

Alta California Regional Center
Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, January 25, 2024
Minutes

Present: Garrett Broadbent, EunMi Cho, Johnny Deng, Tom Hopkins, Dan Lake, Amy Lampe, Kelly Pennington, Michelle Rewerts

Absent (* excused): Carmen Aguilar*, Jackie Armstrong*, Anwar Safvi*, Steven Sanchez*

Staff: Lori Banales, Iqbal Ahmad, Jennifer Bloom, Tracy Brown, John Decker, Camelia Houston, Mechelle Johnson, David Lopez, Faye Tait, Barbara van Ingen, Diane Williams, Nora Zappas, Lisa West

Facilitators: Amy Fulk

Visitors: Steven Andrews, Jaclyn Balanay, Nichole Baxter, Taylor Berry, Adrienne Bridges, Lisa Cooley, Libby Ferris, Maureen Fitzgerald, Bradley Margetts, Ruben Medina, Peter Mendoza, Amanda Parker, Paul Stroub, Joseph Wilson, Jimin Yun

1. **Call to Order – Reading of ACRC’s Mission & Vision** – The Board of Directors met at 4:04 p.m. on Thursday, January 25, 2024. Mr. Broadbent read aloud ACRC’s Mission and Vision.
2. **Meeting Our Mission**
 - ◆ Ms. Yun shared that when her son was born, her and her husband signed him up for a study through the MIND Institute. She was then referred to Kaiser for autism services. While they were waiting for services, their Speech Pathologist suggested connecting with ACRC for the Early Start program. Her son used to have meltdowns because he couldn’t communicate his wants and needs. He is now able to communicate and play with toys appropriately. Ms. Yun believes this story is a testament to how a child can transform with regional center services and supports.
3. **Community Comments/Announcements**
 - ◆ Ms. Fitzgerald received an email about ACRC’s quarterly community meetings and is looking forward to participating. She sent an email to the Board today seeking clarification as to why only 63.6% of services authorized through Individual Program Plans (IPPs) for the 2022-23 fiscal year (FY) were actually expended. Ms. Fitzgerald, once again, expressed her disagreement with the Board approving and signing the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) contract.

- ◆ Ms. Baxter sent an email to ACRC's designated National Core Indicators (NCI) email address after the November Board meeting and expected a follow-up email. She congratulated ACRC for participating in the initiatives that were highlighted in the January issue of *Alta Connections*. Ms. Baxter plans on attending the community meetings and is excited about the client satisfaction survey.
- ◆ Ms. Cooley suggested that ACRC place brochures, in multiple languages, in doctor's offices and community/recreation centers.
- ◆ Mr. Wilson, from Resources for Independent Living (RIL), shared that they serve clients and offer different classes to assist individuals in living more independent lives.

4. **Consent Agenda – By consensus, the following consent agenda items were approved: a) excused absences of Carmen Aguilar, Jackie Armstrong, Anwar Safvi and Steven Sanchez; b) regular session Board meeting minutes of December 11, 2023, and November 16, 2023; and c) Board Development Committee (BDC), Client Advisory Committee (CAC), Executive Committee, Finance Committee and Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) minutes.**

5. **New Business**

- ◆ *Approval of Revised Social Recreation Activities, Camp and Non-Medical Therapies POS Policy*
 - Ms. Banales noted that the Executive Committee reviewed the limited revisions that the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) directed regional centers to make to their existing policies on November 3rd.
 - Ms. Johnson provided a brief overview of the revisions.

M/S/C (Hopkins) To approve the revised Social Recreation Activities, Camp and Non-Medical Therapies POS Policy as presented.

- ◆ *Approval of ARCA Contract*
 - Mr. Lake noted that ARCA is requesting that regional center Boards approve this contract.

M/S/C (Hopkins) To approve the ARCA Contract as presented.

- ◆ *Approve CPP Contract – start-up funding for a Group Home for Children with Special Health Needs (GHCSHN)*
 - DDS requested ACRC assistance with developing the State's first GHCSHN, which will provide a new model of care for individuals under the age of 18 who otherwise would be in sub-acute facilities. ACRC

has been developing these types of homes for adult clients for many years. This GHCSHN would allow children to receive specialized care while staying in the same area as their parents/family.

M/S/C (Hopkins) To approve the \$300,000 GHCSHN Contract for Liberi as presented. (one abstention)

◆ *Finance Committee*

Issue 1: Independent Audit Report

Discussion and Action: Mr. Ahmad introduced Paul Stroub, with Devant CPAs, ACRC's independent auditor, who provided an overview of the "Financial Statements and Supplementary Information with Independent Auditors' Reports June 30, 2023", which was shared onscreen.

