North Los Angeles County Regional Center  
Vendor Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes  
October 4, 2018

Present:  
Orli Almog, Suad Bisogno, Mariela Feldman, Sharoll Jackson, Staci Jordan, Dana Kalek, Kristin Laurino, Jenni Moran, and Nick Vukotic - Committee Members  
Maria Bosch, Jamie DeWitt, Kim Rolfes, Arpi Arabian, Arsho Garlanian, Anna Polin, Ruth Janka, Erin Rodriguez, Jenny Dao, Cindy Escobar, and Jennifer Kaiser - Staff Members  

Absent:  
Fredlyn Berger, Deborah Cutter, Bob Erio, Cynthia Fernandez, Don Lucas, Sonia Ojeda, and Marina Pink

I. Call to Order & Introductions

Sharoll Jackson, VAC chair, called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m. and introductions were made.

II. Public Input

A. Terence Carson, from Strategic Technology Solutions, announced that his company provides viable solutions to get service providers into HIPAA compliance and ongoing support to keep them up to date with any changes. HIPAA compliance can be expensive and challenging, but after discussions with the service provider community, they now offer new suite of low-cost service options including train the trainer, policies and forms, risk assessment, and use of a secure mobile cloud. Terence can be reached at tcarson@hipaasap.com and his website is getstarted.hipaasap.com.

B. Sharoll Jackson announced that the center is currently looking for service providers to join the VAC. Applications were made available on the information table; the deadline for application submission is December 15th.
Please direct any questions about VAC membership to Jennifer Kaiser at jkaiser@nlacrc.org.

III. Consent Items

A. Approval of Agenda

M/S/C (J. Moran/K. Laurino) To approve the agenda as presented.

B. Approval of Minutes from the September 6th VAC Meeting

M/S/C (J. Moran/S. Bisogno) To approve the minutes as presented.

IV. Executive Director’s Report (Ruth Janka for George Stevens)

A. Behavioral Services Transition: Dr. Arpi Arabian reported that 48% of the consumers on the transition list have been transitioned to managed care. We still have 70 consumers who are unable to be transitioned because we have not received consent forms from their family. If we do not receive consent forms, we will have to send them Notices of Action informing them that the regional center can no longer provide them with behavioral services. Consumers who have “fee for service” will continue to receive their behavioral services through the regional center.

B. Bridge Funding: We are still waiting to hear about the matching federal funding. In the meantime, the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) has convened a work group to determine how the funds will be allocated. At this point, the bridge funding will be for 1 year only.

C. Burns & Associates’ Rate Study: In the end, about 52% of providers participated in the rate study which made DDS happy and provided much needed information to Burns & Associates. Consumer and family surveys are now available through a survey monkey on DDS’s website. It is very important for families to complete these surveys so Burns & Associates has valuable data to work with. (See section XI. below.)

D. Self-Determination: DDS has identified NLACRC’s 183 consumers to participate in the 3-year pilot program and they will be contacting consumers and families with their application status. The center is in the process of hiring services coordinators and a supervisor for consumers starting the self-determination program and we have also established an internal implementation work group that meets monthly. If we receive the needed
guidelines and orientation materials from DDS soon, we may be able to start the program January 1st!

E. Candidates’ Forums: The center will be holding 2 candidates forums:

1. Thursday, October 11th, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (The Centre in Santa Clarita)
2. Thursday, October 25th, 6-30-8:30 p.m. (New Horizons in North Hills)

It is vital that we have a huge turnout at both forums. We need to show the candidates that we have strength in numbers and we vote!

F. Community Coffees: Ruth and consumer services directors held 3 community coffees last month – one in each of the 3 valleys. Ruth shared the discussion topics and recommendation made by the participants in those meetings. Due to the amount of discussion and input given at the meetings, it seems that 1 hour was not long enough, so now the community coffees will be 2 hours long. Fliers for the next 3 meetings have been scheduled and fliers for them were made available:

1. Monday, October 22nd, 9:00 a.m. (William S. Hart Park, Newhall)
2. Wednesday, October 24th, 6:00 p.m. (Chimbole Cultural Center, Palmdale)
3. Thursday, November 1st, 6:00 p.m. (Public Library, North Hills)

V. Chief Financial Officer’s Report (Kim Rolfes)

A. Fun Facts: The state of California has a 1 trillion dollar economy – the largest in the nation. If California was a country it would be the world’s 7th largest. L.A. County is the 4th largest economy in the nation and it holds the 2 most populous cities in the state. We can make a difference because of our size. NLACRC now serves 26,000 consumers; if you multiply that by everyone who is part of those consumers’ lives you have a very, very large number, which gives us a lot of power to influence our legislators!

