

Alta California Regional Center
Provider Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, April 11, 2024
Minutes

Present:

Lindsey Dyba, Futures Explored,
Inc., Chair
Garrett Broadbent, Creative
Living Options, Co-Chair &
Design. Dir.
Eric Ciampa, UCP of Sacramento
Andrea Croom, INALLIANCE
Jacquie Foss, STEP
Kate Halecky, Southside
Unlimited
Joe Jaquez, EGACTION
Antonio Ranit, Antelope Hills
Manor
Laleh Sharpe, Maxim Healthcare
Services
Yvonne Soto, DDSO
Carole Watilo, Progressive
Employment

Absent: (* excused)

James Astorga, F&A Astorga
Care Home
Janet Brandon*, A.I.M. &
Associates
Bonnie Douglas*, Turning Point
Christa McClure*, Tri-County
Respite Care Service
Michelle Ramirez*, On My Own

Visitors

Sheila Abrams
Julie Beadle-Brown
Mirela Bere
Taylor Berry
Tim DeBack
Maureen Fitzgerald
Jennifer Gomez
NaTasha Harden
Earl Holmes
Priscilla Holmes
Braydon Holtzinger
Jessica Jenó

ShoaAxum Johnson
Jenny Jones
Jessica Knuth
Jay Kolvoord
Michael Lyman
Mary Marquardt
Myra Montejano
Dylan Nobida
Judith Ovalles
Amy Parkin
Venita Parrish
Michelle Ramirez (CBEM)
Rennie Saltzman
Jasmine Vollenweider

Interpreter:

Brenda Rees

Staff:

Lori Banales, Executive Director
Scott Barr, Quality Assurance &
Compliance Manager
Jennifer Bloom, Director of Client
Services
Tracy Brown, Associate Client
Services Director
John Decker, Director of Community
Services
Michelle Duchene, Community
Services & Supports Manager
Camelia Houston, Director of Intake &
Clinical Services
Mechelle Johnson, Director of Client
Services
Melinda Kimball, Community Services
Specialist
Michael Mercado, Deaf & Hard of
Hearing Specialist
Jason Scantlebury, LEAD Community
Services Specialist
Carly Shearer, Client Employment
Specialist
Lisa West, Executive Secretary

The Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) met on Thursday, April 11, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. to discuss: 1) Board Update; 2) Executive Director's Report; 3) Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist Information; 4) ACRC Vendor Forum Representative Updates; 5) System Reform and Legislative Updates; 6) PAC Committee Reports; and 7) Announcements/Comments. All present provided self-introductions.

Without objection, Lindsey Dyba made the motion to approve the Provider Advisory Committee meeting minutes of March 14, 2024, as submitted.

1. **Board Update**

- Mr. Broadbent shared that the Board met on March 28th.
 - Strategies to Empower People (STEP) presented the "2023 Collaborator of the Year Award" to Valarie Oldham, a Service Coordinator (SC) in ACRC's Supported Living Services (SLS) and Deaf Services Unit. STEP intends to make this an annual award.
 - The Board approved funding for three housing projects:
 - The Heights on Stockton Blvd. has 10 set aside units for ACRC clients consisting of seven one-bedroom units and three two-bedroom units.
 - The River City Apartments has 15 set aside units for ACRC clients consisting of nine one-bedroom units and six two-bedroom units.
 - Mr. Decker noted that this contract now has 17 set aside units – 11 one-bedroom units and six two-bedroom units.
 - The Lake Washington Apartments has 19 set aside units for ACRC clients consisting of nine one-bedroom units and ten two-bedroom units.
 - ACRC continues to vendor new services; these have been vendored since the end of January:
 - Adult Residential Facility (8)
 - Community Integration Training Programs (3)
 - Transportation (3)
 - Occupational Therapy (1)
 - Out-of-Home Respite (1)
 - Speech Pathology (8)
 - Independent Living Services [ILS] (4)
 - Sports Club (2)
 - Specialized Recreational Therapy (2)
 - Coordinated Family Supports (1)

2. **Executive Director's Report**

- Ms. Banales expressed appreciation to those that attended the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA's) Grassroots Day on April 2nd. The "Don't Delay" was our priority and ACRC's group was successful in getting

more of our local legislators to sign on to Assemblymember Stephanie Nguyen's letter.

