

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Vendor Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

November 7, 2019

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

Michele Heid, Raquel Armendariz, Dana Hart, Cindy Amaya, Lisa Fisher, Alona Yorkshire, Dennis Rutnam, Crystal Cortes, Idris Danesi, Ester Fajota, Maria Cecilia Royo, Lori Sivazlian, Linda Cobuzzi, Lisa Peterson, Daniel Ortiz, Cindy Kozlowski, Tara Estrella, Sally Sahebi, Barak Almog, Glynda Givens, Maria Ortiz, Olga Reyes, Silvana Reyes, Nicholle Cash, Stephani Anderson, Pati Johns, Jon Francis, Kelly Reyes, Tina Castro, Rachel Thornally, Myra Mantejano, Haley Rhyne, Kristine Cu, Rebecca Holik, Limoran Chiprut, Hal Kirklin, Yolanda Bosch, Fred Rockwood, Saeda Farah, Kendra Espinoza, Lori Resnick, Andrea Lemus, Allie Stix, Christian Depaz, Maya Jimenez, Cecille Royo, Michelle Linares, Tania Bartolo, Jessica Gould, Julie Eby-McKenzie, and Uju Okeke – Guests

Ruth Janka, Jennifer Kaiser, Jesse Weller, Kim Rolfes, Maria Bosch, Lisa Mayti, Venus Khorasani, Cathy Robinson-Learn, Elisa Hill, Cristina Preuss, Sheila Calove, Jenny Dao, Erin Rodriguez, Olga Ruiz, Sonja Chapman, and Silvana Reyes - Staff

Absent: Catherine Carpenter, Deborah Cutter, Ken Lane, Kevin Shields, and Nick Vukotic

I. Call to Order & Introductions

Sharoll Jackson, VAC chair, called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. and introductions were made.

II. Public Input - There was no public input.

III. Consent Items

A. Approval of Agenda

A report on the employment committee was added as item IX.C.

M/S/C (J. Moran/O. Almog) To approve the agenda as amended.

B. Approval of Minutes from the October 3rd VAC Meeting – Attachment

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

IV. Emergency Preparedness Trainings (Julie Eby-McKenzie, SCDD)

Julie Eby-McKenzie, from the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) announced that the SCDD is offering free training for service providers and other groups on disaster preparedness, response and recovery (including fires, earthquakes and active shooter). The training, which has been a joint effort between the Governor's Office of Emergency Management, Earthquake Country Alliance, Southern California Earthquake Center, Prep it Forward, and the SCDD, focuses particularly on people with disabilities and other access and functional needs. They are also in the process of developing materials for power outages and wildfires. Depending upon the size of the group, the training runs from 2 to 3 hours. Julie is fully certified as a trainer and is offering trainings days, evenings, and on Saturdays. She can come to your location to train your staff (anywhere in LA County); also the SCDD has a meeting room at their Glendale office that could accommodate up to 20 people. She prefers a group of 15 or more. Julie can be reached at julie.eby-mckenzie@scdd.gov or at (818) 543-4631.

V. Executive Director's Report (Ruth Janka)

- A. Consumer Statistics: The center is now serving over 28,000 consumers and applicants: 4,421 in Early Start, 965 in Intake, and the remaining 22,617 in the Lanterman program.
- B. AB 5: Independent Contractors & Employees: AB 5 has been chaptered and is now in law. It set standards to determine whether a worker is an employee or an independent contractor. The case stems from a lawsuit filed by a pair of delivery drivers against Dynamex, after the company changed their job status from employee to independent contractor.
- C. Public Charge Policy: An injunction is halting the application of the public charge policy. This policy would allow the government to deny an immigrant entry into the United States, or adjust lawful permanent resident status, if it is determined that the person is likely to become a public charge. Public charge is a term used in immigration law to refer to a person who might be dependent upon public programs as their main source of support.
- D. SB 398 (Durazo): This legislation allows protection and advocacy agencies (e.g. Disability Rights California) unaccompanied access to programs, facilities, and

service provider premises, relevant records, staff, and consumers when there is reasonably suspected abuse or neglect. It also allows monitoring of facilities, programs, and provider's compliance with respect to rights and safety. This bill was chaptered on October 7th. Copies of an announcement by Disability Rights California were provided.

