North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Vendor Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
November 1, 2018

Present: Orlí Almog, Suad Bisogno, Deborah Cutter, Bob Erio, Mariela Feldman, Cynthia Fernandez, Sharoll Jackson, Dana Kalek, Don Lucas, Jenni Moran, and Sonia Ojeda - Committee Members

Maria Bosch, Kim Rolfes, Arsho Garlanian, Jesse Weller, Elisa Hill, Erin Rodriguez, Giselle Villa, Cindy Escobar, and Liliana Windover – Staff Members

Claire Moynihan, Diane Weary, Jon Francis, Steve Miller, Michelle Heid, Raquel Armendariz, Lisa Peterson, Sharon Weinberg, Carlos Oviedo, Marla Oviedo, Janice Stevenson, Linda Cobuzzi, Debra Dinielli, Lori Sivazlian, Tania Bartolo, Kenneth Lane, Gabriela Sanchez, Jaeda Farah, Tania Helgun, Alisha Turner, Leticia Leon, Fred Rockwood, Glynda Girens, Erica Beall, Yolanda Bosch, Rita Zelaya, and Susie Pittman - Guests

Absent: Marina Pink, Nick Vukotic, Kristin Laurino, and Staci Jordan

I. Call to Order & Introductions

Sharoll Jackson, VAC chair, called the meeting to order at 9:42 a.m. and introductions were made.

II. Public Input

A.

Terence Carson, from Strategic Technology Solutions, announced that his company is planning an affordable HIPAA compliance training session for service providers to attend. Terence announced that there will be a HIPAA training session scheduled on Thursday, December 6th from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at Sam’s Café at New Horizons in North Hills. Prior to the HIPAA training session, a 30 minute webinar has been scheduled for Tuesday, November 13th from 10:00 to 10:30 a.m. to share information on the course. Any questions for this training and webinar please contact Terence at (844) 210-7040 or he could be reached at tcarson@hipaasap.com.

III. Consent Items

A. Approval of Agenda

M/S/C (D. Kalek/J. Moran) To approve the agenda as presented.
B. Approval of Minutes from the September 6th VAC Meeting

Under H. Local Minimum Wage, page 5: Should read “On July 1, 2019” instead of “January 1st”

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

IV. Executive Director’s Report (Kim Rolfes for George Stevens)

A. 2018 State Capitol 87th Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony: The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) has sent out a request to regional centers for ornaments to be hung on the State Capitol Tree in Sacramento. The tree lighting will take place the first week of December. Ornaments must be sent to DDS by November 9th. If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Lungren, assistant director of communications at DDS at (916) 654-1820.

B. Legislative Updates: Steve Miller reported that the center held two candidates’ forums.

1. The first forum took place on October 11th in the Santa Clarita area and it was well attended. Representative Steve Knight and Senator Henry Stern (representing Katie Hill) attended this forum.

2. The second forum took place on October 25th at Sam’s Café. This forum was also well attended but unfortunately Assemblyman Adrin Nazarian and Senator Bob Hertzberg did not attend.

Steve encouraged service providers to get busy sending letters to our district candidates regarding the challenges our community is facing and inform them our highest priorities that need attention by the Legislature.

C. Behavioral Services Transition (BHT): Dr. Jesse Weller reported that the BHT transition continues and is still in progress. NLACRC continues to work with individuals to obtain consent forms for those that are still pending. If there are any specific questions regarding the BHT transition, please contact Dr. Arpi Arabian for more information at AArabian@nlacrc.org.

D. Burns & Associates’ Rate Study: Surveys were sent out to consumers and families. Kim was glad to report that as of October 26th, DDS received 31.6% responses statewide. She was also glad to report that the responses received for NLACRC was 97%! 
E. Proposed Amendment to State Regulations to allow for the use of Speech, Language, Pathology Assistants (SLPAs): DDS has proposed an amendment to State regulations which will allow the use of SLPAs under service code 707. Written comments are being accepted through December 5th. For further information, please visit DDS’s website and you will find the information under “Law & Regulations, Emergency and Proposed Regulations.”

