

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

Present:

Lindsey Dyba, Futures Explored,
Inc., Chair
Garrett Broadbent, Creative
Living Options, Co-Chair &
Design. Dir.
James Astorga, F&A Astorga
Care Home
Eric Ciampa, UCP of Sacramento
Andrea Croom, INALLIANCE
Bonnie Douglas, Turning Point
Kate Halecky, Southside
Unlimited
Joe Jaquez, EGA CT
Christa McClure, Tri-County
Respite Care Service
Antonio Ranit, Antelope Hills
Manor
Yvonne Soto, DDSO
Carole Watilo, Progressive
Employment

Visitors

Sheila Abrams
Rudy Altamirano
Stephanie Berberich
Taylor Berry
Christa Coats
Naycora Fautleroy
Maureen Fitzgerald
Sonya Fox
Braydon Holtzinger
Dawn Horwath
Jessica Jenó
Jennifer Jones
Rebecca LaBoriel
Leticia Leon
Myra Montejano
Michelle Ramirez (CBEM)
Daniel Savino
Walter Williams

Absent: (* excused)

Janet Brandon*, A.I.M. &
Associates
Jacquie Foss*, STEP
Michelle Ramirez*, On My Own
Sergio Pinto, BEST Consulting,
Inc.
Laleh Sharpe*, Maxim Healthcare
Services

Staff:

Lori Banales, Executive Director
Jennifer Bloom, Director of Client
Services
Michelle Duchene, Community
Services & Supports Manager
Jordan Eller, Specialized Services
Manager
Camelia Houston, Director of Intake &
Clinical Services
Helen Neri, Community Services &
Supports Manager
Sydney Ruport, Community Services
Specialist
Carly Shearer, Client Employment
Specialist
Faye Tait, Associate Client Services
Director
Kizi Smith, Executive Assistant

The Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) met on Thursday, October 12, 2023, at 9:32 a.m. to discuss: 1) Executive Director's Report; 2) Board Update; 3) DSP Stipend – payroll obligations; 4) ACRC Vendor Forum Representative Updates; 5) System Reform and Legislative Update; 6) PAC Goals; 7) PAC Committees & Reports; and 8) Announcements/Comments. All present provided self-introductions.

Without objection, Lindsey Dyba made the motion to approve the Provider Advisory Committee meeting minutes of September 14, 2023, as submitted.

1. *Executive Director's Report*

- Ms. Banales shared that ACRC's All Staff Meeting took place yesterday and included a special guest speaker, Christopher Ulmer, "Special Kids Special Books". We had an excellent opportunity to celebrate people's service years and welcome 74 new employees onboarded since July 1st, with a total of 208 new employees over the last 12 months.
- Currently, there are 60 vacancies within the agency, which is excellent progress from last year, which had 95 vacancies.
- We have continual growth positions that were put into place by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to achieve the mandated 1:40 caseload ratio.
- Ms. Duchene thanked everyone on behalf of the CSS team for their support during the Direct Support Professionals (DSP) Recognition Week on September 10th-16th, highlighting the dedication of many DSPs.
- Mr. Scantlebury added that the CSS team reached out to several DSPs that serve our clients and received great feedback, which was featured in the ACRC newsletter, social media platforms, and Collaborative website during Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week.
- Ms. Duchene noted that a few workforce initiatives in the works were shared in the newsletter, including DSP Internship, DSP University, Technology Pilot, Bi/Multi-Lingual Pay Differential, and DSP training.
- We received the first report last week that we had 941 DSPs complete the training.
 - Our Vendor Coordinators have sent letters to our providers to confirm that the DSPs listed under their vendor number have completed the DSP training.
- Ms. Duchene noted that the group's questions and concerns have been submitted to DDS, and she will continue to update ACRC staff during Coffee with Community Services and future PAC meetings.
- A question was asked regarding the guidelines when a DSP completes the training and leaves before the payment is released.
 - It was noted that providers have within 90 days to pay the DSP in these circumstances.
- A question was asked: what positions now qualify for the stipend, and what is the definition of a DSP?

