

North Los Angeles County Regional Center  
**Vendor Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**  
August 6, 2020

**Present:** Orli Almog, Erica Beall, Suad Bisogno, Cal Enriquez, Bob Erio, Kenny Ha, Sharoll Jackson, Dana Kalek, Alex Kopilevich, Ken Lane, Don Lucas, Sonia Ojeda, Daniel Ortiz, Kevin Shields, and Nick Vukotic - Committee Members

Approximately 142 service providers and 12 NLACRC staff participated in the call in addition to the VAC members

**Absent:** Catherine Carpenter and Jenni Moran

---

**I. Call to Order**

Sharoll Jackson, VAC chair, called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. She welcomed 4 new members to the VAC: Cal Enriquez, Kenny Ha, Alex Kopilevich, and Daniel Ortiz!

**II. Public Input** – There was no public input.

**III. Consent Items**

A. Approval of Revised Agenda

**M/S/C** (O. Almog/C. Enriquez) To approve the revised agenda as presented.

B. Approval of Minutes from the June 4<sup>th</sup> VAC Meeting

**M/S/C** (O. Almog/K. Lane) To approve the minutes as presented.

**IV. Executive Director's Report** (Ruth Janka)

A. HEROES Act vs. HEALS Act

The Senate's HEALS Act proposes a second \$1200 stimulus check per qualifying adult, \$500 per child and *will provide support to dependent adults who are listed on their parent's tax returns. (CARES Act did not)*. Provides unemployment benefits though at a reduced rate (benefits based on 70% to 75% of lost wages, starting at \$200 a week and over time increasing to \$500 a week, with state assistance). Note – Congress did not extend the \$600 per week unemployment benefit past July 31. HEALS Act will provide Paycheck Protection Program assistance though will target the hardest-hit small businesses (those with revenue losses of 50% or more over last year). The HEALS Act also includes further tax relief for businesses that hire and rehire workers and builds on the tax credits that were part of the initial CARES Act. Self-imposed deadline for this is Friday, August 7<sup>th</sup>, before the Senate takes a break.

B. CARES Act - Provider Relief Fund – Deadline extended to August 28<sup>th</sup>

Relief funding to offset expenses and lost revenue for healthcare providers through the Provider Relief Fund. RC vendors are eligible to apply.

C. Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) delays Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Final Rule Compliance Date to March 2023

In light of the impact of COVID-19 on states' abilities to complete settings assessments and implement remediation plans, an extension was requested; CMS granted it and has delayed the compliance date to March 2023. CMS strongly encourages states to use the extra year to evaluate the provision of Medicaid funded HCBS services to fulfill larger public health priorities and advance the tenets of beneficiary autonomy and community integration.

D. COVID-19 Updates

1. California Department of Public Health (CDPH) COVID-19 Update

519,427 COVID-19 positive; 9,501 deaths.  
6,302 (<) COVID-19 positive hospitalized; 1,892 (<) ICU.  
1,328 (<) Suspected COVID-19 hospitalized; 190 (>) ICU.

2. LA County Public Health Update

195,614 cases and 4,758 deaths. 1,757 (<) hospitalizations.

3. Healthcare Demand Modeling Projections – as of July 29<sup>th</sup>

Hospital beds and ventilators: adequate capacity over the next four weeks. ICU beds: adequate capacity though may be more limited depending on demand. Hospitalizations have been flat with a slight decrease since July 22. Estimates that 22% of LA County residents are currently infected (1 out of 450) and infectious, and estimates 1 in 9 residents have had C-19.

4. Regional Centers Statewide – as of July 31<sup>st</sup>

1,679 positive, 100 deaths. Largest percentage of deaths for a congregate setting is SNFs.

5. NLACRC Consumers – as of August 5<sup>th</sup>

171 positive cases, 42 recovered, 50 hospitalized, 17 deaths. 63% of positive cases are in family home/ILS/SLS. 37% in congregate settings. SIR trends – because facilities must submit SIRs re: COVID-19 however we may not be getting that same data re: individuals living in the family home/independent/SLS. Note: individuals with disabilities hospitalized due to COVID-19 have a right to visitors.

