

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Vendor Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

June 6, 2019

Present: Orli Almog, Deborah Cutter, Sharoll Jackson, Staci Jordan, Dana Kalek, Don Lucas, Jenni Moran, Sonia Ojeda, and Nick Vukotic - Committee Members

George Stevens, Ruth Janka, Jennifer Kaiser, Arsho Garlanian, Evelyn McOmie, Kim Rolfes, Venus Rodriguez-Khorasani, Lisa Mayti, Arpi Arabian, Cathy Robinson-Learn, Sonia Chapman, Lauren Morton, Erin Broughton-Rodriguez, Jenny Dao, and Emmanuel Gutierrez – Staff

Christian Depaz, Dana V. Andrews, Erica Beall, Alona Yorkshire, Tania Bartolo, Haley Rhyne, Lisa Fisher, Ken Lane, Kelly White, Rebecca Lienhard, Teresa Rathsam, Yanira Mayanes, Shaun Weinberg, Harry Bruell, Glynda Givens, Maria Ortiz, Pat Walsh, Charles Devlin, Leticia Leon, John Brauer, Pam Arturi, Rebecca Holik, Rickie Macken Chilvers, Ella W., Lily Handley, Alisha Turner, Jessica Morton, Steve Miller, Claire Moynihan, Terrence Carson, Debra Donovan, Monique Lopez, Ana Mana Rojas, Lori Sivazlian, Cal Enriquez, Ann Moore, Fred Rockwood, Diane Geary, Hal Kirklin, April Godales, Kevin Shields, Lizeth Corral, Michele Linares, Emily Owens, Scott Bowling, Neily Nersisyan, Kate Sheldon, Chelsea Rivera, Andrew Lemus, Cindy Aguirre, Saeda Farah, Lori Anderson, Kim Lee, Loreena Garcia, Scott Shepard, Richard Dier, Jon Francis, Lori Resnick, Stephanie Anderson, Rachel Thornally, and Idris Danesi - Guests

Absent: Suad Bisogno, Bob Erio, Mariela Feldman, and Cynthia Fernandez

I. Call to Order & Introductions

Sharoll Jackson, VAC chair, called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m. and introductions were made.

II. Public Input

A. Loreena Garcia from ETTA provided copies of the Summer@ETTA 2019 summer schedule, which included such events as camp day, pirate day, and Disney day!

III. Consent Items

A. Approval of Agenda

M/S/C (J. Moran/D. Kalek) To approve the agenda as presented.

B. Approval of Minutes from the May 2nd VAC Meeting

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

IV. Executive Director's Report (George Stevens & Ruth Janka)

A. Appreciation: George will be retiring from NLACRC next month after serving 20 years as its executive director. George thanked the service providers for their support and their involvement in making sure our system continues to move forward. Our consumers have come from workshops and group homes to employment and independent living in the community. George thanked everyone for making such a positive difference in the lives of people with developmental disabilities. Ruth Janka will assume the position of executive director on Monday, July 15th and he is assisting her in the transition.

A. State Budget & Trailer Bill Language: The May Revise includes the following additional increases which were not included in the Governor's proposed budget that was released last January:

1. \$3.5 million increase for operations growth and utilization.
2. \$122.2 million increase for purchase of services (POS) growth and utilization.
3. \$1.6 million increase for trauma informed services for foster youth.
4. \$1.6 million increase for additional family home agency oversight.
5. \$163.7 million increase for provider rate adjustments and regional center transparency and accountability. The increase is intended to help stabilize capacity and maintain options for residential services; address rate differences between regional centers and vendors; and stabilize the workforce. On average, provider rates will receive a supplemental increase of approximately 18% with no provider rate decreases. To implement these supplemental rate adjustments and increase regional center transparency and accountability, the revised budget includes \$4.5 million for regional center operations.
6. \$1 million increase for Early Start co-pays.
7. \$2.9 million increase for updated expenditure data for home health rate increase, supplemental payment program for intermediate care facilities and pediatric day health care.
8. \$500,000 increase for the Best Buddies program.
9. \$50.3 million increase to suspend the uniform holiday schedule until December 31, 2021.
10. \$2.1 million increase to cover the January 1, 2020 state minimum wage

increase from \$12.00 to \$13.00 per hour. The budget does not include any relief from the local minimum wage increases.

