Transformation Highlights

A High-level Overview of the Transformed Application and Resources

How We Began to Transform…

The transformation of the CONNECTIONS application began a few years ago, getting its momentum from focus group discussions with local district and voluntary agency managers, supervisors and caseworkers about "what was working" and "what wasn't working" within the application. We then took the content of those discussions and planned a strategy to "transform" the application.

Our strategy was two pronged – the first being to update the system architecture so that the "behind the scenes" operation, the servers and correlating architectural 'pieces', were updated to support the technology that the transformed application would be operating with. This task was a very detailed venture and this portion of the plan has been successfully completed. The second half of the strategy, was, as you are aware, to update the 'look and operation' of the application itself. The following information describes highlights of how the application has been newly structured to meet the changing needs of the audience who use it on a daily basis. It should be noted that the transformed application returns significantly more information to the user than the previous version of the application; we note this point in the event that the pages take slightly longer to 'load' than they did in the older version of the application.

Highlighted Features of the Transformed Application…

The Transformed CONNECTIONS application look is sleeker, having been developed in a .NET ("dot net") environment. Its' look is modeled like that of a web page – more intuitive for most users and allowing for speedy enhancements and modifications to the system as the need arises. The first phase of the transformation focuses on modifications to: the Common Functions (e.g. workload searches), CPS Intake, Investigation and Foster and Adoptive Home Development (FAD).

*** It should be noted that program and process requirements have remained unchanged.*

For further details about the features of the transformed application please refer to:

- **the CONNECTIONS Transformation Phase 1 Job Aid**

http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/CAMP%20Phase%201%20Job%20Aid%20-%20PDF.pdf

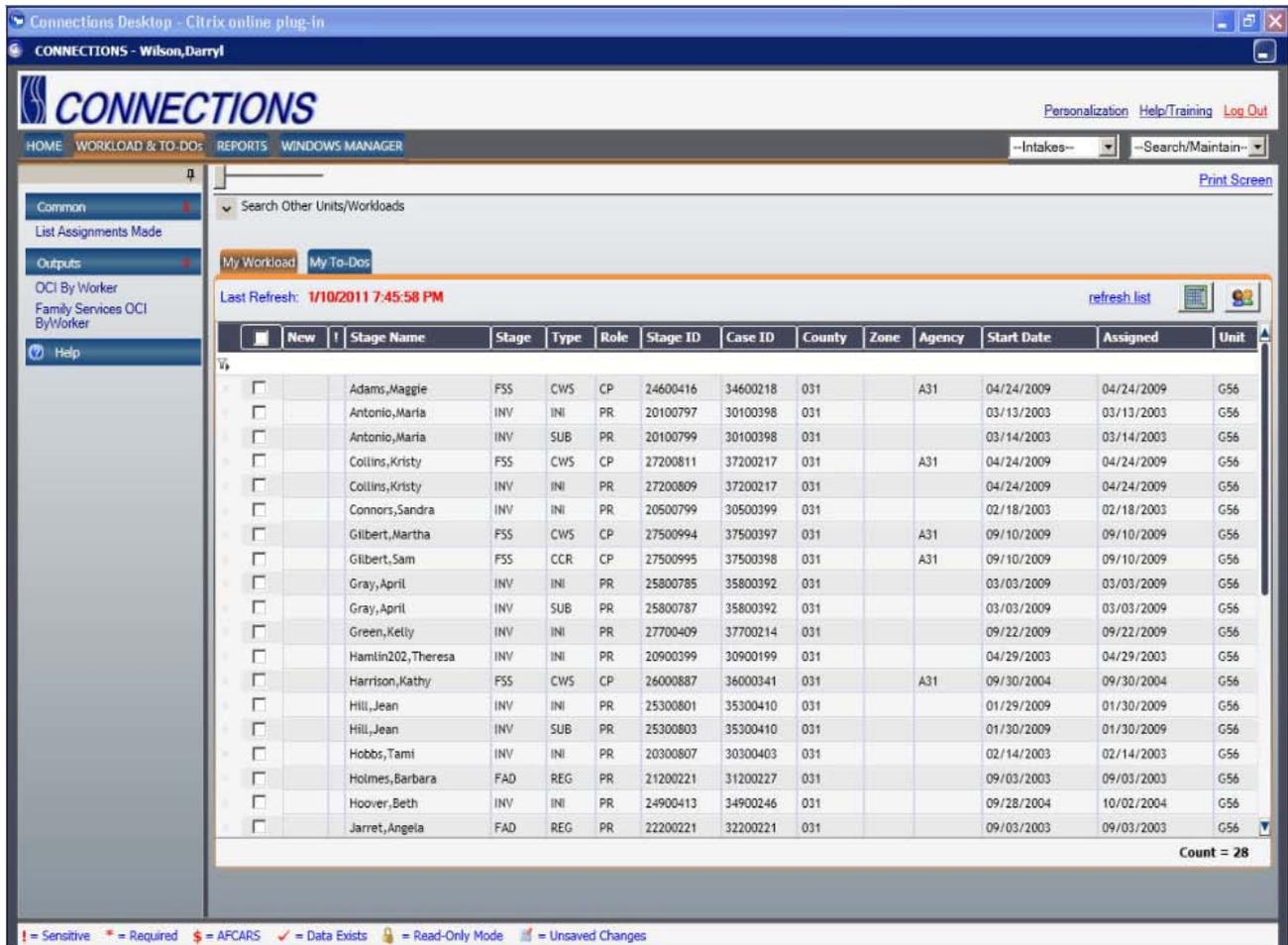- **and, the CONNECTIONS Transformation Quick Start Guide**

