

Alta California Regional Center
Provider Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, January 12, 2023
Minutes

Present:

Lindsey Dyba, Futures Explored,
Inc., Chair
Michelle Ramirez, On My Own,
Co-Chair & Design. Dir.
James Astorga, F&A Astorga
Care Home
Janet Brandon, A.I.M. &
Associates
Garrett Broadbent, Creative
Living Options
Andrea Croom, INALLIANCE
Bonnie Douglas, Turning Point
Jacquie Foss, STEP
Kate Halecky, Southside
Unlimited
Joe Jaquez, EGACTION
Jessica Knuth, Reach Adult
Development
Breeanne Kolster, 24 Hour Home
Care
Laleh Sharpe, Maxim Healthcare
Services
Yvonne Soto, DDSO
Carole Watilo, Progressive
Employment

Absent: (* excused)

Eric Ciampa*, UCP of Sacramento
Sergio Pinto, BEST Consulting,
Inc.
Antonio Ranit, Antelope Hills
Manor

Visitors

Sheila Abrams
Julie Beadle-Brown
Kate Brittain Duwe
Maureen Fitzgerald
Sonya Fox-Watson
Adriene Gaudet
Jennifer Jones
Christa McClure
Dylan Nobida
Jen Roney
Geneva Steward
Jasmine Vollenweider

Staff:

Lori Banales, Executive Director
Jennifer Bloom, Associate Client
Services Director
Tracy Brown, Associate Client
Services Director
John Decker, Director of Community
Services
Jordan Eller, Specialized Services
Manager
Camelia Houston, Director of Intake &
Clinical Services
Mechelle Johnson, Director of Client
Services
Michelle McDonald, Manager of
Community Services
Carly Shearer, Client Employment
Specialist
Lisa West, Executive Secretary

The Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) met at 9:33 a.m. on Thursday, January 12, 2023, by Zoom/teleconference to discuss: 1) Executive Director's Report; 2) ACRC Vendor Forum Representative Updates; 3) System Reform and Legislative Update; 4) Transitioning Out of Alternative Services & Use of TDS; 5) PAC membership Requirements;

6) PAC Committees & Reports; and 7) Announcements/Comments. All present provided self-introductions.

Without objection, Garrett Broadbent made the motion to approve the Provider Advisory Committee meeting minutes of November 10, 2022 as submitted.

1. *Executive Director's Report*

- Governor Newsom released the state's proposed budget for the 2023-24 fiscal year (FY) on Tuesday. The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) will continue to fund the service provider rate increases. The implementation of inclusive preschool grants will be delayed until the 2024-25 FY. Funding in current year budget for 1:40 (0-5) caseloads has been corrected in this January proposal; current budget amounts were based on the incorrect estimates. We will continue to follow the conversations until June and be cautiously optimistic about funding for our statewide service system.
- ACRC continues to strategize ways to assist service providers with coming into compliance with the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Final Rule which will be fully implemented by March 2023. DDS has invited ACRC to meet weekly on this issue. Mr. Decker noted that there was a lengthy delay after everyone completed their self-assessments. Many documents are now being submitted to ACRC's Community Services Department. 40% of our service providers have completed their forms; while most regional centers are where we are at, a few are at 80 to 90%. ACRC has five more sessions scheduled to assist service providers and we will be bringing in temporary staff to assist with processing the paperwork.
 - Mr. Decker will be discussing this topic weekly at "Coffee with Community Services".
- Governor Newsom declared a State of Emergency on January 4th and DDS released guidance on January 6th. Absence billing is allowable due to the severe winter storms; service providers will need to keep internal documentation.
- Additionally, late Friday, DDS released a directive which states that effective January 1st through December 31st, 2023, transportation providers are allowed to bill using their monthly average reimbursement rates that were calculated at the beginning of the pandemic. Transportation providers will need to keep internal documentation on this, as well. They will also be able to bill for their actual fuel costs.
 - ACRC staff will review the data to see if this assists with clients returning to in-person services. We have been told that this also applies to 880 Service Codes (day programs with transportation attached).

- Operationally, Ms. Banales has made the decision to have Jennifer Bloom act as the second Director of Client Services, focusing initially on Early Start and Childhood Development.

2. **ACRC Vendor Forum Representative Updates**

- No updates were shared.

3. **System Reform and Legislative Update (ARCA, CDSA, CCLN, DS Taskforce, Lanterman Coalition)**

