

Alta California Regional Center
Provider Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, June 11, 2020
Minutes

Present:

Michelle Ramirez, On My Own,
Chair
Eric Ciampa, UCP of
Sacramento, Inc., Co-Chair &
Design. Dir.
Janet Brandon, AIM &
Associates
Andrea Croom, INALLIANCE
Jacquie Dillard-Foss, STEP
Bonnie Douglas, Turning Point
Joe Hernandez, Premier
Healthcare Services
Joe Jaquez, EGACT
Jessica Knuth, Reach Adult
Development
Sergio Pinto, BEST Consulting,
Inc.
Antonio Ranit, Antelope Hills
Manor
Robin Rhoades, Southside
Unlimited
Joy Scott, Tri-County Caregiver
Relief
Laleh Sharpe, Maxim Healthcare
Services
Yvonne Soto, DDSO
Peter Stirling, Serenity Respite
Services
Carole Watilo, Progressive
Employment

Absent: (* excused)

James Astorga, F&A Astorga Care
Home
Ed Doonan, LIFE, Inc.
Paul Traglio*, Capitol Autism
Services

Visitors:

Jody Bailey
Gregg Brandon
Garrett Broadbent

Breanne Burris
Vivian Coronado
Wyatt Deters
Tiffany Fink
Maureen Fitzgerald
Sonya Fox-Watson
Adriene Gaudet
Olivia Gomez
Kate Halecky
Mary Harding
Doris Harrington
Braydon Holtzinger
Jennifer Jones
Jim Kaiser
Janice Labrado
Michelle Ramirez
Amea Medeiros
Monique Migdol
Adam Ruggles
Todd Ruggles
Nicky Schluep
Stan Schmidt
Dan Thao
Katherine Wallen

Staff:

Phil Bonnet, Executive Director
Iqbal Ahmad, Chief Financial Officer
Lori Banales, Deputy Executive
Director
Silas Brocks, Transportation
Coordinator
John Decker, Director of Community
Services
Darline Dupree, Manager of
Community Services
Marie Holland, Transportation
Coordinator
Jean Onesi, Manager of Community
Services
Andy Ponce, Specialized Services
Manager
Lisa West, Executive Secretary

The Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) met at 9:31 a.m. on Thursday, June 11, 2020, by Webex/teleconference to discuss: 1) Executive Director's Report; 2) SacRT & Paratransit Inc. – discuss changes to services for individuals with I/DD; 3) Legislative Update; 4) PAC Priorities – Subcommittee Reports; 5) Announcements/Comments; and 6) Board Update. All present provided self-introductions.

Without objection, Michelle Ramirez made the motion to approve the Provider Advisory Committee meeting minutes of May 14, 2020 as submitted.

- *Phil Bonnet, Jacquie Dillard-Foss & Michelle Ramirez will be leaving the meeting early so that they can attend a DS Task Force Workgroup Meeting that begins at 10 a.m.*

**change in agenda was noted*

1. ***Executive Director's Report***

- Mr. Bonnet shared that the DS Task Force workgroup is meeting this morning to discuss system and fiscal reform. He has been at ACRC for almost 14 years and is grateful to this group. Your commitment to the individuals that we serve is heard loudly.
- The statewide numbers are updated periodically by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Currently they are indicating that we have 342 clients that have tested positive to COVID-19, and more than 10% have died (43). There are many more cases that are suspicious (haven't been tested), with an additional 25 to 30 deaths. Almost 300 direct service professionals (DSPs) have tested positive; the numbers are not being made available for deaths. In comparison, ACRC has five clients who have tested positive, with one death; six DSPs have tested positive. Unfortunately, the virus can continue to spread as the state begins to re-open. Please continue to be cautious.
- Mr. Bonnet shared that closing ACRC was easy compared to re-opening. He created a COVID-19 Task Force at the end of February, made up of his Executive Management Team, clinicians, and the bargaining unit. Currently, 97% of ACRC's staff are working remotely. Mr. Bonnet will be releasing the agency's re-opening plan to staff either later today or tomorrow. It is a very cautious and gradual plan that does everything possible to mitigate the virus spread.
- ACRC held a three-day Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) give away last week; 150,000 reusable, washable masks and gallons of hand sanitizer were distributed to our clients/families – special thanks to SCDD!

- Short of herd immunity or a vaccine, things will be different. Many service providers that provide day services have not missed a beat – clients are now receiving virtual services.
- Mr. Bonnet and Ms. Dillard-Foss have talked about recognizing all of the service providers that have gone the extra mile during this pandemic. If you have any ideas of what might be meaningful, please let him know.
 - Suggestion to post a montage on the front page of ACRC's website, with a message from Mr. Bonnet and staff. The posting could include photos and video footage of what service providers are currently doing with our clients (e.g., dance parties, art projects, cooking, exercises, etc.). This message could be shared on all of the social media platforms, as well.
 - If you have something that you would like included, please forward it to Mr. Bonnet and/or Ms. West.
 - Ms. West will forward the release/waiver to committee members so that ACRC will have all of the necessary permissions.
- Although DDS has not released an official statement, Mr. Bonnet believes that, beginning July 1st, the retainer payments that some service providers are receiving may change, if not end. Regional centers are aware that these payments have given service providers the opportunity to keep their staff employed.
 - Does ACRC staff have a sense of what will happen to service providers if these payments do not continue? If programs are not at full capacity, how long will they survive?
 - ACRC is committed to keeping programs/service providers intact. We know that providers are doing everything they can to support our clients.
 - Mr. Decker will be scheduling another Webex meeting for day programs and transportation providers. At this point, we have no new information. Each service provider is vendored a certain way and ACRC staff want clarification from DDS whether changes will need to be made. Mr. Decker assured everyone that we will be as flexible as possible.
 - The impact of losing the retainer payments might be disastrous for our service system.
 - It's important to note that the extensions that DDS has posted on their website, does not include the retainer payments. This particular directive does not have an expiration date – it stands until the department ends it, but adequate notice should be given.
 - DDS applied for the waiver to continue these retainer payments and they received federal approval two weeks ago.