ACRC's management continues to have proper internal controls in place. It is Devant's opinion that the agency complied, in all material respects, with the requirements on the financial statements, as well as the federal awards program, meaning there were no material findings; it is a clean opinion.

This independent audit report will be posted to our agency's website.

M/S/C (Pennington) To accept the Independent Audit Report as presented.

Issue 2: Monthly Financial Report

Discussion and Action: Mr. Ahmad noted that the Finance Committee reviewed the November 30, 2023 financial report at their January 8th meeting.

M/S/C (Lake) To accept the monthly financial report as submitted.

◆ *Committee Updates*

• CAC

- Mr. Hopkins shared that the CAC met on January 9th.
 - Ms. Banales provided an overview of what to expect when Governor Newsom releases his proposed budget for the next FY.
 - ACRC will be offering advocacy trainings for those individuals that wish to testify at the State Capitol this year to share the good stories that come out of our service system.

- Shannon McConnell, ACRC's Dental Coordinator, gave a presentation on oral health.
 - CAC members shared updates from various advocacy meetings that they attend.
 - PAC
 - Mr. Broadbent shared that the PAC met on January 11th.
 - The group discussed the Governor's proposed budget, and the delay of the remaining service provider rate increases to the original timeline of July 1, 2025 (savings of \$613 million general fund; \$1 billion in total funds).
 - Several provider advocacy efforts will be organized at the State Capitol.
 - Vicki Smith, DDS' Deputy Director of Policy and Program Development, joined remotely to provide an overview and answer questions on the workforce initiatives that fall under the new DDS Workforce Development Team's purview.
 - The DSP Training Stipend initiative has been impactful for service provider staff.
 - Ms. McConnell provided an overview of her goals as ACRC's Dental Coordinator.
 - The group discussed SB 616 (paid sick days accrual and use) and how it will impact service providers.
 - PAC members are looking forward to the department's reconstituting of the DDS Taskforce and Workgroups.
- ◆ *President's Report*
 - Mr. Lake expressed appreciation to those in attendance today.
- ◆ *Executive Director's Report*
 - Governor Newsom's proposed budget for the 2024-25 fiscal year (FY) reflects a difference of calculation between the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) and the Department of Finance (DOF).
 - The proposal includes the delay in the implementation of the final rate enhancements for service providers; proposed push back to the original timeline. Business decisions have been made by service providers based on promised funding. If they are not able to provide the services to clients and attract the workforce, our service system will face additional challenges.
 - Ms. Banales noted that this proposal affects clients and hopes it will be reconsidered.
 - Hearings began this week and our trade association, ARCA, stands behind our service providers.

- We will be calling on individuals to assist in our advocacy efforts.
- This year, DDS will develop a Master Plan for Developmental Services to improve the experience of individuals and their families who receive services from regional centers. This plan will outline shared goals for developmental services that are person-centered, equity-focused, and data-driven, while maximizing the effectiveness of recent investments to improve outcomes for clients.
- Ms. Banales noted that the “ACRC Quarterly Dashboard Indicators for the Quarter Ending December 31, 2023” are included in the Board packet.
 - The 1:40 caseloads for Early Start and children, three to five years, has assisted with caseload reduction numbers.
 - ACRC currently has 692 staff. Recruitment and retention remain the focus of our Human Resources (HR) Department.
 - The Targeted Case Management (TCM) units are trending down. Ms. Banales is working with the Directors of Client Services to develop ways to increase these. ACRC has an expectation that every Service Coordinator (SC) complete 400 TCMs per month. It is important that we have these case notes in the client’s file, but we also need to draw down the federal dollars that these notes bring into the statewide system.
 - Special Incident Reports (SIRs) are trending down.
 - The dashboard also reflects the diagnosis, age/gender, ethnicity, county representation, language spoken, and residence type of the individuals served by ACRC.
 - Ms. Banales is available to answer any additional questions that Board members may have.
- Ms. Banales highlighted ACRC’s notable accomplishments for 2023. (see attachment)
- This year, ACRC requested several projects with our submission of our Community Resource Development Plan/Community Placement Plan (CRDP/CPP). DDS approved many of them, including one that allows us to establish a relationship with Mercy Housing. The department also awarded us funding for a respite center for children.
 - The Requests for Proposals (RFPs) will be posted on our website next week; more information will be shared at the March Board meeting.
- Tri-Counties Regional Center (TCRC), along with funding from the other 20 regional centers, partnered with a Hollywood studio to create an animation series for people served by regional centers and the vendors who provide services to them and their families to help

clearly explain the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Final Rule.

