

Alta California Regional Center
Provider Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, April 8, 2021
Minutes

Present:

Eric Ciampa, UCP of
Sacramento, Inc., Chair
Michelle Ramirez, On My Own,
Co-Chair & Design. Dir.
James Astorga, F&A Astorga Care
Home
Garrett Broadbent, Meristem
Andrea Croom, INALLIANCE
Jacquie Dillard-Foss, STEP
Bonnie Douglas, Turning Point
Lindsey Dyba, Futures Explored,
Inc.
Joe Hernandez, Aveanna
Healthcare Services
Jessica Knuth, Reach Adult
Development
Monique Migdol, Tahoe
Community Integrations
Sergio Pinto, BEST Consulting,
Inc.
Robin Rhoades, Southside
Unlimited
Laleh Sharpe, Maxim Healthcare
Services
Yvonne Soto, DDSO
Peter Stirling, Serenity Respite
Services
Paul Traglio, Kadiant
Carole Watilo, Progressive
Employment

Absent: (* excused)

Janet Brandon*, A.I.M. &
Associates
Ed Doonan, LIFE, Inc.
Joe Jaquez, EGA CT
Antonio Ranit, Antelope Hills
Manor
Adam Ruggles*, Medstar LLC
Joy Scott*, Tri-County Caregiver
Relief

Visitors:

Ken Barnes
Breeanne Burris
Heather Cohen
Vikie Cole
Jenna Darling
Maureen Fitzgerald
Adriene Gaudet
Priscilla Holmes
Braydon Holtzinger
Reina Hudson
Jenny Jones
Susana Magana
Jen Roney
Nicky Schluep
Stan Schmidt
Kathleen Short
Hannah Thompson
Jasmine Vollenweider
Katherine Wallen

Board Member:

Rita Walker

Staff:

Phil Bonnet, Executive Director
Lori Banales, Deputy Executive
Director
John Decker, Director of Community
Services
Camelia Houston, Director of
Intake & Clinical Services
Jean Onesi, Manager of Community
Services
Andy Ponce, Specialized Services
Manager
Olivia Procida, Manager of
Community Services
Lisa West, Executive Secretary

The Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) met at 9:33 a.m. on Thursday, April 8, 2021, by Webex/teleconference to discuss: 1) Board Update; 2) Executive Director's Report; 3) COVID-19 Impact Discussion & Vaccinations & Re-Openings; 4) Legislative Update; 5) PAC Strategic Planning; 6) Subcommittee Reports; and 7) Announcements/Comments. All present provided self-introductions.

Without objection, Eric Ciampa made the motion to approve the Provider Advisory Committee meeting minutes of March 11, 2021 as submitted.

1. **Board Update**

- Ms. Ramirez shared that the Board met on March 25th.
 - Daniel Savino, with the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA), gave a presentation on State Level Advocacy. She suggested that the PAC consider inviting him to speak at an upcoming meeting. ARCA also conducts excellent trainings.
 - The Board reviewed the January 31, 2021 financial report. With 58.3% of the year elapsed, ACRC has expended 54.7% of Purchase of Services (POS) and 54.5% of Operations (OPS).
 - They discussed options for the upcoming May Board Training. The first portion will focus on reviewing the proposed bylaw revisions. The training will conclude with a consultant explaining the Strategic Planning process to the group.
 - Ms. Ramirez shared that the PAC recently conducted a survey.
 - Mr. Bonnet spoke about ACRC's efforts to vaccinate our clients, family members and direct support professionals (DSPs).
 - The Board was provided with a list of newly vendored services since the January Board meeting; it's important to note that no programs closed since that meeting.
 - They approved a contract for a Community Crisis Home.
- ED Search & Priority Discussion
 - At the last PAC meeting, the group discussed their ideas in regards to ACRC's recruitment process for hiring the agency's next Executive Director.
 - Ms. Walker introduced herself to the group.
 - Members shared their thoughts regarding this process.
 - Ms. Dillard-Foss participated in the recruitment process that brought Mr. Bonnet to ACRC. She believes the next five years will be an interesting time for our statewide service system. Whoever the new Executive Director is, they need to focus on the 27,000+ clients that the regional center serves. Being in the capitol, ACRC has a spotlight on it. The next leader needs to have a strong vision. Mr. Bonnet set a path for ACRC, and with President Biden's administration, we need someone that is focused on person-centeredness.

- Ms. Watilo noted that the PAC has had a great working relationship with Mr. Bonnet and ACRC over the years. It's important for service providers to know that they are being heard. California may be facing some drastic changes soon and this may provide ACRC an opportunity to appoint someone that has experience in this field. It's important to remember that the Executive Director sets the tone for the agency. The new Executive Director may need to "look outside the box". She would also like ACRC to be a leader on employment policy.
- At the March Board meeting, Mr. Ciampa shared some of the PAC's ideas for this process. The level of collaboration during the current pandemic has been at an all-time high (e.g., safety of our clients/families/DSPs, vaccine clinics, etc.). Continuing and increasing this collaboration is important.
- Ms. Rhoades will be retiring in November of this year. She believes that person-centered thinking must be at the top of our lists. How we touch the person is so important. We also must listen to the folks that we serve.
 - She would like the PAC included in the Board's Strategic Planning process.
- Ms. Dyba believes that ACRC needs someone that is willing to be flexible and utilize things we haven't used before (e.g., technology, Uber, etc.) in order to help our system be more person-centered.
- Ms. Soto noted that COVID-19 has taught us so many things. We need to stay flexible and adapt services to the client's needs.