- E. Final Rules Compliance Funding: The 2019 enacted budget includes \$15 million for providers to come into compliance with home and community-based services (HCBS) final rules. The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) has released provider compliance funding guidelines; concepts are due to regional centers by November 22nd and regional centers must submit completed concepts to DDS by December 13th. DDS will review and notify regional centers by February 21, 2020.
- F. Self-Assessments: DDS is developing a provider self-assessment. Once completed, they will release a request for proposals to a third party to review the completed self-assessments.
- G. Service Provider Rate Increases: DDS is awaiting approval from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in order to fund the rate increases; they anticipate approval by January 2020. We have everything in place to move forward with the rate increases, we are just waiting for DDS's go ahead.
- H. Burns & Associates' Rate Study: Burns and Associates has completed its work on the comments, summarized responses, and revisions to some of the rate models. The materials are now in the Administration's review process and will be released once approved.
- I. Safety Net: DDS will be scheduling a series of community roundtable discussions on remaining needs for development of the community safety net. The expectation is that they will be structured discussions similar to those that were held a few years ago as the enhanced behavioral supports homes and community crisis homes were in the planning stages.
- J. Joint Advocacy Platform for the Southern CA Regional Center Directors and the Los Angeles Coalition of Service Providers: Both groups met to discuss a legislative advocacy platform for this upcoming year that addresses the needs of the regional center and service providers. The focus will be increased funding to regional center operations and service provider rate increases. To this end, an invitation has been sent to Dr. Mark Ghaly, the secretary of California's Department of Health & Human Services, to visit programs in our area over a 2-day period.

- K. Group Home Health & Safety: The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) is collaborating with other agencies on how to improve the health and safety for consumers living in group homes. They are reviewing critical incident reports that were submitted by 4 different states. Their findings are that state agencies are not consistent with the timeliness of their actions. The OIG is working with DDS the select 5 regional centers to review. More to come.
- L. Legislative Advocacy Report (Michelle Heid): Michele provided everyone with copies of her written report which covered the following topics:
1. 25th congressional district special election
 2. NLACRC grass roots visits with local legislators
 3. Rate study and associated rate models
 4. Developmental services task force
 5. DDS safety net stakeholder roundtable discussions
 6. Bills that have been chaptered (signed into law)
 7. Voting solutions for all people
 8. Split roll property tax ballot initiative
 9. North San Fernando Valley bus rapid transit project
 10. Aging and disability transportation forum
 11. Upcoming events

VI. **Chief Financial Officer/Deputy Director's Report** (Kim Rolfes)

- A. Fun Fact: NLACRC sent 14 health and safety requests to DDS last fiscal year – and all 14 were approved!
- B. Resources for Power Shutoffs and Wildfires: Have been posted on our website under “Latest News.”
- C. NLACRC's Budget: Is \$538 million for this fiscal year. We won't know whether or not we will be projecting a surplus of deficit in our purchase of service (POS) budget until we prepare our first POS expenditure projection next month.
- D. Electronic Visit Verification (EVV): The 21st Century CURES Act, signed into law in 2016, requires that states set up an EVV system to verify that services for all Medicaid-funded personal care and home health care services occurred. 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 service
6. Time the service begins and ends

The new requirements for EVV will not change where and how these services are delivered. All states must implement EVV for personal care services by January 2020 and home health care services by January 2023.