- These videos can be viewed at: [Tri-Counties Regional Center - YouTube](#)
- The Board has requested updates on open and closed programs since the last Board meeting. The following are newly vended services:
 - Transportation Companies (11)
 - Independent Living Services [ILS] (2)
 - Speech Pathology (2)
 - Supported Living Services [SLS] (2)
 - Day Programs (4)
 - Adult Residential Facility (4)
- Closed vendors:
 - Adult Residential Facility (2)
 - SLS (1)
- The CAC has been working on a few initiatives. They completed the “A Client’s Guide to My Individual Program Plan” and continue to assist with the development of the training materials for the Supported Decision-Making (SDM) Training that will be rolled out in the late spring.
- On Wednesday, February 7th, ACRC will host its first Quarterly Community Meeting. We have been promoting this opportunity on our social media platforms.
- ACRC’s Purchase of Services (POS) Data Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 19th, from 5 to 6:30 p.m., via Zoom.
- ARCA’s Grassroots Day is scheduled for Tuesday, April 2nd, at the State Capitol. We continue to look for volunteers.

◆ *ARCA-CAC Rep. Report*

- Ms. Lampe shared that the next meeting is scheduled for February 23rd, from 11 a.m. to noon.

◆ *ARCA Delegate Report*

- Ms. Pennington noted that the ARCA Board met on January 19th. She also encouraged Board members to participate in ARCA’s Grassroots Day.

6. **Closed Session** – At 5:57 p.m. the Board adjourned to closed session to discuss personnel and legal issues.

7. **Announcement of Closed Meeting Discussion** - At 6:08 p.m. the Board reconvened in open session following a closed session in which personnel and legal issues were discussed.

8. ***Adjournment***

The meeting adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

Lisa West
Executive Secretary

cc: Lori Banales



ACRC Reflections: Notable Accomplishments for 2023 **(January through December)**

As the 2023 calendar year closed, it is important to pause and review the accomplishments that our organization has made as we continue our work into 2024. This list is not intended to be a comprehensive representation of the work across all staff, instead it is a reflection and compilation of the work conducted and contributed by our staff across all departments.

HR:

- Staff as of 12/31/23= 692
Hired = 233
SC = 164 which is over 2/3 of the staff hired last year
Termed = 115
Net growth = 118
- Recruitment strategies:
 - Staff referral program: 58 hired
 - Eight in-person Job Fairs
 - Workforce collaboration with VMRC
 - Established partnerships across multiple local and online Universities.

Fiscal/IT:

- Clean State audit with no unresolved items.
- Clean Independent public audit report.
- Completed all required Vendor audits and collected all audit findings.
- Implemented DDS/Burns Study Vendor rate increases.
- Renewed four Branch office leases with advantageous terms.
- Migrated applications to cloud and integrated telecommunications system.
- Spearheaded the design and development of the upcoming comprehensive case management system that will be revealed later this Spring.
- Developed client/family satisfaction survey that launched in January 2024
- Hired a Data Scientist/Systems Operator

Intake:

- Lanterman
 - 2159 applicants were assessed through Intake; 1167 applicants were made eligible.

- An Intake Navigator through community-based organization, La Familia, began assisting Spanish speaking applicants going through the Intake process.
- Early Start
 - 3,668 applications processed.

ASD Specialist:

- Engaged with the community on more than 11 outreach trainings, providing training on Autism and how to meet the needs of individuals with an Autism diagnosis (includes a co-training with a mental health practitioner on how to cater mental health services to meet the needs of individuals with autism).
- Created and disseminated a mental health resource guide outlining resources and instructions on how to access these services for all counties in ACRC's catchment area.
- Created and disseminated a resource guide defining what ABA services are and how to access them through generic resources (to support intake applicants).

BCBAs:

- Consulted on 484 internal case referrals supporting service coordinators and planning teams.
- Conducted and hosted four, 9-hour trainings as a part of vendor orientation for new vendors providing behavior related services and five community outreach/vendor trainings:
 - Compassionate Care (end-of-life planning)
 - Evidence-based Practices
- Supports all of the QA oversight across all of the homes, including specialized homes.

Dental Coordinator:

- Member/Chair of the Medi-Cal Dental Advisory Committee (MCDAC).
- Provided community outreach and trainings to day programs, the Special Olympics, and California Northstate University – dental college.
- Assisted with the vendorization process of new dental providers (mid-level sedation in office as an alternative to hospital dentistry), and four Registered Dental Hygienists in Alternative Practice (RDHAP).