11. \$14.4 million increase for operations expenditures (\$10 million for personal services and \$4.4 million of operating expenses and equipment).
12. \$1.6 million increase to pay for DDS's portion of the electronic visit verification (EVV) system.
13. \$158,000 to pay for a full time position to implement trauma informed services for foster youth.
14. \$3.4 million increase to cover the cost of DDS's move to a new building.
15. \$2.5 million increase for provider rate adjustments and regional center transparency and accountability.

The budget still does not include the 8% across-the-board rate increase for service providers and regional center operations that we have been pushing for. **It's not too late! Please call the governor and your senate and assembly representatives and urge them to include the much needed 8% increase.** Tell them how many people you are serving who will not benefit from the budget as it is.

Kim added that the rate increase is time limited: January 1, 2020 to December 30, 2021.

Steve Miller added that to address the results of the Burns & Associates' rate study, the governor, the Assembly, and the Senate have all offered proposals as part of the ongoing budget negotiations. Of these 3, only the Senate's proposal comes close to providing the support needed to stabilize the system. The Senate's proposal would provide \$200 million in service provider rate increases, beginning January 1, 2020. This is roughly double what the other 2 proposals would pay. In addition, the Senate version would allow service providers to request a rate increase based on the minimum wage in their area. **We need to push for approval of the Senate's proposal.**

- B. Hearing: The Assembly Select Committee on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities has been tasked with reaching out to California's IDD community to learn about the challenges those with disabilities face and what the state can do to better serve them. Under the chairmanship of Assembly Member Jim Frazier, the Select Committee has been holding hearings and forums in local communities throughout California. The next public hearing will be held at 5:30 p.m. at the SDGE Energy Innovation Center in San Diego. It is a listening session; a platform to have your voice heard by members of the

Legislature. With the closure of the developmental centers and the state moving away from institutional living, it is imperative that the Legislature pay close attention to how IDD individuals are being served in their communities and by the state.

- C. Statewide Webinar: A statewide webinar called “Real Work for Real Pay in the Real World” is going to be held on Tuesday, June 18th, from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. The intended audience is youth and students of all ages with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families to learn about pathways to competitive integrated employment (CIE). If you are interested, you can register for the webinar at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1050264900494369805>

- D. Bridge Funding: The bridge funding received federal approval; it will provide a 2.1% increase, but it will only be for 1 year. The increase is effective May 1, 2019 through April 30, 2020 for the providers of community-based day programs, in-home respite agencies, and community care facilities under the alternative residential model in “high cost” counties. “High cost” counties are those with an average weekly wage of \$900 or higher per the US Bureau of Labor Statistics data for the 4th quarter of 2017. Unfortunately, the bridge funding will expire on April 30, 2020. For specific information on the vendor rate changes, including how rates were adjusted and which vendors are affected, please see the Department of Development Services’ (DDS’s) website.
- E. Behavioral Health Transition: Dr. Arpi Arabian reported that the transition of consumers to managed care plans for their behavioral health services is 90% complete!
- F. CA Health & Human Services Secretary: Dr. Mark Ghaly was appointed to this position by Governor Newsom earlier this year. In this role, Dr. Ghaly will oversee California’s largest agency which includes many key departments that are integral to supporting the implementation of the governor’s vision to expand health coverages and access to all Californians. Before joining Governor Newsom’s team, Dr. Ghaly worked for 15 years in county health leadership roles in San Francisco and Los Angeles. Dr. Ghaly has shown an interest in our system and recently met with the Southern CA regional center directors to learn more about our challenges, issues, and strengths.

V. **Joint Presentation by LA Coalition and the VAC**

The L.A. Coalition of Service Providers, the VAC, and service providers presented George with their acknowledgements for his many years of service at the regional center and for his 20 years of leadership as its executive director.

