

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Consumer Services Committee Meeting Minutes
May 18, 2022

Present: Gabriela Herrera, Nicholas Abrahms, Cathy Blin, David Coe, Jennifer Koster, Alma Rodriguez, Rocio Sigala – Committee Members

Liliana Windover, Lizeth Chavez, Dr. Michael Fernandez, Jennifer Williamson, Ruth Janka, Jesse Weller, Evan Ingber, Alan Darby, Cristina Preuss, Robert Dhondrup, Jazmin Zimmerman, – Staff Members

Ana Quiles, Leticia Garcia, Jeremy Sunderland, Sylvia Brooks-Griffin, Lillian Martinez, Nancy Gallardo – Interpreter, Shelley Hash- Interpreter, Erica Beall, Kimberly Bermudez, Jasmine Barrios-Minutes Services - Guests

Absent:

I. Call to Order & Introductions

Gabriela Herrera called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.
Lizeth Chavez took attendance; a quorum was met.

II. Public Input

Ana Quiles acknowledged an email that was sent out to families last week from NLA in regards to continued COVID services. This has been an ongoing issue and although it has been addressed by NLA in the email, the Committee needs to know that there is still a disconnect in communication to consumers which has an impact. Ana would like the Committee to ensure that everything is being done to take care of families.

Alma Rodriguez works with Save the Children, who serve about 300-400 children. One issue being faced by parents is the gap between diagnosis and reaching NLACRC to apply for services. Parents shared that they have not received returned phone calls, they are unsure what steps to take after submitting applications, or what to do if they have been denied for services. Last Tuesday, Ana Quiles and Liliana Martinez joined Alma at a community meeting where they gave information and listened to the issues brought by families. Alma states that the overall sentiment is that families do not feel that they can be helped. Alma hopes that there can be continued communications between the organizations to serve and improve these experiences.

III. Consent Items

A. Approval of Agenda – (Page 2)

Dr. Weller would like to add item J under Committee Business: DDS Services Access and Equity Awards.

Ruth Janka would like to add item K under Committee Business: COVID Authorizations

Ruth also wanted to modify the agenda to reflect that item C under Committee Business: Pending Transfers Update will be presented by Cristina Preuss.

M/S/C (D. Coe/J. Koster) To approve the Agenda as Revised.

B. Approval of Minutes of April 20th Meeting – (Page 3)

M/S/C (D. Coe/ C. Blin) To approve the April 20th Meeting Minutes as presented.

IV. Committee Business

A. Self Determination Program Report – Dr. Jesse Weller (Page 8)

i. FMS Agencies on NLACRC Website Update

Per a previous discussion in this Committee, Dr. Weller reported that FMS Agencies have now been posted on NLACRC's Website: <https://www.nlacrc.org/consumers-families/self-determination-program/fms-agencies>

ii. Orientation Update

Dr. Weller summarized the updates as presented in the packet. Highlights include that as of May 1, 2022, 471 Participants have completed Orientation, there are currently 123 budgets certified and 18 of budgets that are in the Certification process. There were 103 spending plans approved, reflecting the same number of individuals who are in the program. 20 spending plans are in progress and 1 person opted out of SDP after enrollment.

In terms of ethnicity, 22 individuals identified as Hispanic/Latino, 54 identify as white, 11 identify as Black/African American, 6 as Asian American, 7 identify as multi-cultural, 1 as White/Latino, 1 as Armenian-Latino and 1 as Persian American.

NLACRC has been allocated funding for 3 Participant Choice Specialist

positions: 2 positions out of Antelope Valley which are currently in the recruitment phase and 1 position that has been filled at the San Fernando Valley location.

Orientation & Information Meetings are continuing monthly and Participants can now self-register for Orientations and will receive a confirmation upon submission. Permanent Zoom links for Orientation & Information Meetings have been updated to be more user-friendly. Virtual Orientation is being developed in a live format in order for Participants to have increased access to complete Orientation.

Self-Determination Support Group meets the 1st Wednesday of each month. It is facilitated by the Autism Society of Los Angeles and the next meeting is Wednesday, June 1st from 6:00-7:00 pm.

SDP Local Volunteer Advisory Committee next meeting is Thursday, May 19th from 7:00 p.m.- 9:00 p.m. Meetings are now returning to in-person for Committee Members at the Chatsworth Office. Everyone is welcome to attend in-person or on Zoom.

SDP Local Volunteer Advisory Committee & Disability Voices United – Best Practices Subcommittee is reviewing workflows and processes related to NLACRC’s implementation of Self Determination. The Subcommittee is currently looking at getting recommendations and feedback on ways NLACRC can streamline processes.. The next meeting will be on June 9, 2022.

NLACRC will be recording the Self-Determination Orientation. Families will be able to self-certify that the Orientation was completed. This will allow families to complete orientation at a time that works for them. Target date to offer recorded orientation is set to begin in June 2022.