E. State Budget

The developmental disabilities services system budget increased by \$580 million, as compared to the May Revise, and ultimately, landed in the best place possible as our system will not endure trigger cuts should California not receive federal funding this fall. We sent a letter to Governor Newsom thanking him.

F. Funding Policy Items

Enhanced behavioral support home (EBSHs) with delayed egress and secured perimeter.  
Rate Increases for ILS, IDP, and ES therapeutic Services.  
Temporary expansion of the secure treatment area at Porterville Developmental Center.  
COVID-19 funding (increase in OPS and POS to cover additional costs).

G. Education Funding

\$5.3 billion additional funding directed toward “Rigorous Distance Learning.” Under this new law, schools must provide:

1. Devices and connectivity so every child can participate in distance learning.
2. Daily live interaction for every child with teachers and other students.
3. Class assignments that are challenging and equivalent to in-person instruction.
4. Targeted supports and interventions for ESL learners and special education students

H. Governor’s Office

Public Health Order requires public schools in counties on the monitoring list to remain closed this fall. Statement against the administration’s directive to exclude undocumented individuals in the 2020 census; all Californians to be counted.

I. DDS Directives

The department has extended several directives to allow continued flexibility for regional centers and service providers in providing services to consumers and families. The updated directives with new expiration dates are available on the center’s website.

J. Developmental Services Task Forces and Workgroups

The Developmental Services Task Force and Workgroups continue to meet. The Oversight, Accountability and Transparency Group met and reviewed the strengths and challenges in delivering service during COVID19. The meetings are public and information regarding the meeting can be found on the Center’s website.

K. NLACRC Office Closure to the Public – Continues to be in Effect

Effective March 20, 2020, NLACRC’s offices continue to be closed to the public during Stage 2; however the center is fully operational including receptionists in each office answering and directing calls.

L. Remote Staff

NLACRC staff working remotely will continue to do so during Stage 2 of the re-opening. The center’s chief organization development officer and a cross-departmental team has developed a return to work plan for the agency; it’s in its final draft.

M. Community Engagement

The Family Focus Resource Center continues to facilitate support groups virtually, including Cultivar y Crecer, Parents of Adult Consumers, and the Filipino Support Group. Cafecito, Aprendiendo, and Grupo de Hombres continue to be facilitated by Dr. Weller virtually through Zoom. A new African American parent group is underway.

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

A. Fun Facts

1. Face Masks: Kim reported that NLACRC had distributed 199,000 face masks to consumers, their families, their support staff, service providers, and community-based organizations. Kim recognized and thanked the contract transportation service providers, Keolis, Student Transportation Services, R&D Transportation, and NLACRC's staff for providing this support to the people we serve.
2. Eligibility Determinations/Intakes: Kim reported that as of the June 2020 report, NLACRC had 100% compliance with assessing eligibility determination within statutory requirements and had the highest number of Intakes statewide.
3. Ken Lane's Retirement from The Adult Skills Center (TASC): Kim recognized and acknowledged the valuable contributions Ken Lane of to support and serve our service delivery system and wished Ken well in his retirement.

B. Security and Privacy Awareness

Kim introduced Arlayn Ladson-Castle, the center's contract administration and privacy manager to the VAC. Arlayn provided a brief overview of her role and reminded service providers of the importance of protecting the data of which they are entrusted. Arlayn reported that the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) will be hosting a webinar called 'Security & Privacy Awareness 1010 Keeping Our Data Safe' for NLACRC service providers. There are two webinars scheduled on Monday, August 24<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm; and from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Arlayn encouraged service providers to register for the training via Eventbrite on our website. Arlayn will be meeting with Evelyn McOmie next week to identify the best ways to contract service providers. Arlayn can be reached at [privacyofficer@nlacrc.org](mailto:privacyofficer@nlacrc.org).

C. NLACRC's Financial Reports

1. FY 2020-2021

The center received its preliminary budget and contract from DDS. This contract provides the means for the center to receive its cash advances from the State so that the center may continue operations and process payments to service providers. The contract represents approximately 80% of the center's allocation. The center anticipates receiving its B-1 amendment by the later part of August 2020. The center's operations budget for FY 2020-21 is \$46,292,399 and the purchase of

service (POS) budget is \$415,799,466 for a total budget of \$462,071,805.