http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/Transformation%20Quick%20Start%20Guide%20_final.pdf

(Both of these documents can be found on the CONNECTIONS intranet as they have been posted to the Transformation page.)

- ### The 'Transformed Opening Window'

(It should be noted that the application 'opens' on the 'WORKLOAD & TO-DOs' window.)

The 'opening page' is replaced by the following design:

This design *allows more information to display on one screen, yielding easier access to all system functions, thus streamlining overall navigation.* The opening page is comprised of several 'sections', among them:

- *The CONNECTIONS Toolbar* – (located across the top of the page just under the word CONNECTIONS) which displays the HOME, WORKLOAD & TO Dos, REPORTS and WINDOWS MANAGER tabs and the Intakes and Search/Maintain drop-downs.

- *The Navigation Pane* – (located on the left-hand side of the page) which displays links that perform an action or open a window replacing various menus.

  A new feature: The Navigation Pane has a 'pin' feature which means that it can be expanded or collapsed by clicking the pin icon.

- *The Main Work Area* – (body of the page – front and center) which displays information from whichever tab is accessed.

- *The Legend* – (located at the bottom of the page) which displays information on the various symbols used throughout the application

- *REPORTS Tab*

Clicking the REPORTS tab opens a window that displays a grid listing reports that are available to be launched.

- *WINDOWS MANAGER Tab*

The WINDOWS MANAGER tab is a *new* feature of the transformed application. This feature allows you to keep track of the multiple stages, and in some instances, multiple windows within a stage, that you may have opened at the same time. This new feature was created at the request of system users to provide the ability to 'multi-task' and manage critical workloads.

- *Personalization*

The Personalization link is a new feature that allows access to a window that can be used to customize the display of the workload, as well as a few other elements of the application. Please note that personalized settings apply only to one's own workload, and does not carry-over to other workloads that may be accessed.

- *Outputs*

Outputs (such as the OCI By Worker etc.) are generated from the Output button of the Navigation Pane. To be noted, the security of the application user determines which outputs may be accessed.

- *Help Features*

There will be two ways to access Help information within the application – either by clicking on the Help link that displays on various windows or, by clicking on the Help/Training link located in the top right-hand corner of the page. When you click the Help link on the windows an alphabetical listing of the transformed tabs and windows

displays. When you click the Help/Training link a page displays with various resource documents including 'How Do I?', tip sheets, the CONNECTIONS Transformation Phase 1 Job Aid and the Transformation Quick Start guide.

In Summary…

The various application elements highlighted above are a small snapshot of the transformed application. For a more in-depth detail of the new features we refer you to the *CONNECTIONS Transformation Phase 1 Job Aid*. For your convenience, the job aid is posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet site on the Transformation page.

Further Resources…

There are a number of resources that have been created to aid in the understanding and utilization of the transformed application. The following list details them further.

- *CONNECTIONS Transformation Phase 1 Job Aid*
- *CONNECTIONS Transformation Quick Start Guide*
- *Transformation page of the CONNECTIONS intranet*
- *iLinc Training – CONNECTIONS Transformation Training for Supervisors and Resource Users*
- *TrainingSpace Web-based Training (WBT)*

    The Transformation WBTs include:

    - CPS course (3 modules)
    - Child Welfare course (2 modules)
    - FAD course (3 modules)