Nurse Consultants:

- Early Intervention:
 - 204 in person, Early Start nursing assessments related to eligibility (an increase from 128 in 2022)
 - 985 medical record reviews (ranging 60-112/ month)
- Lanterman (3 years and older):
 - Monthly QA oversight and emergency consultation for 11 specialized homes.

Speech Language Pathologist (SLP):

- 193 assessments for Early Start (average 16 per month with a range of 10-23)
- Collaborated with ACRC CSS on industry serve standards and expanded vendor service types to increase access to SLP services (e.g., remote services, group, and community parent training) in underserved areas.

Client Advocates:

- All three Client Advocates have successfully completed People Planning Together Certification (Person-Centered Peer Planning).
- 145 consultation referrals: advocacy support to Planning Teams
- 35 outreach presentations
- Membership on the SCUSD Career Technical Education Advisory Board

Outreach:

- 100 community outreach events (includes: law enforcement, school districts, community-based organizations, county social service agencies, colleges and universities, festivals, hospitals, culturally based organizations, and more).

Advocacy:

- Hosted Legislative staff, DHCS and DDS: 5 times
- Testified before the legislature: 3 times
- ARCA Grassroots Day

Internship Program:

- 25 interns and 14 colleges and universities affiliation agreements.
 - ACRC onboarded a dedicated training specialist in 2023 to increase the number of internship opportunities (from 8 to 25).

Associate Service Coordinator:

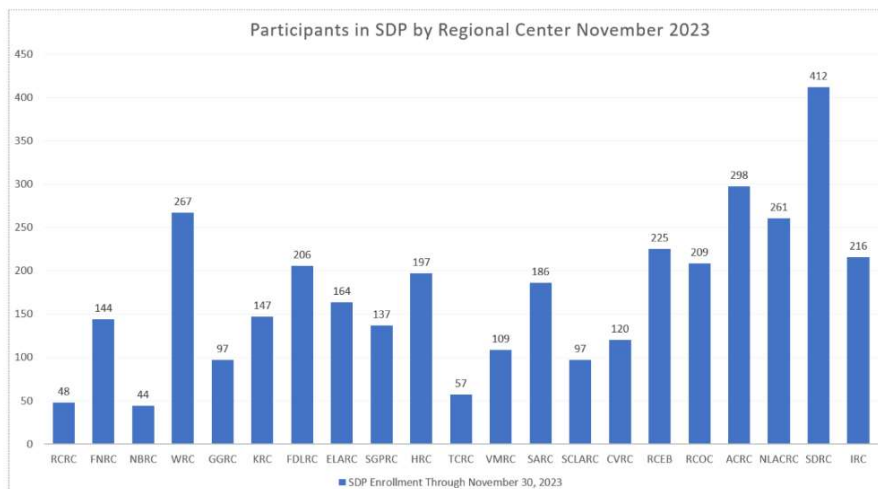
- Created the *Associate Service Coordinator* (ASC) position as a means to support service coordinators and to positively impact retention and recruitment.

Emerging Leaders Program:

- ACRC established our Emerging Leaders Program. 31 staff completed this program; five of which have been promoted into Management.

Self Determination Program:

- ACRC ranks second for the highest number of SDP participants statewide.



Regional Center Performance Measures (RCPM):

- To date, ACRC has participated in the three RCPMs that DDS has released guidance (Early Start, Equity and Cultural Competency and Person-Centered Services Planning). ACRC successfully met four of the five measures and received recognition and an incentive payment.
 - Cultural and Linguistic Competency Training with contractor, Circle Up; 433 staff have completed part one. Training continues August 2024.
 - ACRC is actively collecting for the 2024 calendar year to measure length of time to translate IPPs into threshold language for the Language Access measure identified in Equity and Competency. ACRC intends to participate in all of the RCPMs, which are being rolled out in phases.

Implicit Bias Training (prior year TBL):

- Welfare and Institutions Code section 4511.1 requires implicit bias training for all regional center staff and clinicians and contractors conducting intake and eligibility evaluations. Implicit bias training is intended to raise awareness of unconscious biases to improve and develop the workforce to increase access to services. In April 2023 DDS awarded the training contract to a consulting firm called EquitiFy. ACRC rolled out Implicit Bias training to staff on December 4th. Six of the training sessions are online and one session is in-person. To date, 254 staff have started the training. ACRC has identified 27 contractors who conduct intake and eligibility evaluations and is in the process of notifying them about the training.