- Ms. Duchene noted that the DSP definition is extensive, and we do not have a direct definition from DDS at this time and will provide an update once available.
- Questions or concerns can be directed to thedspstipend@altaregional.org.
- Ms. Shearer shared that PRIDE Industries is hosting a Disability Career Fair on October 18th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at The Officer's Club in McClellan Park. The fair is exclusively for our service providers to hire staff.
- Ms. Horwath shared that the Disability Career Fair is the first event that Pride has hosted. Many employers from Sacramento and surrounding counties are expected to be in attendance. In addition, volunteers will assist with resume writing and submitting online applications. ASL and Spanish-speaking interpreters will be available.
 - Pride Transit will also be providing roundtrip shuttle services for the event.
- Ms. Shearer shared details about the upcoming Disability Industry Career Expo Job Fair on November 7th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Sierra College. We encourage everyone to sign up to participate in the job fair and join the website at www.dspscollaborative.org.
- Mr. Scantlebury shared that we have two new Coordinated Family Support Services providers in addition to California Resource Services.
 - Compass ILS and SLS
 - On My Own
- Ms. Eller provided an overview of the 2023 Unmet Needs Vendor Survey results and highlighted the twelve priority areas for development. These priorities will be proposed to the DDS to request startup funds. We anticipate hearing from the DDS on which startup funds were approved in November or December.
 - Affordable Housing – Multi Family Home Projects
 - Financial Management Services (FMS)
 - Adult Residential Facilities for Persons with Special Health Needs (ARFPSHN)
 - Housing Access Services
 - Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)
 - Day Program – Medical & Behavioral (outlying areas)
 - Enhanced Behavioral Supports Home (EBSH)
 - Residential Care Facility for the Elderly (RCFE)
 - Psychiatric Services
 - Respite
 - Enhanced SLS
 - Substance Use Disorder Treatment
 - A meeting will be held on October 17th from 1 to 2 p.m. to discuss the survey results. The Zoom link can be accessed on our transparency website.

- The group discussed residential facilities for the elderly client population and whether ACRC has considered contacting other RCFEs to propose additional training.
 - Ms. Banales noted that DDS has collaborated with the Department of Aging on many initiatives. Furthermore, the Department of Aging has funding that will expire, and we were happy to be one of the agencies that utilized these funds towards other projects aligned with family home agencies.
- There was a discussion on where the focus is on outlying counties.
 - Ms. Eller shared that currently, the focus is on Yolo, South Lake Tahoe, Grass Valley, Yuba, and Sutter Counties regarding day programs.
 - Ms. Banales noted the importance of sharing geographical information with our community and this group to expand in areas we know have a significant need for programs.
- There was a discussion regarding service code options and changes.
 - Ms. Duchene noted that we share these service code changes with our service providers and give them the option to choose with the understanding of future changes.
- Ms. Eller noted that Mr. Decker and she will provide a presentation on Enhanced Supported Living Services at the November PAC meeting.
- Ms. Neri provided an update on the transition to our new broker, R&D Transportation. It was emphasized that we did not deviate from the Title 17 Regulations regarding what R&D Transportation can provide for the ACRC.
- Ms. Montejano, with R&D Transportation, shared that within the first week, they received over 400 Transportation Service Requests (TSRs) submitted by SCs and the CSS team, which is used to identify transportation needs and volume. In addition, R&D will collaborate with transportation providers to gather data to determine what programs and number of routes they serve to match individuals with transportation providers.
- Ms. Leon, with R&D, shared that a meeting was held with CSS to discuss priorities and essential goals. Furthermore, outstanding or unresolved TSRs are being reviewed during this transition as we work with service providers with pending requests. To address the urgent priority of unmet service needs, R&D is working on an Unmet Needs Assessment specifically for ACRC transportation to identify what areas, counties, programs, and services have unmet needs. This will be shared in a future PAC meeting.
- Feedback was shared that the 024 (purchase reimbursement) process is being used as a stopgap but is difficult to access.
 - Ms. Duchene recommended submitting a TSR while the 024 process is taking place and will work with Ms. Johnson to address this. It was also suggested to contact providers directly to streamline the process.

- Ms. Neri will provide more information on the roles of a broker and ACRC's Transportation Department at the November PAC meeting.