- We also had two staff members lobby at the State Capitol with SEIU to advocate for the "Don't Delay", as well as pay for respite workers.
- The April *Alta Connections* is now posted on our agency's website.
 - This month is Autism Acceptance Month and ACRC is participating in numerous activities across our ten-county catchment area to celebrate this month.
 - Ms. Banales noted that approximately 80% of applicants seeking assistance from the regional center require ruling out autism.
 - Reyva Johnson, one of ACRC's Client Advocates, was the keynote speaker at Sierra College's Transition Symposium on March 21st.
 - ACRC staff assisted Assemblymember Stephanie Nguyen in writing a resolution designating March as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. Assemblymember Nguyen also toured Mirasol Village and visited clients that are supported by STEP. She is engaged in learning about our service system.
 - The CAC Corner highlighted the recently developed "A Client's Guide to My Individual Program Plan," which is available in several different languages in hard copy form, or it can be downloaded from ACRC's website.
 - The issue highlights two of our New Early Childhood Unit Managers. These units have 1:40 caseloads, consisting of three, four and five-year olds (drawing down clients from our existing children's units).
- At last week's "Coffee with Community Services," the group discovered that the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) released an update to their "Provider Directory Frequently Asked questions (FAQs) on March 21st.
 - As a general overview, Mr. Decker shared that this is the department's way to align service providers across the state. Activities for service providers are laid out in the FAQs.
 - ACRC has established an email address, providerdirectory@altaregional.org, which will allow service providers to make sure that their information is correct in ACRC's system.
 - Mr. Decker noted that ACRC will be initially focusing on Question #1. When ACRC receives additional guidance from DDS, staff will notify service providers on the next steps regarding Question #2.
- Dr. Lou Vismara is working with AKT Development, and they are presenting their "Community for Health & Independence" proposal to both the El Dorado Board of Supervisors and the Folsom City Council next Tuesday, April 23rd. This project would provide housing for individuals with developmental disabilities, as well as aging caregivers. UC Davis may acquire land for staff, nurses, first responders, etc.

- This is in the preliminary stages of project development. The units will hopefully be as inclusive as possible. There are many important partners that may be able to lift this project to make the best opportunities for clients.
- Beginning June 1st, Coordinated Career Pathways (CCP) will be available for eligible participants. CCP is a new service designed for individuals exiting work activity programs, subminimum wage settings, or within two years of exiting secondary education to achieve or advance in Competitive Integrated employment (CIE).
 - ACRC is hosting an informational session on May 8th at 10 a.m. for service providers. Ms. Shearer encourages everyone interested to attend. The registration link will be posted on ACRC's website's calendar.
 - More information is posted on DDS' website, as well.
 - ACRC is currently accepting letters of interest.
 - If you have any questions, please reach out to Ms. Shearer.
- Although ACRC was "all in" to have a designated Self-Determination Program (SDP) unit, Ms. Banales noted that the number of clients transitioning into SDP exceeds our ability to attract and recruit SCs into these roles. The unit was down to four SCs, with a long waiting list for "flipping the switch." She made the decision that ACRC could not sustain the way we set it up. Those four SCs have been moved to Participant Choice Specialists (PCSs). The clients have been dispersed across units and Melissa Schuessler is the Manager of the PCSs (eight in total).
 - Faye Tait, Associate Client Services Director, and Ms. Schuessler will share details of this decision at the next Self-Determination Advisory Committee (SDAC), which is scheduled for Wednesday, May 8th, from 6 to 8 p.m.
- ACRC continues to accept input via email on the 2024 Performance Contract. The deadline is close of business May 8th – performancecontractfeedback@altaregional.org.
 - Ms. Banales noted that DDS provides the reporting data on this document, and it is antiquated.

3. ***Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist Information***

- Michael Mercado, ACRC's Deaf & Hard of Hearing Specialist, introduced himself and noted that service providers who are serving deaf or hard of hearing clients can contact him if they need assistance serving them in the hearing world.
- Melinda Kimball, ACRC's Community Services Specialist, also introduced herself and noted that she is available to assist service providers who need to expand their services in order to support deaf or hard of hearing clients.
 - Service providers are invited to attend the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Vendor Forum on Tuesday, June 25th, from 9 to 11 a.m. The forum

is for service providers who currently serve and those who are interested in serving the deaf and hard of hearing community.

- ACRC has the ability to support these individuals. Ms. Johnson reminded those present that Norma Vidaurreta, one of ACRC's Community Services Specialists, assists with Health & Safety Waivers.
- Service providers must ensure clients can access their full community. It is the responsibility of the service provider to hire deaf and/or hard of hearing staff. When clients can connect to their deaf community, it is a magical experience.
 - A suggestion was made to highlight Mr. Mercado and Ms. Kimball in an upcoming *Alta Connections*.

4. **ACRC Vendor Forum Representative Updates**

- The Residential vendor forum was held on March 19th.
 - Aliesia Gautschi provided an update on the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) site visits.
 - Dan Kilmer discussed Request for Proposals (RFPs).
 - Denise Hopkins reviewed ACRC's policy on "Cameras in Residential Care Homes."
 - Ms. Duchene provided an update on the Direct Support Professionals (DSP) Training Stipend Program – ACRC is now at 10,316.
 - Mr. Decker noted that specialized care home providers would benefit from attending the regular residential vendor forums to get general information and updates.
- The Independent Living Services (ILS) vendor forum is scheduled for April 16th.

