

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Self- Determination Local Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

March 21, 2024

Present: Lori Walker, Richard Dier, Michael Carey, Miriam Erberich, Jordan Feinstock, Lia Cervantes Lerma, Wilmary Torres, Victoria Berry, Socorro Curameng, Jon Francis -
Committee Members

Denise Juarez, Gabriela Eshrati, Robin Monroe, Silvia Haro, Cristina Preuss, Evelyn McOmie, – **NLACRC Staff Members**

Melissa Meira Amster, Ivette Kruk, Jacquie Bisquera (Jacquie), Xochitl Gonzalez, Bianca, Claudia Wenger, Kristianna Moralls, Melissa Keller, Lisa M. Carey, Education Advocate Dora Alston# NeuroNav (Dora Alston), K Merzouk, Meira Amster, Shawna Shelton, Stella@girasolhive.org, Arlene Mun, Mrs. A Dunbar, Sol Garza (Interpreter) (Sol Garza) Jasmine Barrios- Minutes Services-- **Guests**

Absent: Josefina Romo, Diana Padilla-Garcia, Ellen Jannol,

I. Call to Order, Introductions and Housekeeping

Lori Walker called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm.

Spanish interpretation services were announced.

NLA staff and Committee members introduced themselves to the group and explained their connections to SDP.

II. Public Input and Comments

Lori shared contact information for issues related to SDP:

NLA SDP Email: selfdetermination@nlacrc.org

SDP Hotline: 818-756-6314

Committee Direct Email: nlacrcsdlac@gmail.com

Ivette Kruk, the parent of a consumer, shared that she received a 30-day Termination of Service Letter from FMS due to Code 315 not generating due to a glitch. She received a response to her inquiry but wanted to bring awareness to this situation as this is an ongoing issue.

Lia Cervantes-Lerma, from SCDD, shared her information in the chat and shared that State-wide Trainings are held every Monday at 10:00 am in English and the next week in Spanish. The next training is scheduled for April 1st in English, regarding IEP Strategies.

Wilmary Torres, from Disability Rights California, shared an upcoming webinar celebrating National Siblings Day and addressing the relationship between NLA clients and their siblings.

This live webinar will take place on April 10th from 10am-12pm.

Lori shared information on how to access the Committee Meeting agenda and Zoom links on the NLA website via the calendar and the SDP section of the NLA website.

Jordan Feinstock announced that there is an Emergency Preparedness Training that will be held on March 26th, April 9th, April 23rd, May 1st, May 21st and June 18th. Gabriela clarified that these meetings are invitation only based on consumers identified as living in a high-fire risk area and attendees will be given an emergency Go-Kit.

III. Meet the Interim Executive Director Cristina Preuss and the Deputy Director Evelyn McOmie

Cristina Preuss introduced herself as the Interim Executive Director for NLA. She began her career as an Early-Intervention Specialist in the late 1990s, gaining experience working with Spanish-speaking families in different age groups and continued as a Service Coordinator, Supervisor, Director and now Interim Executive Director. She feels that there is much work to be done and looks forward to collaborating with the Committee on SDP and how it can benefit NLA consumers.

Evelyn McOmie has been with NLA since 2003 where she began as a Service Coordinator. She then worked her way to being a Manager, Supervisor, Director, and Chief and now serves as the Deputy Director since January 2024. She also spent time at the South Central Regional Center as a Service Coordinator. Evelyn completed the SDP trainer training that was offered at South Central Regional Center. She believes that SPD is for everyone who has the option and would like to ensure that the process is as easy as possible for interested consumers at NLA.

The Committee asked the team they would consider to be the top 3 concerns or obstacles in Self Determination. The answer included understanding the Self-Determination program, FMS issues and complacency.

IV. Funding to Support Implementation of the SDP Discussion

Lori stated that this has been a standing agenda item, and there are still plans to fund the coaching services and the monthly support group. The RFP will be coming up in April. Lori proposed to hire a professional, licensed workflow specialist to conduct interviews to gain perspectives on the current process, document concerns and successes and develop a gap analysis to report findings and offer solutions to streamline the issues. NLA staff indicated that more information would be needed to make a recommendation on this proposal.