- Many things affect the state's budget (e.g., retainer payments, minimum wage, etc.). Hopefully we will receive some clarification by the end of this week.

2. ***SacRT & Paratransit Inc. – discuss changes to services for individuals with I/DD***

- Janice Labrado & Dan Thao from SacRT
 - SacRT is required to provide Paratransit routes; they will be utilizing their own drivers. They will also be providing non-ADA trips (rides that go outside of the ¾ mile radius).
 - They are holding two virtual open houses – June 18th from 4 to 6 p.m., and June 19th from 10 a.m. to noon. By Saturday, they will be sending a letter out to all of the clients that they serve explaining the upcoming changes.
 - SacRT has hired Paratransit drivers and they are bringing over reservation staff, too.
 - The transition takes place on Sunday, June 28th, with a soft launch on Friday, June 26th.
 - Although the demand for service is significantly down, they are working to have extra services available in the future.
 - They will work with ACRC staff to ensure that clients have enough support during this transition, understanding that it may be confusing for some.
 - SacRT also provides mobility training. Due to COVID-19, this program has moved to a virtual training, but those present were assured that this will remain a fully funded program.
- Tiffany Fink & Mary Harding, from Paratransit
 - Historically, Paratransit has provided two different forms of transportation for ACRC client – transition to SacRT and program level transportation (they will continue to provide this).
 - Safety protocols are in place and many options are available.
 - They are prepared for different scenarios and understand that being flexible is key during this time.
 - Clients may have shorter hours or different destinations on any particular day. Paratransit will still be able to provide transportation.
 - Online reservations will still be available. They will work with ACRC and service providers to make sure their routes are correct.

3. ***Legislative Update***

- Lanterman Coalition
 - They are actively working to advocate against the cuts that were proposed to our statewide service system. They have reached

out to both the California State Assembly and Senate, but are waiting to see what Governor Newsom does.

- The Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) and The Arc of California have been sending out information on how to contact the Governor's office to share your thoughts on what the proposed cuts will do to our statewide service system.
- The potential loss of retainer payments and the scheduled minimum wage increase, without the additional funding, both may have more of an impact on service providers than the proposed rate decreases.

4. ***PAC Priorities – Subcommittee Reports***

- Communications
 - Mr. Hernandez shared that the group revised the PAC's brochure, which was shared with those present.
 - The brochure redirects interested individuals to the PAC's portion of ACRC's website.
 - Suggested revisions will be made prior to its release.
- Outreach/Membership
 - Mr. Ciampa shared that the group met and reviewed six pending PAC applications.
 - Three applicants do not meet the attendance requirement. They will be encouraged to attend additional PAC meetings prior to membership consideration.
 - Two applicants have met the attendance requirements.
 - The subcommittee would like to recommend Garrett Broadbent and Adam Ruggles for PAC membership at one of our upcoming meetings.
 - Committee members agree to invite them to the next PAC meeting for membership consideration.
 - One applicant is currently on leave and will be considered for PAC membership upon their return to work.
- SLS/Day Program
 - At the beginning of this meeting Mr. Ciampa emailed the notes from the May 28th meeting to committee members.
 - The group brainstormed about creative options that day programs might be able to consider in the future.
 - They discussed what services are currently being offered.
 - Another meeting will be scheduled after the budget is signed.
 - Ms. Watilo requested actionable items from this group.
 - Mr. Ciampa clarified that they do not know how to proceed without direction from DDS.

- ACRC staff is waiting for direction from licensing regarding day programs and residential services.
- Regional center have heard that DDS will be clarifying the billing guidelines soon.
- Service providers are past the managing phase – we are now triaging. Concern remains regarding utilization of services.

5. ***Announcements/Comments***

- Mr. Decker expressed his appreciation to all of the service providers that have assisted ACRC during the pandemic. Your input and experience is invaluable to ACRC.
- Service providers may want to contact the Main Street Lending Program.
- DDS is currently drafting their re-opening plan and will be hosting training Webinars.
- Ms. Banales shared that ACRC is supporting all of you and we will do everything we can to keep the valuable services that you provide to our clients. Your feedback will be essential to all of this.
- Mr. Ciampa noted that the PAC is tasked with providing technical assistance to ACRC's Board. Our meetings are open to the public and the group discusses issues that service providers are experiencing.
- Although ACRC's Community Services Department held regularly scheduled Vendor Forums in the past, Mr. Decker shared that we are currently hosting meetings as needed. If you have ideas on how your programs can change, please continue to work closely with your Community Service Specialist.
- If service providers are in need of PPE, we will be holding a drive-thru give away towards the end of next week (up to 4,000 masks per agency). We have hand sanitizer and face shields, as well.
 - The State Council on Developmental Disabilities' (SCDD's) Sacramento Regional Office has been an amazing partner.

6. ***Board Update***

- Mr. Ciampa shared that ACRC's Board continues to meet over Webex and discuss our response to the COVID-19 pandemic and budget.
- Key updates:
 - The Board has a new slate of officers – Rita Walker is President and Ron Mainini has been elected Vice President.
 - Mr. Ciampa has termed off the Board and Ms. Ramirez has been elected to serve as the PAC representative to the Board for the 2020-21 fiscal year (FY).
- The Board is still recruiting.

The next PAC meeting is scheduled on **Thursday, July 9, 2020**, 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