

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Vendor Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

April 4, 2019

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

George Stevens, Jennifer Kaiser, Venus Khorasani, Lisa Mayti, Giselle Villa, Giselle Melik-Jahanian, Jesse Weller, Cathy Robinson-Learn, Arsho Garlanian, Arpi Arabian, Erin Broughton-Rodriguez, Jenny Dao, Sheila Calove, Sonja Chapman, Kim Rolfes, and Evelyn McOmie – Staff Members

Rebecca Lienhard, Teresa Rathsam, Sharon Weinberg, Alona Yorkshire, Michelle Heid, Steve Miller, John Brauer, Pam Arturi, Malina Hussain, Lisa Fisher, Terrence Carson, Elle E. Wallace, Maria Ortiz, Harry Bruell, Glynda Givens, Stephani Anderson, Nikisia Simmons, Erica Beall, Tania Bartolo, Erik Flores, Kelly Grimes, Ken Lane, Monique Lopez, Debra McCurry, Andrea Arambula, Lori Sivazlian, Debra Dinielli, Linda Cobuzzi, Cheryl Keehne, Haley Rhyne, Margie Rhyne, Kristine Cu, Diane Geag-McRoy, Kevin Shields, Sally Sahebi, Leticia Leon, Fred Rockwood, Kelly Weber, Monica Bhuyan, Hal Kirklun, Howard Grossman, Monica Villeda, Myrna Beltran, Jon Francis, Darrell Bunch, Tania Holguin, Kori Jones, Laura Schmieder, Saeda Farah, Alexandra Rivera, Loreena Garcia, Andrea Lemus, Vincent Van Antwerp, Alisha Turner, Lily Handley, Olga Reyes, Devin Letzer, Ann Moore, Mayra Perez, Tina Castro, Rachel Thornally, Yanet Rao, Ari Murphy, Susie Pittman, and Brenda Watts - Guests

Absent: All present

I. Call to Order & Introductions

Sharoll Jackson, VAC chair, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and introductions were made.

II. Public Input

A. A guest present reported that one of her consumers had their Medi-Cal discontinued for no apparent reason; who could she talk to about this?

Action: Kim Rolfes offered to follow up with her after the meeting.

B. 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. His company is holding trainings on a monthly basis; the next one will be held Thursday, April 18th. They also provide train-the-trainer and online trainings. For more information on how to get your company in compliance with HIPAA regulations, Terence can be reached at tcarson@hipaasap.com and his website is getstarted.hipaasap.com.

III. Consent Items

A. Approval of Agenda

M/S/C (J. Moran/B. Erio) To approve the agenda as presented.

B. Approval of Minutes from the March 7th VAC Meeting

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

IV. Executive Director's Report (George Stevens)

A. April 5th Rally: Steve Miller reported that after only 1 month of planning, the rally is really coming together! It took a lot of people and a lot of work, but everything is ready and we are prepared for a large turnout!

B. April 18th Assembly Hearing: Unfortunately, Assembly Member Jim Frazier, chair of the Select Committee on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, had to cancel the April 18 hearing that had been planned to be held at New Horizons in North Hills. He hopes to schedule a hearing in the greater Los Angeles region sometime in the future.

C. Burns & Associates' Rate Study: The assumptions and mechanics of the study don't reflect reality. There are several issues with the rate study, including:

1. Direct service professionals are treated as entry level positions with no needed skills; this could not be further from the truth.
2. If a consumer is 30 minutes late to program, the payment rate drops from 100% to 83%.
3. The study compresses our system by bringing some programs up but also bringing other programs down.
4. Real estate and cost needs are inadequate.

We received 178 responses on the study through our survey monkey which we will forward to the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) by the input deadline. Our main message to DDS and legislators is to extend the implementation deadline to provide them with enough time to thoroughly review the study results so they fully understand its implications and needed modifications can be made. Our voices must be heard so the May Revise does not include a rate model that would be detrimental to our system. George encouraged service providers to attend the budget hearings in Sacramento and provide testimony.

- D. Behavioral Health Services Transition: Dr. Arpi Arabian provided an update on the consumers who are having their behavioral health services transitioned from the regional center to the managed care plans. The transition is almost 90% done.

V. **Deputy Director's Report** (Ruth Janka)

- A. Self-Determination Program (SDP): DDS conducted a series of train-the-trainer sessions in February and March to prepare regional centers for the delivery of orientation presentations to SDP participants across all 21 centers; several NLACRC staff members attended those trainings where they received orientation materials and updated information regarding the mechanics of SDP. DDS has confirmed that all regional centers have 60 days from the date of the last DDS training (March 15, 2019) to conduct at least one orientation with its SDP participants. DDS has also authorized regional centers to purchase initial person-centered planning (PCP) services to assist participants with the transition into the SDP. Regional centers can purchase PCP services from vendored providers or from non-vendored providers who will be required to demonstrate training or certification in the principles of person-centered planning. NLACRC has been made aware that there are currently 9 financial management service (FMS) providers through other regional centers and will be obtaining this information from DDS as soon as it is made available. The center is also in the process of vendoring a number of potential FMS providers in its catchment area. NLACRC continues to work toward finalizing its internal procedures and will be conducting staff training in April, in advance of the orientations. The center is collaborating with the SDP local advisory committee to review and modify the orientation materials to ensure that they are user-friendly and readily understandable to all participants. NLACRC will also be partnering with the SDP local advisory committee in conducting orientations. Orientations will be held across all three offices and notifications regarding orientation schedules will be distributed through Eventbrite and will be published on NLACRC's events

calendar located on the center's website. The center plans to hold its first orientation at the end of April or early May. Trainings will also be held for service providers at all 3 of the center's offices.