5. **System Reform and Legislative Updates (ARCA, CDSA, CCLN, CRA, PAVE, DS Taskforce & Workgroups, & Statewide PAC Collaboration)**

- CCLN
 - The California Community Living Network's (CCLN's) upcoming Annual Leadership Conference will have a technology strand.
 - They, along with the Capitol Coalition, are organizing a "Don't Delay" rally on May 21st & 22nd at the State Capitol – more information to come.
 - The group is assisting PAVE with the operational service definitions.
- CDSA
 - The California Disability Services Association (CDSA) is supporting AB 2423 (Mathis). This bill will require DDS to review and update the rate models every two years, beginning July 1, 2025.
 - They are working closely on Private Attorneys General Act (PAGA) reform and are seeking legislative solutions.
 - The group is also focusing their efforts on structural systemic changes to employment supports.

- CRA
 - The California Respite Association (CRA) is focusing their efforts on the “Don’t Delay” and are engaged at the Capitol.
 - The group is working to secure respite for foster youth; regional centers were not authorizing respite for these individuals.
- PAVE
 - Dr. Beadle-Brown noted that they are in the initial stages of the Person-centered Advocacy Vision Education (PAVE) project. Recently, DDS approved their Management Plan.
 - The group continues to work on the operational definitions of ILS, SLS, Supported Employment, and Respite, considering feedback from regional centers and ARCA.
 - The State Council on Developmental Disabilities’ (SCDD’s) advocacy group has been reviewing their plain language summaries. They will soon be seeking a wider consultation from the community.
 - The group has started working with a software provider for testing of quality and outcomes measures. They are developing tools to help assist individuals to document what they really want; preferably from their chosen representative if they cannot do it themselves.
 - They continue their work on the measures that will go before the stakeholder group (which includes ARCA, regional centers, SCDD, service providers, clients and families) for consultation.
- Master Plan Workgroup
 - This group held their first meeting yesterday. It is a new way of looking at service delivery. DDS is asking for feedback.
 - They will be discussing potential subcommittees at the next meeting.
- Capitol Coalition
 - Conversations with this group have been dynamic.
 - They are working to educate themselves on the different waivers.
 - Futures Explored is planning a legislative luncheon in the fall.
 - The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 18th, at noon.
- Service Provider Coalition Group
 - This statewide group is reforming and has not met since the last meeting.

6. **PAC Committee Reports**

- Vendor Relations Committee
 - The group has been working on a survey to generate additional input on what service providers and ACRC should be collaborating on.
 - At the most recent meeting, the group reviewed the responses to determine common themes.
 - Mr. Broadbent will connect with Mr. Decker to identify dates for potential Vendor Fairs in outlying areas.
 - They would like to develop a “Core Competencies for Service Providers.”

- Communication & Outreach Committee
 - The group met a few weeks ago and discussed the newly created listserv which will allow the PAC to have a discussion group and a way to engage service providers.
 - Mr. Ciampa would like the link to the listserv embedded on the PAC's page of ACRC's website.
 - They meet on the first Tuesday of the month – the next meeting will be held on May 7th, where the group will begin discussing goals.

7. **Announcements/Comments**

- Mr. Kolvoord asked for clarification on the service provider's responsibilities for submitting Special Incident Reports (SIRs) to the regional center.
 - Mr. Decker noted that the number of SIRs that are submitted to the regional center is not a negative reflection on the service provider. It is important to make sure the regional center is aware of these incidents.
- Southside Unlimited, as part of their HCBS grant, will be holding a two-day "Unlock the Power of Person-Centered Thinking" Training on May 29th & 30th, in ACRC's Redwood Room. This training is geared towards Leadership.
- Progressive Employment Concepts continues to offer HCBS Compliance Workshops. The next workshop's topic is "Developing the Roots; Building a Person-Centered Organizational Structure." These virtual workshops will be held on April 18th & 25th, from 2 to 4 p.m.
- A customized employment in-person training for Coordinated Career Pathways (CCP) will be held on June 17th, 18th, 19th, 27th & 28th.
 - Ms. Watilo will share more information as the date gets closer.
- The PAC will be voting on the PAC Chair and Co-Chair/Designated Representative to ACRC's Board of Directors for the 2024-25 fiscal year (FY) at the May meeting.
- The DDS Individual Program Plan (IPP)/Person-Centered Services Plan Meeting is scheduled for April 25th, from 1:30 to 3 p.m. Those in attendance will review and provide feedback on the proposed standardized and statewide template that all regional centers will implement and use starting January 1, 2025.
- The next Disability Industry Career Expo will be held on April 23rd from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Sutter One Stop, Boyd Hall in Yuba City.
- 6Beds, Inc. Advocacy Conference is being held on April 23rd. Both DDS and Mr. Decker will be presenting at this conference.
- Please send any suggested agenda items to Ms. Dyba for the May meeting.
 - Suggestion to discuss PAC members assisting other service providers in completing the DSP Workforce Survey.

The next PAC meeting is scheduled on **Thursday, May 9, 2024**. The meeting adjourned at 11:34 a.m.

Lisa West
Executive Secretary

cc: ACRC Board of Directors
Lori Banales