V. Approval of the February Committee Meeting Minutes

M/S/C (J. Feinstock/M. Carey) To approve the meeting minutes as presented.

VI. Committee Reports

A. Chair Report

Lori shared information on the California for Health and Human Services Master Plan for Developmental Services. This initiative seeks “to create and strengthen bridges that connect the developmental services system to other critical systems across CalHHS, and other systems and services including education, housing, employment, transportation, and safety.”

Senate Bill 1463: Self-Determination Program Success “would require the Governor to appoint, subject to confirmation by the Senate, a Deputy Director of Self-Determination, responsible for overseeing the successful implementation and operation of the program.” A link was shared for a template for a Letter of Support for those who are interested.

Senate Bill 1281: Advancing Equity and Access in the Self-Determination Program Act is also of interest to the Committee. The bill “would require the department, by January 1, 2026, to establish statewide standardized processes and procedures for the Self-Determination Program, as specified, and to ensure that those processes and procedures are applied consistently by regional centers, and that enrollment is equitable by race, ethnicity, and regional center. The bill would require deviation from the standardized processes and procedures to be approved by the department”. Kristianna Moralis from Disability Voices United requested that the Committee submit a letter of Support for this particular bill, and a link was provided.

B. Board Report Related to SDP

Lori shared that at the last NLA Board Meeting, there were over 100 Service Coordinators who joined the meeting, and many complaints and concerns were heard in public input regarding high caseloads, low pay, training, the social media post of a Board Member, Out of Area Paperwork and Social Recreation. Part of the Committee plan includes the investigation of complaints by the Service Coordinator.

Cristina shared that in regards to the issues raised at the Board Meeting, internal discussion is being had to determine the concerns that were expressed. The Committee noted that there is more communication that is needed with the Service Coordinators regarding SDP.

C. Discussion/Updates of Best Practice Work

It was shared that Soccoro Curameng and Miriam Erberich will be attending the next Best Practices Committee meeting.

D. Questions/Concerns from Chair to Staff

This item was addressed in item A.

VII. Committee Centered Plan

Richard Dier shared that one of the roles of the SDLAC includes “reviewing the development and ongoing progress of the SDP, including whether the program advances the principles of Self-determination, operating consistently with the requirements and making ongoing recommendations for improvement to NLA”.

As part of the Committee Centered Plan, the Committee has an objective to Meet with NLA upper management to get a clear idea of their view on how to organize SDP to make it more efficient and productive. Discussion will continue regarding these issues, and it was noted that Wilmary Torres and Socorro Curameng will be joining the subcommittee.

VIII. Implementation Updates

A. NLA Update - Silvia Haro

Silvia reviewed the SDP Report as presented in the packet.

As of March 1st:

Participants have completed Orientation: 777 (increased by 28)

Total number of budgets that are certified: 386 (increased by 10)

Total number of budgets that are in the certification process: 2

Total number of spending plans that are approved: 318

Total number of spending plans in progress: 65

Total number of PCPs completed: 389 (increased by 54)

Total number of participants that have opted out of SDP after enrolling: 4

Total number of Inter-Regional Center Transfers (out):3

Total number of participants that have fully transitioned into SDP with approved spending plans and active SDP IPPs: 318 (increased by 17)

Robin Monroe reviewed the SDP Participant Supports Sunging. There is a remaining balance for this FY of \$109.663.

B. DDS Update

Xochitl Gonzalez, is a DDS Liasion for multiple regional centers in California. Her role is to learn how the Committees support families and make DDS aware of what NLA can offer potential consumers within the regional center and DDS as a whole. Her main role is to listen and learn from the Committee.

C. SCDD Update - Lia Cervantes-Lerma

There are no updates at this time.

IX. SDP Challenges and Successes

Claudia Wenger shared that she attended the Transition to Adulthood Fair at the Miller Career and Transition Center, and most people who visited their sponsor table had

never

heard of NLA's SDP program.

X. Agenda Items for Next Meeting

XI. Adjournment

Lori Walker adjourned the meeting at 8:32 p.m.

Submitted by:
Minutes Services