VI. Deputy Director's Report (Ruth Janka)

- A. CalFresh: The California Department of Social Services (DPSS) is starting the Cal-Fresh food stamp program this month. Eligible families can apply to get up to \$192 per household member on an EBT card. The DPSS will be working with DDS to enable regional centers to assist people in applying for Cal-Fresh and regional centers will also be responsible for some tracking. For more information go to GetCalFresh.com.
- B. Self-Determination Program: We still have 42 consumers who need to participate in their orientation. We are in the process of organizing trainings for service providers. We have just vendored Accredited Nursing to provide financial management services. We will have a SDP supervisor at our main office and have an SDP specialist at each branch office.
- C. Staffing: The center is currently recruiting for a supervisor for our Antelope Valley office and a risk assessment specialist.
- D. Community Coffees: Ruth continues to hold community coffee events in all 3 valleys at various service provider sites. 123 Home Care will be hosting a coffee on June 24th, at 10:00 a.m. and The Adult Skills Center (TASC) will be hosting a coffee on August 7th at 10:00 a.m. If you would like to host one, please contact Ruth's assistant, Sandra Rizo, at SRizo@nlacrc.org.
- E. Coffee Amongst Us (Cofecito Entre Nos): Dr. Jesse Weller will be holding coffee events in Spanish. The first one will be here on Thursday, June 13th, at 11:00 a.m.
- F. Caseload Ratio Public Meeting: Will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 25th, at our San Fernando Valley office. Anyone is welcome to attend.

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

- A. Funding for Purchasing EVV Mobile Devices: Kim reported that she has seen nothing in the budget to cover the cost of purchase EVV mobile devices; it will most likely be an unfunded mandate.
- B. NLACRC's Budget

1. Fun Fact! The top 3 purchase of service (POS) growth areas are: 1) community integration; 2) personal assistance; and 3) in-home respite.
2. FY 2018-19: The center recently received another POS allocation from DDS, so our POS deficit budget has dropped from \$20-\$24 million to \$5-\$9 million. Our total budget for this fiscal year, as of today, is \$499 million.
3. FY 2019-20: We received our preliminary budget from DDS and expect to receive our advances (80% of our total projected budget) in July and August. We expect our budget for next fiscal year to be over a half of a billion dollars.

C. Legislation: The NLACRC board voted to support the following bills:

1. AB 261 (Mathis): This bill would repeal the prohibition on the regional center's ability to purchase social recreation and camping services.
2. AB 311 (Frazier): This bill would repeal the half-day billing requirement, which was originally enacted as a cost-savings measure during the recession.
3. AB 438 (Frazier): This bill would repeal the uniform holiday schedule.

D. Money Management Services: The center has finalized its contract with FACT to assume the duty of representative payee services for our consumers. The transition from the center providing this service to FACT should take about 18 months. Letters about this change have been sent to all of our residential service providers and consumers. We have just started transitioning consumers from our San Fernando Valley office.

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

- A. Community Placement Plan (CPP): The proposed FY 2019-20 state budget includes additional funding to serve consumers with challenging needs who are moving out of developmental centers and other large facilities and into the community.
- B. Stakeholder Surveys: We received 160 responses to our surveys which will help us identify the needs of our community. The input needs to be submitted to DDS by June 14th.

- C. Program Design Changes: Will be made once the state budget is passed in order to reflect any budget or trailer bill language mandates.

- D. Upcoming Trainings:
 - 1. Self-determination program: June 10th, 10:00 a.m. to noon (SFV office)
 - 2. Self-determination program: June 12th, 10:00 a.m. to noon (AV office)
 - 3. Medication administration: June 24th, 10:00 a.m. to noon (SFV office)
 - 4. Medication administration: June 25th, 10:00 a.m. to noon (AV office)
 - 5. Risk mitigation: July 23rd (AV office)
 - 6. Risk mitigation: July 29th (SCV office)
 - 7. Risk mitigation: July 25th and 31st (SFV office)
 - 8. Special incident reports (SIRs): October 22nd and 29th

Evelyn provided everyone with a list of SIR reporting requirements and a list of questions that will need to be answered when submitting an SIR. Please use these documents to help train your staff. NLACRC staff are available and willing to come to your program site to provide SIR trainings.

- E. New Employment Specialist: Evelyn introduced Lauren Morton, the center's new employment specialist. Lauren will work closely with the Employment Roundtable that was established at last month's VAC meeting.

IX. Committee Business

- A. Two VAC Members Needed to Serve on the Strategic Planning Committee

Action: Erica Beall (incoming VAC member) and Nick Vukotic (current VAC member) volunteered to serve on the center's Strategic Planning Committee next fiscal year.

X. Agenda Items for the Next Board Meeting

The following item was identified for the VAC's section of the June 12th board meeting:

- A. Minutes of the June 6th VAC Meeting

XI. Announcements/Public Input

- A. Next Meeting: Thursday, August 1st (full meeting) – no July meeting

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

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

XIII. Adjournment

Sharoll adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m. and the individual workgroups met.

Submitted by,

Jennifer Kaiser

Jennifer Kaiser
Executive Assistant

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