B. Monthly Consumer Competitive Employment Report – Alan Darby (Page 12)

Alan Darby stated that is the Consumer Competitive Employment Report for the service month of April 2022

This report shows every individual that is competitively employed in NLA’s catchment area and is shown by Residence Type and by Ethnicity. The report also shows the total of Competitively Employed Consumers for age ranges 18-77 years old and for working age consumers with no employment - ages 18-

The reports are broken down into the following age ranges

- 14–17 years
- 18–25 years
- 26–45 years
- 46–59 year
- 60 years old and older

Additionally – as per the Committee’s request, Alan mentioned that he added two charts showing a comparison to the prior month’s totals.

For the service month of April 2022, the total number of all competitively employed consumers = 2,113 - which is 13.49% of all consumers shown. This is an increase from March’s total - which was 2,096 – a difference of 17 consumers. The total number of Working Age Consumers within NLA’s area with no employment for April was 13,545
This is an increase from March’s total which was 13,537 - a difference of 8 consumers

Alan welcomes any feedback on these new reports.

C. Pending Transfers Update – Cristina Preuss

i. Internal and External Transfers Update

In order to best serve consumers who are transferring out of NLACRC to another Regional Center, NLACRC discussed current practices and workflows, along with associated timelines. Transfer Cases are not able to be sent to the receiving Regional Center without the required documentation. would be helpful to have the 3 to 5-day timeline listed publicly so that consumers have an overview of the process and to set an expectation of when they can expect their Transfer will be completed. Dr. Weller agreed and stated that he and Cristina will draft a public-facing document with this information to promote transparency and will update the Consumer Services Committee in July 2022. Cristina is currently assessing the available reporting on timelines of transfers will update the Consumer Services Committee in July 2022.

ii. Notification to Families/Consumers Update

Once the Transfer Coordinator has compiled all of the documentation and the case is ready for transfer, a letter will be sent to client/family with all of the pertinent contact information for the Regional Center who will be receiving them. Ana suggested that an email also be included in this communication, Cristina agreed and will work on implementing an email update for families in addition to the letter. Gabriela suggested a text update

as well for continued communication. Updates will be provided to Consumer Services Committee in July 2022.

D. Workforce Employment Specialist Update Project Plan Update – Dr. Jesse Weller (Page 16)

Dr. Weller reviewed the updates as presented in the packet.

Highlights include:

Recruitment is continuing for the Workforce Employment Specialist position and interviews are being scheduled. There is an external candidate moving through the assessment phase for this role and the department is hopeful that the position will be filled by July 1, 2022. This position will be supervised by Yemi Robinson, Consumer Services Supervisor.

NLA is reviewing data and queries related to employment goals in the Individual Program Plan to evaluate the metrics.

NLA created a centralized email that will be released to the public/promoted when the position is filled. A centralized phone number will come next to develop a Workforce and Employment Hotline for questions and resources related to the grant. NLA has created a draft plan/proposed scheduled to create roundtables and information sessions on Paid Internship Program, Competitive Integrated Employment, and Supported Employment. Yemi will attend the Vendor Advisory Committee on June 3, 2022, to participate in the Employment Sub-Committee to collaborate on outreach and training in underserved communities; will discuss a taskforce to help support the objectives identified in the grant. Ana suggested bringing in other agencies to the taskforce who work in the Workforce Development sector.

E. Process to Contact NLACRC Personnel Update – Dr. Jesse Weller

At the last Committee meeting, concerns were discussed regarding access to and responsiveness of Service Coordinators. The recommendation was to create public-facing steps on what to do if unable to reach your Service Coordinator. A draft is currently in progress for this recommendation. The current steps to escalation are Service Coordinators, OD Specialist Unit, Manager/Director. The email aspect of this would be implementing this information in an email for those who prefer that method of communication. The draft is expected to be uploaded to the website by the next Committee meeting date in July 2022.

F. Purchase of Services Expenditure Projection (PEP) Report/ Surplus -Ruth Janka & Leticia Garcia (Page 18)

Ruth Janka stated that it was requested at the last Board Meeting to submit this

report to the Consumer Services Committee for review. The goal for this is to discuss the potential for the NLA to expend the \$40 million surplus. Leticia Garcia added that there is over \$621 million in POS. By reviewing this report, the Committee can see all the different areas where the money is being spent. The Committee is also able to provide some direction and oversight into how money is being spent.

Leticia summarized the PEP Report as presented in the packet.

Ana inquired about the Day Care Family Member and Day Care Paid Family categories being listed as 0 on the report for the year. NLA will look into the Service Codes to assess and gather information to report back to Consumer Services Committee in July 2022.