2. **Executive Director's Report**

- Mr. Bonnet shared that it is starting to sink in that this is it – he's retiring. He started his career in direct service to individuals with developmental disabilities. Mr. Bonnet believes he has a great Leadership Team at ACRC. He has always asked "how does this help our clients" when decisions are being made. Mr. Bonnet will be providing advice to the Board during their search for a new Executive Director. ACRC's new Executive Director needs to be approachable and flexible with the changes and increased opportunities that lay ahead for our service system. It's exciting that the people that do the work are being recognized at the highest level (Biden's administration).
- ACRC currently has 785 clients who have tested positive for COVID-19. The age of those affected have decreased; we had a six-month old test positive a few weeks ago. Mr. Bonnet remains concerned about vaccine hesitancy.

- Our community has established a wonderful relationship with Safeway.
 - STEP is developing an outreach program that might help the DSP community about vaccine hesitancy.
 - ACRC's Client Advisory Committee (CAC) put together a video that will be released later this week to encourage clients to get vaccinated.
- Ms. Banales noted that ACRC is tracking 22 ethnicities; who has been offered the vaccine versus who has been vaccinated. Our agency plans on hosting community-based clinics that will hopefully relieve vaccine hesitancy.
 - Ms. Dyba shared that the Disability Thrive Initiative is hosting a webinar next week on the safety of the vaccine. More information can be found at <https://scdd.ca.gov/iddthrive/>
- Mr. Schmidt's agency put a panel together and participants shared an hour's worth of testimony about their own experience with the vaccine. People need to see individuals like themselves get the vaccine. They need to feel that it isn't rushed and it's not political.

3. **COVID-19 Impact Discussion & Vaccinations & Re-Openings**

- On My Own is holding a vaccine clinic today. Partnering with Aim Higher, UCP will be holding vaccine clinics on April 15th, 22nd and 30th. Southside Unlimited is also holding a vaccine clinic on April 19th.
 - These clinics are open to our clients, family members and DSPs.
 - Flyers can be sent to Ms. West and she will distribute them to the group. Please make sure you share these opportunities with the folks that you serve.
 - Mr. Decker shared that ACRC is hoping to add Placerville and Woodland vaccine clinics soon.
 - Yesterday, Mr. Decker joined the 6Beds Annual Advocacy Day Webinar. It was shared that statewide, those individuals that live in Community Care Licensing (CCL) facilities are 75% vaccinated. Here at ACRC, we are at 85%.
 - Ms. Banales noted that ACRC currently have 4,271 clients vaccinated, equaling 83.2% over all of our congregate setting environments.
- CCL has held several meetings and there next one is scheduled for April 21st. Before then, they will release a Provider Information Notice (PIN) Summary specifically for day programs.
 - Ms. Soto shared that one of DDSO's programs will be doing a slow re-opening in May.
- Service providers must work together as programs begin to re-open. Things are not going back to pre-COVID times immediately. After receiving alternative services for almost a year, some clients may realize that they don't want or need the standard five-day a week, six-hour programs.

- Yesterday, STEP made the decision to close their vocational (“Next Step” 1:3) day program that opened in 1995.
- In preparing for Home & Community-Based Services (HCBS), UCP is discussing ways to transition folks into different types of services. For better or for worse, alternative services have given service providers flexibility.
- Ms. Banales believes this is the perfect time to discuss the Self-Determination Program (SDP). ACRC is currently offering biweekly “Self-Determination Q&A Sessions” on specific topics. She would like to include a group from the PAC to join these discussions. Then ad-hoc groups can start to drill down what opportunities could be offered.
 - Ms. Banales will send the next Self-Determination Advisory Committee (SDAC) meeting information to Ms. West to share with this team.

4. **Legislative Update**

- No updates were shared.

5. **PAC Strategic Planning**

- Mr. Ciampa shared that workgroup chairs met a few weeks ago and had a robust discussion. They agreed that the PAC should work through the full Strategic Planning process, not just set goals. The group will meet again on April 14th to continue discussions.
- Thoughts to consider include:
 - How does the PAC fulfill the Lanterman Act’s requirement?
 - Consolidating some committees with goals attached to each. Encourage full participation of all PAC members.
 - This process must include all members of the PAC.
 - The new ACRC Executive Director will invoke more change, as well.
- More information will be shared at the next PAC meeting.

6. **Subcommittee Reports**

- Vendor Relations – the group would like the liaisons to focus on their purpose/role, open communication and working cooperatively with service providers. They will meet with ACRC staff to share their thoughts about these positions. The workgroup could also begin discussions about the re-opening of programs.

7. **Announcements/Comments**

- SB 639 (Durazo) Minimum wages: persons with disabilities; Ms. Watilo shared that this bill is set for hearing on April 20th. She encouraged everyone to look at the bill – this is a civil rights issue.
- Mr. Decker noted that the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) will release the rates for transportation and supported

employment soon. Vendor forums will be scheduled so that ACRC staff can support our service providers with any billing issues.

- The May meeting will include the PAC's annual elections for the Chair and Co-Chair positions.

The next PAC meeting is scheduled on **Thursday, May 13, 2021**, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. The meeting adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

Lisa West
Executive Secretary

cc: ACRC Board of Directors
Phil Bonnet