- ARCA
 - Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) staff are focusing on the budget.
 - They are starting the conversations about the 90/10s, related to the Quality Incentive Program.
- CCLN
 - The group met with DDS on the Independent Living Services (ILS) rate issue, who referred them to Section I of the rate study. CCLN then met with their lobbyist who is seeking an author for a legislative bill. It is estimated that this “fix” will cost \$50 million.
 - Ms. Foss noted that ACRC has always followed the regulations in the appropriate way.
 - ILS started in 1977 and California is losing ILS programs across the state.
 - Ms. Foss would like to gather ILS providers to join forces on this issue.
 - Ms. Ramirez would like CDSA to assist CCLN in bringing ILS vendors together to discuss what is needed to keep this service an option for clients.
 - The group is working with DDS on the 90/10 issue.
 - The rate study states that on July 1st, 2024, this is what your rate should be and there is a hold harmless clause.
 - Dr. Julie Beadle-Brown provided an update on the Person-centered Advocacy Vision Education (PAVE) project.
 - The plan is for this to be a system which will support individuals with developmental disabilities. Based on person-centered thinking and working with their Service Coordinators (SCs), data will be gathered and shared with providers and regional centers.
 - The data will also be used to build trainings that are more person-centered. They will utilize surveys and observation visits to validate the data – does real life match the data that is being collected?
 - This project will provide data to service providers in regards to the 10% incentive payments from DDS.

- DS Taskforce
 - Ms. Foss and Mr. Decker are members of the technology workgroup; \$5 million funding is available. The workgroup will meet again after DDS will chooses two regional centers, who will then choose two service providers.
 - Ms. Ramirez and Mr. Decker are attending a Technology Conference in Los Angeles; this conference will include information on assistive technology.
- Little Hoover Commission Update
 - Ms. Foss hosted a tour of STEP and also invited Ms. Banales. Members wanted to know why regional centers have service codes and why regional centers across the state do things differently.

4. ***Transitioning Out of Alternative Services & Use of TDS***

- Mr. Decker noted that ACRC is still gathering data. We have eight new service providers vendored for tailored day services (TDS), with several more at some point in the vendorization process.
- After a few months, ACRC will pull data on the following points:
 - How many clients have switched over?
 - Do we have clients leaving programs due to this change?
 - We have had pushback from clients that don't want to participate via Zoom or a phone call. ACRC staff are assisting service providers on these specific cases.
 - Trends that ACRC is seeing as we transition from alternative services.
- The definition of TDS has changed (i.e., what is allowed). Staffing remains an issue for service providers.
- DDS released a one-page addendum that is to be attached to the Individual Program Plan (IPP).
- If service providers have any questions about how to bill, please reach out to Mr. Decker to have a discussion.
 - This item will be kept on the agenda for the next few meetings.

5. ***PAC Membership Requirements***

- Ms. Dyba placed this on the agenda as a refresher; this will be discussed next month.

6. ***PAC Committees & Reports***

- Ms. Ramirez noted that with the new year, we need to have the PAC committees meet to see if work needs to start or if the committee is needed.
 - Suggestion to add goals to the agenda or list the committees.

- Ms. Dyba believes that the PAC's goals may need to be revamped considering what everyone is doing now. She will email members.
- Communication & Outreach
 - Christa McClure completed a PAC application; she shared a brief introduction of herself.

Without objection, Jacquie Foss made the motion to approve Christa McClure's PAC membership.

7. ***Announcements/Comments***

- Ms. Ramirez noted that her term as the PAC's Co-Chair/Representative to the Board of Directors is up on June 30, 2023. The PAC has always had the PAC Chair move into the PAC Board Representative position. Because of that, the PAC will need to elect a new PAC Chair that will take office on July 1st.
 - Ms. Dyba would like to remain as PAC Chair; if it is necessary, she will become the PAC's Board Representative.
 - Ms. Ramirez provided a brief overview of how she serves in this position. If you are interested, please consider attending upcoming Board meetings.
- PAC members will be invited to gather for lunch after the February PAC meeting.
- Ms. Johnson and Ms. Bloom will be sharing a short Social Rec presentation at the February PAC meeting. This is part of ACRC's Outreach Plan.
- Mr. Decker shared that service providers have expressed concern noting that ACRC's Vendor Orientation is not required for certain service codes. ACRC will be placing their training sessions on our Learning Management System (LMS) so that service providers can begin working with clients, instead of waiting for the next orientation.
 - The goal is to have everything placed into LMS by the end of February.
 - Ms. Dyba will work on completing the PAC's portion/video by February 20th.
- The State of Emergency due to COVID is ending at the end of February 2023. The COVID supplemental staffing ratios will also be ending in residential facilities.
 - A survey was sent out to residential service providers and 90+ completed it.
- Ms. Watilo noted that the COVID sick pay regulations have been lifted, but providers are still being affected by staff testing positive.
 - It was noted that this needs to be addressed by the Department of Public Health.

- Ms. Johnson shared that ACRC is working to increase our participation in the Self-Determination Program (SDP).
 - Ms. Watilo noted that on the Disability Voices United (DVU) call yesterday, one of the Financial Management Service (FMS) is claiming that they are owed \$6 million, and another FMS is pulling out of working with three different regional centers. She would like the PAC to keep SDP at the forefront of our minds.
 - Ms. Johnson noted that the local SDAC met on Tuesday and they discussed the FMS issue. She is hopeful that DDS will soon be releasing guidance on this.

The next PAC meeting is scheduled on **Thursday, February 9, 2023**, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. The meeting adjourned at 11:36 a.m.

Lisa West
Executive Secretary

cc: ACRC Board of Directors
Lori Banales