2. FY 2019-2020

The center's operations budget for FY 2019-20 is \$56,146,244 and the purchase of service (POS) budget is \$500,512,610 for a total budget of \$556,658,854. The center is projecting a deficit in our non-CPP POS budget of \$8,146,278. The POS deficit increased over the last month as a direct result of increased services needed by consumers and families due to the stay at home order such as personal assistance, SLS, home health agency services, and 1:1 supplemental support services in residential settings. The center is projecting a surplus in CPP POS of \$389,734; the surplus is due to the delay in placing individuals from a developmental center, a STAR facility, or an IMD into the community due to COVID-19.

D. Statewide Regional Center Budgets

Twelve of the 21 regional centers are projecting potential non-CPP POS **surpluses** for this fiscal year, which range from \$1.2 million to \$18.7 million; while the remaining 9 regional centers are projecting non-CPP POS deficits, which range from \$168,000 to \$8.1 million. NLACRC has the largest non-CPP POS deficit. Statewide, the regional center system is projecting a non-CPP POS **surplus** of \$33.1 million.

E. Upcoming Audits

1. DDS Audit: Kim reported that during the month of August, DDS will conduct a program review audit of the programs for which the regional center received federal funding, which includes Medicaid Waiver, 1915i, TCM, Nursing Home Reform.
2. Windes Audit: The center has scheduled its annual independent financial audit with its CPA firm, Windes, for October 2020.

F. Rollover

Those service providers seeking information on the authorizations that continued into FY 2020-2021 should contact their accounts payable staff person. All authorizations were scheduled to be mailed by the end of July 2020 and service providers should expect to receive them shortly.

G. Additional Check Runs

The center is providing additional POS check runs for service providers due to the COVID-19 situation on August 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>.

H. Community-Based Integrated Support Service (CBISS) 637 Proposal

DDS denied the center's CBISS 637 proposal to provide day programming and employment services to consumers in the community with complex medical and/or behavioral supports. The CBISS 637 proposal included variable staffing levels with higher

staffing qualifications compared to existing day program services. DDS found that the CBISS 637 proposal was significantly costlier than other comparable services and the denial was based on WCI 4669.75(d) which requires the use of lease costly services. Kim acknowledged and thanked all the service providers that had participated in the 637 proposal process.

I. FACT Transition and P&I Balances

The center has received feedback from service providers seeking information about what to expect with the representative payeeship for Social Security/Medi-Cal benefits is being transferred from NLACRC to FACT. The center will be working on a list of FAQs that will be shared with service providers. It was encouraged that service providers maintain cash resource balances below \$300 to ensure that the consumer social security/Medi-Cal benefits are not terminated for exceeding the \$2,000 cash resource limitation.

J. Service Provider Independent Audit/Review Reports

The center has received questions from service providers inquiring if the service provider independent audit/review requirement has been waived due to COVID-19. Kim reported that the service provider independent audit/review requirement has not been waived and service providers that meet the criteria under statute (WIC 4652.5) are required to submit the independent audit/review report within 9 months of their fiscal year.

K. NLACRC's New Antelope Valley Office

We are selling some of our old office furniture; the auction ends today. Go to govdeals.com if interested. We should be able to relocate to our brand new office in late September.

**VI. Chief of Program Services Report (Jesse Weller)**

A. Consumer Services Directors Positions

We currently have two openings for consumer services directors. Sheila Calove held this position previously for our branch offices and Maria Bosch for the Adult, Transition and CPP Units. Recruitment is currently in progress for those positions.

B. Community Engagement

Continued facilitation of groups such as Cafecito Entre Nos via zoom, Alianza de Hombres, Aprendiendo Entre Nos, and the new Black & African American Support Group.

C. Disparity Committee

We continue our discussions regarding Festival Educational planning for October. Regarding the Special Olympics Southern California, Dr. Weller had the opportunity to meet the president of this organization. We are currently building some relationships and we will try to coordinate to see if they can attend our disparity committee meetings. The

Disparity Committee helped established the center's new African-American parent support group; 22 families have already shown interest in participating.

- D. Daily placement review continues daily to assess for high risk conditions. Also reviewing plans for individuals who want to go for a visit home to ensure safety.
- E. The center continues to distribute personal protective gear (PPG) to consumers, families, and service providers. An application to apply for PPG is available on the center's website.