F. Strengthening Protections for Social Security Beneficiaries Act: A new law was passed by Congress called “Strengthening Protections for Social Security Beneficiaries Act.” This law means that each state’s protection and advocacy group will be responsible for conducting representative payee reviews so it is possible that we or any payee that provide these type services could be audited.

G. Proposal for Worker’s Compensation Rates: The decision to amend rates was denied.

H. Self-Determination: DDS has identified NLACRC’s 183 consumers to participate in the 3-year pilot program and they have contacted 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. The Self-Determination Local Advisory Committee meets the third Thursday of every month from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. If we receive the needed guidelines and orientation materials from DDS soon, we may be able to start the program January 1st.

V. Deputy Director’s Report (Kim Rolfes on behalf of Ruth Janka)

A. 637 Proposal: Infant Development Programs for Antelope Valley: Elisa Hill reported that we are in need of Early Start service providers, providing licensed services such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech therapy in the Antelope Valley. Currently, Early Start service providers cannot bill separately for mileage or the travel time of staff to travel to the Antelope Valley because the cost of travel time and mileage is currently included in the service provider’s rate. As such a travel premium is needed to compensate Early Start providers for their travel time. WIC allows for regional centers to request approval from DDS to develop an alternative for service delivery.

The Early Start subcommittee will be meeting to put together a cost statement. In addition, the center will be collecting data from the providers
receiving the travel premium regarding all no-shows in order to identify the reasons for “no shows” and to address potential disparities in accessing early start services. Public hearings have been scheduled on January 23, 2019 (Antelope Valley) and January 24, 2019 (San Fernando Valley).

B. Community Coffees: Kim reported that Ruth Janka, deputy director, is holding monthly community coffees. The next one will be held this evening at 6:00 p.m. at the Mid-Valley Public Library located in North Hills. The community coffees are an opportunity for our community members to meet in a casual setting with our deputy director to ask questions, share concerns, and get to know our staff. Some of the issues brought to Ruth’s attention and discussed during previous meetings are timelines for services, access for services, unemployment, respite services, public transportation, and the desire of service providers to participate in the IPP process. The meetings are being held in all 3 valleys. Please visit our website if you wish to RSVP.

VI Chief Financial Officer’s Report (Kim Rolfes)

A. Fun Facts: Kim reported that the center’s #1 purchase of service (POS) expenditure is residential services. One of the reasons is because of the number of consumers who have moved from the developmental centers and into the community.

B. Health & Safety (H&S) Waiver Exemptions: DDS provided guidelines for requesting H&S waiver exemptions. In addition, DDS published two forms regarding H&S request, the local minimum wage and the regular. The center is setting-up an internal group to assess all the requests by service providers and we are required to notify DDS within 30 days.

C. Home Health Care Rates: Change in DHCS rates for LVN, RN, and certified nurse aid were approved. Contracts will be sent to providers.

D. State Minimum Wage: The State minimum wage will increase to $12.00 per hour effective January 1, 2019. Service providers seeking a rate increase due change in the State minimum wage must submit payroll records during calendar year 2018 that demonstrate workers who were paid less than $12.00 per hour to be eligible for a rate increase effective January 1, 2019. However, due to local minimum wage requirements, service providers who employ 26 or more employees have been paying $12.00 per hour since July 1, 2017. These same service providers will not have any calendar year 2018 payroll records that demonstrate workers were paid below the State minimum wage due to the local minimum wage requirements. This will result in many service
providers not being eligible for a rate increase on January 1, 2019 since they will not have any workers paid below minimum wage during calendar year 2018 due to local minimum wage mandates. The center has reached out to DDS to obtain clarification regarding this information.

E. **Zero Tolerance on Consumer Abuse or Neglect Policy:** The center’s zero tolerance policy will be sent out to all of our providers in November.