Resource Development:



*not including individual social rec vendorizations (024 purchase reimbursement), over 700 additionally processed

- AB 637: received approval from DDS to waive specialized services median rates. This has increased new vendorizations as well as opened up additional therapy services to regional center clients and their families.
- AB 637: increasing median rates for psychologists.
- Transportation Broker contracted in October 2023; added 15 new transportation companies in 2023.

Federal Programs:

- Waiver Enrollee Stats as of Dec 2023
 - 245 clients on the SD (Self-Determination) Waiver (Alta has the most clients on the SD Waiver than any other regional center),
 - 15,173 clients on MW, ACRC ranks 2nd for the largest # of clients on MW.
 - 6,000 on 1915i (no statewide report exists on 1915i waiver enrollees and ACRC has taken a leadership position in the state by creating our own monitoring tool).

Health and Safety Waivers:

- 48 health and safety waiver requests to DDS.

Forensics:

- Created the Forensic Intake Specialist position, who has taken the responsibility of Intake for those applicants that are forensically involved.
- 292 Forensic Review Team staffings (increase of 47 from 2022)
- 115 diversion cases
- 36 competency cases
- 9 juvenile remediation cases
- 192 court orders
- 104 known arrests
- 1,156 known court dates

Housing:

- Mirasol Village Multifamily Housing Project (15 clients housed).
- Initiated pilot of DDS Assistive Technology Workforce Initiative.
- Hired an ACRC Housing Specialist.
- Community outreach: Housing Presentations to Supported Life Conference, State Council on Developmental Disabilities, Team Davis
- Continued participation in Coordinated Future Planning Initiative.

DDS Workforce Initiatives:

- DSP Internship – ACRC is one of three regional centers participating in this pilot.
- Assistive Technology Pilot

- DSP Stipend – ACRC ranks number one across all regional center in the number of DSP that have completed the trainings and received stipends.

Employment:

- CIE and PIP:
 - 89 CIE placements (compared to 127 CIE placements in 2022).
 - 51 clients who reached a year of employment at their place of work. For Fiscal Year 22-23, ACRC is leading Regional Centers in CIE placements.
 - 126 Paid Internships (compared to 83 PIPs in 2022).

Microenterprises:

- ACRC hosted two Microenterprise Fairs in June 2023 and December 2023. These fairs saw 40+ client vendors and 100+ shoppers.
- Three clients have opened their own businesses utilizing the PIP to support their microenterprise.

Employment Grants:

- Below are the recipients of the DDS Employment Grant serving the ACRC area.
 - Disability Voice United- “What Works For Us: Research and Training on Leveraging the Determination Program to Increase CIE”
 - New Leaf Solutions- “Benefits Planning for Paid Internship Program (PIP) Participants”
 - Progressive Employment Concepts- “Creating a cadre of skilled Customized Employment mentors and professionals in California to increase quality employment outcomes”
 - Sierra College- “Learning Independence for Future Employment (LIFE) Project”
 - UC Davis- “Promoting Competitive Integrated Employment for Young Adults with Autism and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities”
 - Zavikon- “Zavikon Supported Placement”

Events & Training:

- Employment Corner Workshop – January 2023, April 2023, July 2023, December 2023. These workshops have included topics such as learning about ACRC employment services, microenterprises, obtaining state employment, and DOR.
- Staff Trainings on Employment Services – June 2023, December 2023
- Community Trainings:
 - Sacramento Job Corps
 - SELPA
 - DOR

DSP Collaborative:

- The DSP Collaborative launched the <https://dspcollaborative.org/> in Summer 2023.
 - DSP Collaborative held three DICE Job Fairs – May, June, and November 2023
 - 30-50 Service Providers at each event
 - 10-20 new DSPs hired*
- *These number do not include results from November 2023 DICE

Community Partners:

- ACRC is part of the following Local Plan Agreements (LPAs):
 - Greater Sacramento Valley LPA
 - Gold Country LPA
 - Northern Sierra-Rocklin LPA
 - Tri-Counties LPA
 - Yolo County LPA
 - Truckee-Lake Tahoe LPA
- ACRC participates in the SCUSD Career Technical Education (CTE) Advisory Board to ensure that students with developmental disabilities are represented in CTE. ACRC is a member of the Northern CA Business Advisory Committee.
- ACRC has current connections with the following Chamber of Commerce:
 - Metro COC
 - Auburn COC
 - El Dorado County COC
 - Citrus Heights COC