B. SB 134: This bill was passed and will have an effect on regional centers. It has 2 components: 1) regional center transparency; and 2) worker retention. It will go into effect January 1st.

C. AB 959: This will was passed which required DDS to post regional center services and their description on their website, along with the typical age group that uses those services. DDS has complied and this information is posted on their website.
D. **Electronic Visit Verification:** As reported in previous VAC meetings, EVV is a telephone and computer-based system that electronically verifies service visits; all states must implement EVV for Medicaid-funded personal care services by January 2020 and home health care services by January 2023. Under the act, an EVV system must verify the following service components:

1. Type of service performed
2. Individual receiving the service
3. Date of the service
4. Location of service delivery
5. Individual providing the services

DDS and other departments, including the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), will be holding stakeholder meetings to involve consumers and their family members, service providers, and the regional centers in discussing options for EVV implementation. The first stakeholder meeting will be held earlier this week at the State Capitol. They are hoping to delay the implementation of this until January 2024. For more information you can visit DHCS’s website at [dhcs.ca.gov/provgovpart/Pages/EVVMeetings.aspx](http://dhcs.ca.gov/provgovpart/Pages/EVVMeetings.aspx).

E. **Home Health Services:** We are waiting to hear more about rate increases for home health services due to local minimum wage increases. DDS has streamlined their process for health and safety requests which should expedite the process for changing the hourly rate. We are going to send a letter to DDS requesting an increase for all home health service providers rather than submitting the requests individually.

F. **NLACRC’s Budget:** The center’s operations budget for this fiscal year is $51.3 million and the purchase of service budget is $421.4 million. We will not know whether or not we will be projecting a deficit or surplus in our POS budget until December, when we must submit our first POS expenditure projection report to DDS. But regardless whether we project a surplus or deficit, we are an entitlement program and services will be provided based on the needs of our consumers based on their individual program plans – not based on our budget. If we exceed our POS budget, DDS will just need to allocate us additional funds.

G. **Money Management Services:** NLACRC has been the representative payee for nearly 1,500 of our consumers. The center, through its RFP process, has selected FACT to provide money management services for all of our consumers in residential settings. Starting November 1st, they will support adult consumers who reside in residential placement and who require assistance in managing third-party benefits, such as Social Security and Medi-
Cal benefits. We anticipate that the transition will take about 18 months. Transition is underway.

H. **Local Minimum Wage:** On July 1st, the minimum wage in Los Angeles will increase to $13.25/hour for employers with 25 or fewer employees and to $14.25/hour for employers with 26 or more employees. Vini Montague, the center’s director of finance, is putting together information to inform our service providers how to apply for a rate increase from DDS.

VI. **Community Services Report**

A. **Risk Mitigation Trainings:** NLACRC will be holding several trainings geared toward specific service types:

   **Chatsworth Office**

   1. Residential CPP: 9:00 am – noon on October 23rd
   2. Adult Residential Facilities: 1:00 – 4:00 pm on October 23rd
   3. Behavior Day Programs: 9:00 am – noon on October 25th
   4. Day Programs: 9:00 am – noon on October 30th
   5. Supported & Independent Living: 9:00 am – noon on October 30th
   6. Adult Residential Facilities: 1:00 – 4:00 pm on November 1st

   **Antelope Valley Office**

   1. Adult Residential Facilities: 1:00 0- 4:00 pm on October 22nd
   2. Supported & Independent Living: 9:00 am – noon on October 29th
   3. Day Programs: 1:00 – 4:00 pm on October 29th

Fliers for each training were made available. Registration can be done online using the Eventbrite on the center’s website. Please contact Venus Rodriguez-Khorasani with any questions at VRodriguez-Khorasani@nlacrc.org.

B. **DS 1891 Forms:** Providers need to update their information every 2 years. This is easy to do using the center’s portal. Notices are going out to providers next week reminding them to do so.