## **VII. Community Services Director's Report (Arsho Garlanian for Evelyn McOmie)**

### A. Requests for Proposals 2020

Will be posted on our website on August 24<sup>th</sup>; proposals are due October 9<sup>th</sup>.

### B. Residential Services Orientation

Is being held virtually from July 20<sup>th</sup> to August 17<sup>th</sup>.

### C. Community Care Licensing Safety Notice re: Hand Sanitizer

Has been posted on our website.

## **VIII. Progress Reports from Service Provider "Return to Work" Groups**

The center has scheduled meetings with service providers, by service type, to collaborate on plans to resume service delivery in the community:

### A. Early Start

Dana Kalek (chair)  
Elisa Hill (staff lead)  
Sandra Rizo (administrative support)

### B. Individualized Services

Dr. Bruce Gale (chair)  
Chantelle Crown (staff lead)  
Cheryl Blizin (administrative support)

### C. Residential Services

Tatiana Winter and Wilda White (chairs)  
Venus Rodriguez-Khorasani (staff lead)  
David Ramos (administrative support)

### D. Independent Living Services/Supported Living Services

Kevin Shields (chair)

Maria Bosch (staff lead)  
David Ramos (administrative support)

E. Day Programs (site-based)

This group met on May 28<sup>th</sup>, June 18<sup>th</sup>, and July 9<sup>th</sup>. The next meeting will be held Thursday, August 13<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. Representatives from Community Care Licensing join in the meeting discussions.

Bob Erio (chair)  
Steve Johnson (staff lead)  
Jennifer Kaiser (administrative support)

F. Community Based Day Programs

The first meeting for this group will be held August 10<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m.

Suad Bisogno (chair)  
Lisa Mayti (staff lead)  
Lizeth Chavez (administrative support)

**IX. Legislative Educators' Report** (Michelle Heid/Raquel Armendariz)

Michelle and Raquel provided everyone with copies of their written report, which included:

A. A Legislative Update

Legislators returned to the Capitol on July 27<sup>th</sup> for their last 5 weeks of the legislative session; they will be hearing about hundreds of bills tidying up any final issues before final adjournment on August 31<sup>st</sup>. Governor Newsom will then have until September 30<sup>th</sup> to sign or veto the bills sent to his desk.

B. State Budget Update

The state budget was signed into law on June 29<sup>th</sup> and covers the fiscal year July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021. The signed budget is balanced and protects services critical to the disability community and other human services programs. The legislature rejected cuts to many regional center services that had been included in the Governor's May Revise.

C. Federal Representatives

With trigger cuts looming if federal relief funding is not provided to states, advocacy is needed to protect our services and supports. Please contact your federal representatives, including: Senator Kamala Harris, Senator Dianne Feinstein, Congressman Brad Sherman, Congressman Mike Garcia, Congressman Tony Cardenas, and Congressman Kevin McCarthy.

D. Legislative Calendar

Many changes have been made to the legislative calendar in response to COVID-19.



E. California's Joint Economic Stimulus Plan

Key working groups from both houses are prioritizing economic recovery in the final weeks of the session to develop a joint \$100 billion stimulus plan.

F. DDS Directives (see Section IV.I. above.)

G. Bills

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many bills were stalled in the regular bills process and are dead for this legislative session except those that deal directly with the currently health crisis, wildfire prevention, and homelessness.

H. November 3<sup>rd</sup> General Election

Mail in ballots will be sent to all registered voters; the state will also offer safe in-person voting options. In LA County, voters will have 10 consecutive days and Election Day to vote at any participating vote center in California.

I. Census 2020

The census only takes place every 10 years and it is critical for people with developmental disabilities and their families to participate in it. People with disabilities tend to be undercounted.

J. Workers' Compensation Changes

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, Governor Newsom issued executive order N-62-20 which significantly expanded workers' compensation eligibility for employees diagnosed with COVID-19.

K. Federal Response to COVID-19

1. HR 6201 Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)
2. HR 748 Coronavirus Aide, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act
3. HR 266 Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act
4. HR 7020 Paycheck Protection Program Flexibility Act

L. NLACRC Events

(For more information about these groups, please contact Jennifer Kaiser at JKaiser@nlacrc.org.)