VII. Chief of Program Services' Report (Jesse Weller)

- A. New Director: Jesse introduced Cristina Preuss who was hired to fill his former position: consumer services director in charge of Early Start and school age consumers.
- A. Purchase of Service (POS) Disparity Projects: The center currently has 2 disparity projects:
 1. The Family Empowerment Team in Action (FETA): This program uses MSW students from CSUN to provide outreach to families who are not using regional center services. They are also developing micro-videos on school age, transition, and adult services in both English and Spanish. The FETA program will be coming to a close at the end of December.
 2. Parent Mentor Program: We have 2 part-time positions (20 hours per week) for parents to help other parents navigate the regional center system. This will also include a customer care phone line. The position at the San Fernando Valley office has been filled by Victoria Girard who is currently going through the new staff orientation process; we are still recruiting for the position at the Antelope Valley office.
- B. Community Coffee Events: We continue to hold these events at various service provider locations. Family Caring Supports and Desert Haven are the most recent hosts. The next one will be held at New Horizons on Friday.
- C. Cafecito Entre Nos Events: These events are community coffees for Spanish-speaking families and are held every second Thursday at 11:00 a.m.; we had 25 families attend one last month – even families from outside of our catchment area attended. These events are held in the San Fernando and

Antelope Valleys and are a great way to receive information from our community and to have a dialogue. The last one was held at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, October 10th, at our Antelope Valley office and had about 35 people in attendance. The next one will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, November 14th, at our San Fernando Valley office.

- D. Self-Determination Program (SDP) Update: We currently have 156 active participants. DDS has set a deadline of December 6th requiring all participants to complete their program orientations; we still have 21 consumers outstanding. DDS will be making additional consumer selections by November 22nd to fill those positions left by consumers who withdrew from the program. The SDP Volunteer Advisory Committee continues to meet at 7:00 p.m. on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 1 of NLACRC's 3 offices; the next one will be held Thursday, November 21st, at our Santa Clarita Valley office. Michelle Heid is the committee chair. DDS, The Autism Society of Los Angeles, and Disability Voices United are co-sponsoring a SDP conference in Culver City tomorrow; NLACRC leadership will be there.
- E. CalFresh: We continue to partner with the family focus resource center, DDS and the Department of Social Services (DSS) to implement this program and the interagency agreement has been signed.

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

- A. Request for Proposals: Proposals for our housing development organization (HDO) is posted on our website and project proposals are due December 4th.
- B. Final Rule Compliance: DDS is once again offering \$15 million to help service providers come into compliance with the home and community-based services (HCBS) final rule. Eligible service providers are invited to apply for funding by submitting their proposals to us by November 22nd. NLACRC will be offering technical assistance on Thursday, November 14th, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. DDS will be making their selections by February 21st.
- C. Annual Program Evaluations: Are due; there are still 10 that are outstanding.
- D. Independent Audits: Are due; there are still 15 that are outstanding.
- E. Service Provider Trainings: NLACRC held trainings on 25 different topics last fiscal year. Our next training schedule will be coming out on February 2020.

- F. E-mail Blasts: Please go to our website and sign up to receive e-mail blasts.
- G. Newsletter: The newest issue of the community services newsletter is out and copies of it were made available.

IX. Committee Business

- A. Resignation of Loreena Garcia: Loreena Garcia had to resign from her position on the VAC as she no longer works for a NLACRC service provider.
- B. VAC Representative to the Consumer Services & Government/Community Relations Committees: With Loreena's resignation, we need someone to take her place as VAC representative to these 2 committees.

Action: Orli Almog volunteered to represent the VAC on the Board's Consumer Services and Government/Community Relations Committees.

- C. Report on Employment Committee (Suad Bisogno/Erica Beall): The VAC had decided they did not want to add a 5th priority issue break out group for employment, so various vendors decided to establish their own committee to focus on customized consumer employment options. The committee met last month at Jay Nolan Community Services and about 25 people were in attendance. They discussed ways to mitigate delays for internships and they would like to bring in representatives from the Department of Rehabilitation to discuss supported employment options. The next employment committee meeting will be held at noon on Wednesday, December 11th at The Adult Skills Center (TASC). If you would like to join the committee, please provide your e-mail address to Suad.

X. Agenda Items for the Next Board Meeting

The following items were identified for the VAC's section of the January 15th board meeting agenda:

- A. Minutes of the November 7th VAC Meeting
- B. Minutes of the January 9th VAC Meeting

XI. Announcements/Public Input

- A. Next Meeting: Thursday, January 9th (full meeting)

XII. Committee Work

- 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 10:48 a.m. and the individual committee work began.

Submitted by,

Jennifer Kaiser

Jennifer Kaiser
Executive Assistant

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