C. **Service Provider Newsletter:** Our next edition of the center’s service provider newsletter will be going out next week via e-mail blast and it will also be posted on the center’s website. You can sign up to have the newsletter sent directly to you.

VII. **Consumer Services Report** (Ruth Janka)
A. **Risk Mitigation**: Our service coordinators expect to be included in our providers’ risk management plans – this is also a regulatory requirement. We are re-evaluating our internal training to include more in-depth training. We want to do our best to ensure our consumers’ health and safety and reduce the likelihood of special incidents. Quarterly case management trainings are now going to be held as part of the center’s 5-year strategic plan. The last one was on in-home support services and in December, the training will be on risk mitigation. We are happy to share copies of the PowerPoint presentations we use for these quarterly trainings with our providers. We are partners in risk mitigation with our providers and share this responsibility with them.

B. **Annual Service Provider Program Evaluations**: Our service coordinators have been reminded that they need to do their part in helping our providers complete their program evaluations. Any providers who are experiencing an issue with this should contact Ruth at Rjanka@nlacrc.org.

C. **Officer of the Day (OD) and Floater Positions**: The center has created these new positions to help cover uncovered caseloads.

D. **Looking up the Assigned Service Coordinator**: A provider made a suggestion that it would be very helpful if a providers could identify a service coordinator by entering the consumer’s UCI number on the center’s website. Ruth asked the providers present if they would find this useful – and they agreed that it would.

**Action**: Ruth will follow-up on implementing this suggestion.

E. **Reduction of Caseload Sizes**: The center is focused on bringing down caseload sizes by hiring lots of service coordinators. We want our service coordinators to have more time to spend addressing their consumers’ needs.

F. **POS Disparity Projects**: NLACRC will be requesting funds to continue the Family Empowerment Team in Action (FETA) program which provides outreach to families who are not using regional center services; the current funding will end in January. The center will also be requesting funds to cover the cost of publishing new outreach materials, including a frequently asked questions sheet, a commonly coordinated services guide, and a family service guide. These materials have already been created, but are being revised to make the language easier to understand. They should be available by the end of the calendar year.
G. **Parent Navigation Program:** We are working with Children’s Hospital LA to replicate their parent navigation program, which they have had significant success with. A parent is hired and trained to help other parents. We want to make this part of our FETA program.

H. **Dental Services:** The state’s Legislative Analyst’s Office released a report last month that included recommendations on how to improve access to dental services by people with developmental disabilities, including:

1. Adding a dental coordinator position at each regional center.
2. Improving access to Denti-Cal services.
3. Increasing the number of dental service providers.

VIII. Committee Business

A. **Follow-up to Last Meeting: Person-Centered Planning Training:** In follow-up to last month’s VAC meeting, copies of the recommended person-center planning trainer were provided to the VAC for their review. After discussion, the VAC decided that they would like the following additional information:

1. The curriculum outline, including ideas for creating customized employment and increasing social activities.
2. What service providers would want from a person-center planning training as it relates to employment – especially for those consumers who have significant challenges.

**Action:** Sharoll with share this request with Cynthia Fernandez for follow-up.

B. **Report on September 13th Collaborative Meeting:** Steve Miller reported that the Southern CA regional center directors and their directors of community services and/or their VAC chairs recently met with the LA Coalition of Service Providers at Harbor Regional Center. Minutes from that meeting were made available. The purpose of the meeting was to priorities issues and how to work together to address them. The number 1 issue was inadequate provider rates and the group decided to take the following actions prior to the development of the state budget for FY 2019-20, which will be drafted and released in January:

1. Organize support the Lanterman Coalition’s recommendation for an across-the-board rate increase of 8% as an initial “down payment” until rate reform is realized.
2. Organize all stakeholders to participate in grassroots meetings with our legislators carrying this message.

A Steering Committee for the group is gathering data to support the message. Talking points for meetings with legislators should be ready by mid-October.

C. Upcoming Legislative Activities (Steve Miller)

1. Candidates’ Forums: The center will be holding 2 candidates forums:
   - Thursday, October 11th, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (The Centre, Santa Clarita)
   - Thursday, October 25th, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (New Horizons, North Hills)

   Fliers for both forums were made available. Please take some with you and share them with others. It is imperative that we have a huge turnout for these forums. Please come and bring as many people as you can with you. Spanish translators will be available. Our legislators and legislative candidates needs to see that we are a force to be reckoned with! Please RSVP to rsvp@nlacrc.org.