- B. Community Coffees: Ruth offered to hold community coffee events at service provider program sites to speak with their staff, consumers, and/or families to provide them with information and answer any questions they may have. If interested, please contact Ruth's assistant, Sandra Rizo, at SRizo@nlacrc.org.
- C. New Horizons: Just celebrated their 65th anniversary!

VI. Chief Financial Officer's Report (Kim Rolfes)

- A. Funding for Purchasing EVV Mobile Devices: Kim contacted DDS to find out if there would be any additional funding provided to service providers in order to comply with California Labor Code which requires employers to reimburse employees for the use of mobile devices as it relates to implementing the CMS electronic visit verification (EVV) requirement. DDS reported that they have not made any decisions with regards to the specific model of implementation but will be continuing to involve service providers, consumers and their families, and other stakeholders as DDS determines the best implementation model for California and how to support local programs comply with the CMS EVV requirement. More information regarding DDS and EVV, including any upcoming stakeholder engagement opportunities, can be found on DDS's website at <https://www.dds.ca.gov/EVV/>.
- B. NLACRC's Budget: The center's operations budget for FY 2018-19 is currently \$51,763,350, the purchase of service (POS) budget is \$430,645,160, and the family resource center budget is \$207,187, for a total budget of \$482,615,697 at this point. The center is currently projecting a deficit in the POS budget between \$20.1 and \$25.4 million which will be resolved with future funding allocations from DDS.
- C. NLACRC's Audited FY 2017-18 Financial Statement: We received another excellent audit; the financial statement has been posted on the center's website.
- D. Money Management: NLACRC has been the representative payee for nearly 1,500 of our consumers. The center, through its RFP process, selected FACT to provide money management services for all of our consumers in residential

settings. FACT 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. Kim reported that letters would be sent out to all residential service providers this month notifying them of this change. We anticipate that the transition will take about 18 months. Please direct any questions about this to revenuehelp@nlacrc.org.

- E. Consumer Growth: The center is now serving over 27,000 consumers!

VII. Community Services Director's Report (Evelyn McOmie)

- A. Gratitude: Evelyn expressed gratitude to Suad Bisogno, Lisa Peterson, Susie Pittman, and Alona Yorkshire for spending 4 hours of their time working with our community services department to sort through the input received on the Burns & Associates rate study.
- B. Home & Community-Based Services (HCBS) Proposals: We have not yet heard back from DDS on the status of the proposals.
- C. CMS Final Rule: The center held 5 informational sessions with over 100 service providers in attendance.
- D. Request for Proposals (RFP): An RFP has been posted on the center's website for financial management service providers for the self-determination program. Please contact Lisa Mayti with any questions at LMayti@nlacrc.org.

VIII. Committee Business

- A. Resignation of Kristin Laurino: Kristin Laurino resigned from her position on the VAC.
- B. Transformation to Competitive Employment Act (Attachment): No discussion or action was taken on this agenda item.
- C. Nominations for FY 2019-20 VAC Chair: Only 1 nomination was made.

M/S/C (J. Moran/B. Erio) To nominate Sharoll Jackson to continue serving as VAC chair next fiscal year.

IX. Agenda Items for the Next Board Meeting

The following item was identified for the VAC's section of the April 10th board meeting:

- A. Minutes of the April 4th VAC Meeting

X. Announcements/Public Input

- A. A question was raised as to whether or not POS authorizations could be e-mailed.

Action: Kim will talk with Vini Montague, the center's director of finance, about this and report back at next month's VAC meeting.

- B. Next Meeting: Thursday, May 2nd (full meeting)

XI. Committee Work (The committee breaks into their workgroups)

Before the committee broke into their workgroups, a question was raised as to whether additional break-out groups should be formed to include consumer employment and services for older adult consumers.

Action: The VAC's priorities for next fiscal year will be discussed at next month's VAC meeting.

- A. Early Start Services (Dana Kalek)
- B. School Age Services (Mariela Feldman)
- C. Adult Services (Jenni Moran)
- D. Implementation of Legislative Changes (Sharoll Jackson)

XII. Adjournment

Sharoll adjourned the meeting at 10:58 a.m.

Submitted by,

Jennifer Kaiser

Jennifer Kaiser
Executive Assistant