F. **Update of NLACRC Gift Policy:** The center has updated its gift policy regarding what type of gifts are acceptable. More information to come.

G. **R&D Transportation Holiday Survey:** R&D will be sending out a short survey monkey to establish program schedules on December 24th.

**VII  Community Services Report**

A. **Community Services Staff:** Arshalous Garlanian introduced Lisa Mayti as the new resource developer and Sonja Chapman as the CMS specialist for day programs.

B. **Risk Mitigation Trainings:** Our Community Services department hosted 9 Risk Mitigation Management trainings for the service provider community in the last several weeks. We received many positive feedback about the content of the training and we hope to offer more Risk Mitigation trainings in the coming year. There will be one training regarding adult residential facilities scheduled for today at 1:00 p.m. in our Chatsworth office. 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.

C. **Community Care Licensing (CCL):** CCL is conducting “Meet & Greets” with all licensed providers. This is a great opportunity to meet the licensed program analyst and ask facility specific questions. CCL also will share upcoming events and regulations that will impact licensed facilities.

D. **637 Proposal - Community Based Integrated Support Services (CBISS):** No updates. We are still waiting to hear from the department.

E. **637 Proposal - Travel Time for Psychologists to Provide Services in the Antelope Valley:** The center will be working with our contracted psychologists to put together a 637 proposal to establish travel reimbursement rates for psychologists who are willing to travel to Antelope Valley to provide
services. We currently are in desperate need of psychological services in Antelope Valley.

VIII Committee Business

A. Disparities Presentation: Four community-based organizations (CBOs) received funds from DDS for the purpose of promoting equity and reducing disparities in the purchase of services for people with developmental disabilities. A brief presentation was provided by two CBOS who received these funds from DDS.

B. Follow-up on September 13th SCCRC/ LA Coalition Meeting: Steve Miller and Sharoll Jackson attended the Southern California Regional Center Directors meeting with the Los Angeles Coalition of Service Providers on September 13th at Harbor Regional Center. The purpose of the meeting was to prioritize issues and identify how to work together to address them. The number one 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 by the governor 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.

It is very important that we reach out our legislators and coordinate meeting with them before that rate study is release and before the release of the budget in early January. A Steering Committee for the group is gathering data to support the message.

Steve asked the VAC to formally participate in this effort through its Legislative Affairs work group.

C. Interest in LA County 211 Training: This committee agreed to reach out to Patricia Hernandez, program director at 211 LA County Services, to provide a brief presentation during the next VAC in January 2019 regarding information available for generic resources for our community.
**Action:** Sharoll Jackson will contact Patricia Hernandez regarding her services and availability. Upon information, Jennifer Kaiser will send an email to our VAC group.

D. **Approach to Burns & Associates’ Client & Family Rate Study:** Michele Heid stated that the consumer and family on-line survey regarding the rate study is no longer available.

E. **Resignation of Fredlyn Berger:** Fredlyn Berger has resigned from her position on the VAC. Sharoll Jackson announced that the center is currently looking for service providers to join the VAC. This committee currently has 4 openings. 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.

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

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

A. Minutes of the October 4th VAC Meeting
B. Minutes of the November 1st VAC Meeting

X. **Announcements/Information/Public Input**

A. **Next VAC Meeting:** Thursday, January 3rd (no December Meeting)

B. Kim reminded attendees regarding to incoming primary elections on November 6, 2018. Please remember to vote!

C. Michelle Heid announced that there will be a task force meeting on November 15th from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. to discuss the rate study. Michelle will be sending the information to Jennifer Kaiser so it could be distributed to the VAC.

D. R&D Transportation is aware of the constant interruption of services with Keolis and they want to assure the community that R&D is taking the necessary steps to improve the services with Keolis.

XIV. **Adjournment**

Sharoll adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.
Submitted by,

Liliana Windover
Liliana Windover
Executive Administrative Assistant