Ana asked what families need to do to learn more about how to be assessed for any number of these different services listed on the report. Leticia stated that this information regarding available services and who to contact to be assessed is located in the Consumer Services Guide but agrees that there can be more effective ways of making this information more available to the public. Leticia will mention this at the next Community Relations Committee Meeting for further input. There was extensive discussion surrounding differing aspects of family member transportation costs and reimbursement. Ruth referenced Participant Directed Services Regulation- Section 588886 of Title 17, California Code of Regulations to help clarify those issues. The Committee will continue to follow up on this item.

Leticia pointed out on the report that NLA currently has a \$40,414,480 million dollar surplus in POS. At the end of June, this amount will be returned to DDS as it was not utilized. Currently, NLA spends about \$22,671 per consumer. Leticia would like to see what we can do allocate money to focus on services that consumers don't know about and to eliminate the need to return money to DDS.

G. Personal Assistance & Participant Directed Services Reports – Ruth Janka
(Page 26)

Ruth reviewed the FY21 Respite report as presented in the packet. These reports will assist in focusing efforts on the further assessment of the disparities and differences. Ana asked for an update on her previous request for data that reflects the POS by ethnicity and diagnosis. Ruth stated that they are currently in the query-building phase, she will follow up with the IT department to get an update. Ruth also recommended age and location categories be added to this data. A summary of the new report should be a standing agenda item for this

Committee, but the detailed review and discussion of the data would be a standing agenda item for the Administrative Affairs Committee. Ruth stated that a report should be able to be generated before the next Consumer Services Committee Meeting in August.

- H. Committee's Draft Critical Calendar for FY 2023-24 – Ruth Janka (Page 36)
Ruth reviewed the items on the Critical Calendar as presented in the packet. It was noted that the Purchase of Service Data Report and the Purchase of Service Disparity Report are the same report but both names have been used to describe it.

Review of Purchase of Service Expenditure Reports will be added to the calendar as a monthly standing agenda item including the new report discussed in Item G.

M/S/C (D. Coe/C. Blin) To approve the Critical Calendar as revised.

- I. Board Audit: Community Placement Plan Goals – Dr. Jesse Weller
There are required monthly transition calls for anyone living in an IMD setting for better oversight around movement, placement, court dates, forensic updates, etc. Dr. Weller believes that our goals and milestones are currently being met.
- J. DDS Service Access and Equity Awards – Dr. Jesse Weller
Any organization that is receiving funding from DDS is required to identify what work is going to be done to decrease disparities and to develop outreach plan for informing consumers. Questions have been raised regarding how consumers are receiving information about community-based organizations. Dr. Weller stated that the Disparity Committee is working on relationship building with the community and having representatives of these organizations report out on their respective programs to inform consumers on their services. Rocio Sigala recommended including information about the awardees as their proposals on their services for consumers. Dr. Fernandez will gather updates and provide at the next committee meeting in July 2022.
- K. COVID Authorizations – Cristina Preuss
Concerns were raised from the community regarding miscommunication from Service Coordinators in relation the termination of COVID Support Services. A meeting was held with Case Management Leadership and Supervisors to ensure that staff is using effective communication and conducting program planning for all families who are unable to have their annual Rollover Evaluation before May 31st, services extended to July 31st to allow time for the Service Coordinator and family to meet for program planning.

Ana stated that quality assurance and validation is needed to ensure that clear communication is being made to families. David Coe recommended that information on how DDS directives that affect the community are being communicated to CSCs be presented to the Board. Ruth stated that any directive that affects consumers will be sent to the Committee and that she welcomes continued feedback.

Ana recommended acknowledging, supporting and honoring case workers in some way to highlight positivity. Perhaps an Employee Spotlight, Case Worker of The Month. Starting with Success Stories from staff being presented at Board Meetings would be something to consider.

VI. Deputy Director Report – Dr. Jesse Weller

Town Hall: What is an IPP and IFSP? & How to Prepare for Meetings

Inclusion, Equity and Diversity policy will be going before the Executive Committee on May 25th Service Standards on Revised Intake timeline have been submitted and are pending response from DDS.

The Disparity Committee meeting monthly, the format will change into a working committee to help support the Equity Report and areas identified in the policy. Updates for Social Recreation and Non-Medical Therapies Outreach Plan is being discussed by the Disparity Committee.

SDP Local Volunteer Advisory Committee Meeting: May 19th at 7pm. This will be in-person as well as Zoom.

VII. Board Meeting Agenda Items

The following items were identified for the committee's section of the May 11th Board Meeting agenda:

- A. Minutes of the May 18th Meeting
- B. Critical Calendar for FY2022-23

VIII. Announcements / Information Items / Public Input

- A. Next Meeting: Wednesday, July 20, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. (via Zoom). No June meeting.

No public Input

IX. Adjournment

Gabriela Herrera, Committee Chair, adjourned the meeting at 8:16 p.m.

Submitted by:

(*) *Lizeth Chavez*

Executive Administrative Assistant

() The majority of these minutes are taken from the Minutes Service submission and reviewed/edited as presented herein by NLACRC staff.*