2. Assembly Member Richard Bloom: A representative from Senator Bloom’s office will be coming to the NLACRC’s next self-advocacy group meeting on **Tuesday, October 16th, at 10:45 a.m.** Please encourage any adult consumers you know to attend this meeting. Fliers for the meeting were made available.

3. Your Vote Matters! Fliers were made available on how to register to vote. The deadline to register is October 22nd in order to vote in the November 6th elections. Please take and share these fliers.

4. Voter Engagement Trainings: Steve Miller and Michelle Heid are available to provide trainings specifically for direct care staff. Their livelihoods are directly affected by their legislators and they want to help empower them by showing them how they can make an impact by reaching out to their legislators.

IX. Reports from the VAC Priority Issue Work Groups

George has ensured that regional center staff will regularly attend the work group meetings.
A. **Early Start Services** (Dana Kalek for Fredlyn Berger): The work group is in the process of developing its goals. The group discussed the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) which involves many different organizations and stakeholders to improve the social and emotional development of infants and toddlers in the Early Start program. The center is currently hiring for a new Early Start supervisor and hiring additional service coordinators. NLACRC recently held several vendor fairs, including one for Early Start providers, which was very successful. Also, it was announced that the center’s 637 proposal for the use of speech and language pathology assistants (SLPAs) was approved by DDS!

B. **School Age Services** (Mariela Feldman): The work group discussed the behavioral health services transition to managed care, which is going smoothly, but families need urging to get their consents in so the transition can take place! The vendor fair for school age service providers was also very successful.

C. **Adult Services** (Jenni Moran): The work group was joined by Donna Lane, a doctor in clinical psychology who talked with the group about issues that face aging consumers.

D. **Implementation of Legislative Changes** (Sharoll Jackson): The work group discussed voter registration and legislative opportunities.

X. **Report on Board Committee Meetings**

A. **Administrative Affairs** (Kim Rolfes for Cynthia Fernandez)
B. **Board of Trustees** (Sharoll Jackson)
C. **Consumer Services** (Ruth Janka for Sonia Ojeda)
D. **Government & Community Relations** (Sonia Ojeda/Orli Almog)
E. **Nominating** (Jennifer Kaiser for Bob Erio)
F. **Strategic Planning** (Suad Bisogno)

Minutes from the NLACRC Board of Trustees meetings and minutes from all of its subcommittee meetings are posted on the center’s website under the “Governance/Board of Trustees/Approved Meeting Minutes” tab.

XI. **Open Issues for Discussion**

A. **Rate Study**: The Burns & Associates’ client and family rate study is very confusing. In addition, it asks questions like, “Are you happy with the services you receive?” We need to come up with an approach to this.

**Action**: The client and family rate study will be added to next month’s VAC agenda for discussion.
B. **Self-Determination Advisory Committee:** Ruth Janka announced that NLACRC has 2 open spots on its committee and we are seeking applicants; the application deadline is November 3rd.

C. **All You Need to Know to Help People Become Informed Voters:** Steve Miller provided copies of a flier with the following website addresses that you can access in order to become a more informed voter:

2. **Best Voter Information Website:** [https://ballotopedia.org](https://ballotopedia.org)
3. **Find your Ballot:** [https://ballotpedia.org/Sample_Ballot_Lookup](https://ballotpedia.org/Sample_Ballot_Lookup)
4. **Best Disability Voter Education Website:** [https://www.aapd.com/advocacy/voting/](https://www.aapd.com/advocacy/voting/)

**XII. Agenda Items for the Next Board Meeting**

The following item was identified for the VAC’s section of the November 14th board meeting agenda:

A. **Minutes of the October 4th VAC Meeting**

**XIII. Announcements/Information/Public Input**

A. **Next VAC Meeting:** Thursday, November 1st (break out groups will meet)

**XIV. Adjournment**

Sharoll adjourned the meeting at 11:23 a.m.

Submitted by,

**Jennifer Kaiser**

Jennifer Kaiser
Executive Assistant

[vacmin.oct4.2018]