1. Self-Advocacy Group: Meets every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday at 10:45 a.m.
2. Consumer Advisory Committee: Meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month at 11:00 a.m.
3. Self-Determination Local Advisory Committee: Meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

4. Government & Community Relations Committee: Meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month at about 7:00 p.m.

M. Upcoming Community Events

1. Santa Clarita Valley Chamber of Commerce 2<sup>nd</sup> annual current affairs forum with Congressman Mike Garcia: Tuesday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, at 2:00 p.m.
2. Valley Industry & Commerce Association (VICA) After Dark with Council Member Mitch O'Farrell: Thursday August 27<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00 p.m.

**X. Committee Business**

A. Annual VAC Orientation: Review Policies & Procedures

Copies of the VAC policies and procedures were provided. The primary role of the VAC is to provide advice, guidance, recommendations, and technical assistance to the board in carrying out its mandated duties.

B. FY 2019-2020 VAC Action Log

A list of all of the actions that were taken by this committee last fiscal year were provided for the VAC's information.

C. FY 2020-2021 VAC Meeting Schedule

Copies of the VAC meeting schedule were provided; all meetings will be held via Zoom until further notice.

D. FY 2020-2021 VAC Roster & Terms

The VAC was provided with a copy of a list showing the status of their 6-year terms on the VAC and when they will term off.

E. Discussion re: VAC Priorities for FY 2020-2021

The VAC's priorities for FY 2019-20 were:

1. Early Start Services: Continue strengthening and enhancing the social-emotional development of children by supporting the family system in alignment with the State Systematic Improvement Plan (SSIP). Advocate and educate the medical community in early intervention and available services to support optimal development of every child.
2. School Age Services
3. Adult Services: Including the implementation of the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services' (CMS') Final Rule, the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA), and transportation issues.

4. Implementation of Legislative Changes - including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), mandated reporting, zero tolerance, cyber insurance, etc.

**Action:** The VAC will revisit these priorities next month and identify their proposed priorities for this fiscal year.

F. Volunteers Needed to Represent the VAC on Board Committees

1. Administrative Affairs: Kevin Shields volunteered to continue representing the VAC at the Administrative Affairs Committee.
2. Consumer Services & Government/Community Relations: Orli Almog volunteered to continue representing the VAC at these 2 meetings.
3. Nominating: Bob Erio volunteered to represent the VAC on the Nominating Committee.

G. Update on Employment Committee (Suad Bisogno)

1. Recommendations for Removing Barriers to Employment

Reviewed next steps for advancing the VAC's proposed policy/recommendations to the Board. The recommendations must first be presented to the board's Consumer Services Committee on August 19<sup>th</sup>. Orli agreed to present the recommendations as VAC representative to that committee. Erica and Suad agreed to be available for support.

H. Update on Developmental Services Task Force Meetings (Erica Beall)

Erica reviewed most recent meeting dates for all workgroups and commented on key recommendations. Links to view all on DDS page were also provided. It was noted that the DS Taskforce is now moving to monthly check in calls.

**XI. Reports from the VAC Priority Issue Work Groups**

Since the VAC has not been meeting in person, the break-out groups have not been meeting after the VAC meetings.

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

**XII. Report on Board Committee Meetings**

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.

- A. Administrative Affairs (Kevin Shields)
- B. Board of Trustees (Sharoll Jackson)
- C. Consumer Services (Orli Almog)
- D. Government & Community Relations (Orli Almog)
- E. Nominating (Bob Erio)
- F. Strategic Planning (Erica Beall/Nick Vukotic)

### **XIII. Agenda Items for the Next Board Meeting**

The following items were identified for the VAC's section of the September 9<sup>th</sup> board meeting agenda:

- A. Minutes of the August 4<sup>th</sup> VAC Meeting
- B. Minutes of the September 3<sup>rd</sup> VAC Meeting

### **XIV. Announcements/Public Input**

- A. Next Meeting: Thursday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, at 9:30 a.m.

### **XV. Adjournment**

Sharoll adjourned the meeting at 12:32 p.m.

Submitted by,

*Jennifer Kaiser*

Jennifer Kaiser  
Executive Assistant

[vacmin.aug6.2020]