2. **Board Update**

- Mr. Broadbent shared that last month's Board retreat in Davis was successful, which included Board Governance and Development training. A presentation on CAPTAIN evidence-based practices training was given by Ms. Rettinhouse.
- ACRC announced a request for funds to enter a contract with Neudesic to streamline most of our processes, including SignNow and a new Intake portal, which will significantly lower the costs of the Regional Center.
- Mr. Ahmad shared the vetting vendor process.
- Ms. Banales shared the excitement of this project with Neudesic to streamline these processes, which will create many efficiencies for the regional center.
- The Board approved a new member, Dr. EunMi Cho, a longtime Special Educator, Trainer, and Professor at CSUS who will join us in November.

3. **DSP Stipend – payroll obligations**

- It was noted that the DSP Stipend comes through payroll. There was a discussion on how the stipend is calculated. If staff work overtime, this can create an issue. There were no further discussions or comments.

4. **ACRC Vendor Forum Representative Updates**

- No vendor forums were held.

5. **System Reform and Legislative Update (ARCA, CDSA, CCLN, PAVE and DS Taskforce & Workgroups)**

- ARCA
 - Ms. Banales introduced Mr. Savino, the Government Affairs Director with ARCA.
 - Mr. Savino shared legislative updates, including several bills that will affect service providers that the Governor has until Friday to sign legislation.
 - Ms. Banales acknowledged the recent change to the minimum wage for fast-food workers and noted that ACRC remains focused and intentional in highlighting the job paths and opportunities.
- PAVE
 - Did not meet. Working on operations updates.
- DS Taskforce & Workgroups
 - The Quality Incentive Program (QIP) Workgroup met in September.
 - The Employment Workgroup met, which included a presentation about customized employment. This workgroup is working on a customized employment specialist, service code, position, service category, and employment navigator service. A focus group

completed outreach to discuss services to providers, regional centers, family members, and self-advocates and then presented the feedback. The next meeting will be in December.

6. **PAC Goals**

- Ms. Dyba provided the outcome of the "Vendor Survey" that PAC members completed to develop committee goals and shared an analysis of the potential focus areas and committees.
- There was discussion on if the group would like to move forward or shift these focus areas. Once focus areas are defined, we will create committees to develop goals.
- There was a suggestion to reach out to current committees to see if they are already working on potential focus areas to determine if they will be absorbed into that committee.
- It was discussed that Health and Safety committees will be absorbed into Communication and Outreach. The Diversity and Equity Committee will be absorbed into the Workforce and DDS Advocacy Committees under Legislative and Budget.
- Ms. Dyba will send a revised list of which committees will be absorbed.
- Current committee chairs of the Communication and Outreach, Legislative and Budget, Training, and Vendor Relations will meet and identify potential goals or any needed changes moving forward.
- Ms. Watilo proposed that since some committees have been inactive, the PAC committee can reconvene in November to discuss further and choose new chairs.

7. **PAC Committees & Reports**

- The Communication/Outreach Committee continues to meet.
 - The Vendor Relations Committee met.
 - The group made progress on the communication guides, which will be on the website listed under the Provider tab.
 - The group requested additional training on CSS alerts.

8. **Announcements/Comments**

- Ms. Watilo shared that the upcoming HCBS Compliance Workshops will begin in January. These services were funded by a grant through the HCBS funds from the regional center. Dates and additional information will be shared at the November meeting. The workshop topics will be:
 - Sowing the Seeds, Thinking Beyond Clients
 - Developing the Roots, Building the Person Centered Organizational Structure
 - Cultivating the New Direction, Implementing the Strategies
 - Employment, the Ultimate Payoff Growing Employment Services
 - Please email Kate at kate@progressiveemployment.org to be added to the list to receive information about the workshops.

- Ms. Banales shared that National Core Indicators (NCI) will hold their Annual Public Presentation at the November Board meeting on November 16th.
- The November PAC agenda will include Workforce Diversity and additional language.

The next PAC meeting is scheduled on **Thursday, November 9, 2023**. The meeting adjourned at 11:33 a.m.

Kizi Smith
Executive Assistant

cc: ACRC Board of Directors
Lori Banales