

Alta California Regional Center
Provider Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, March 13, 2025
Minutes

Present:

Lindsey Dyba, Futures
Explored, Inc., Chair
Garrett Broadbent, Creative
Living Options, Co-Chair &
Design. Dir.
James Astorga, F&A Astorga
Care Home
Janet Brandon, A.I.M. &
Associates
Eric Ciampa, UCP of Sacramento
Andrea Croom, InAlliance
Bonnie Douglas, Turning Point
Kate Halecky, Southside
Unlimited
Joe Jaquez, EGA CT
Jay Kolvoord, STEP, Inc.
Christa McClure, Tri-County
Respite Care Service
Michelle Ramirez, On My Own
Antonio Ranit, Antelope Hills
Manor
Laleh Sharpe, Maxim Healthcare
Services
Yvonne Soto, DDSO
Carole Watilo, Progressive
Employment

Visitors

Jessica Anderson
Robyn Bajema
Taylor Berry
Gregg Brandon
Allan Bravo
Nora Cancino
Christa Coats
Meddie Cueva
Patti Damon
Bill Duncan
Maureen Fitzgerald
Angel Garcia
Gizelle Garcia
Michael Hayes
Braydon Holtzinger
Erica Horn

Dawn Horwath
Lana Knyazev
Letty Leon
Michael Lyman
Susana Magana
Maria McConnell
Susan Miner
Kelli Nuttall
Lois Orcutt
Amy Parkin
Becca Pressnell
Melissa Savage
Kristin Symonds
Cynthia Teel
Jennifer Todd
Jasmine Vollenweider
Rafael Wagas
Michelle Wild
Max Woodford

Staff:

Lori Banales, Executive Director
Scott Barr, Quality Assurance and
Compliance Manager
Jennifer Bloom, Director of Client
Services
John Decker, Director of Community
Services
Michelle Duchene, Community
Services & Supports Manager
Jordan Eller, Specialized Services
Manager
Camelia Houston, Director of Intake &
Clinical Services
Mechelle Johnson, Director of Client
Services
Carly Moorman, Client Employment
Specialist
Jason Scantlebury, LEAD Community
Services Specialist
Kristi Shaffer, Community Services
Specialist
Lisa West, Executive Secretary

The Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) met on Thursday, March 13, 2025, at 9:30 a.m. to discuss: 1) Presentation from ACRC's Education Support Team; 2) ACRC Vendor Forum Representative Updates; 3) Executive Director's Report; 4) System Reform and Legislative Updates; 5) PAC Committee Reports; and 6) Announcements/Comments. All present provided self-introductions.

1. *Presentation from ACRC's Education Support Team*

- Ms. Bloom introduced Kristine Gamberg and Tara Cawthon-Argerich, ACRC's Education Support Team, who serve over 16,000 clients within the educational service system.
 - Both Ms. Gamberg and Ms. Cawthon-Argerich provided an overview of their roles and responsibilities, as well as their background.
 - In June 2024, they launched an Education Consultation Clinic (ECC), which allows Service Coordinators (SCs) to staff simple and immediate education concerns.
 - ACRC's Education Support Team has held five SC Workshops and continues to hold Community Workshops (two last calendar year, with an additional two that are scheduled for March 20th and June 26th).
 - ACRC have shared information about the Community Workshops with the Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPAs) that we work with, as well as WarmLine. SCs also reach out to the clients and families that ACRC serves.

Without objection, Lindsey Dyba made the motion to approve the Provider Advisory Committee meeting minutes of February 13, 2025, as submitted.

2. *ACRC Vendor Forum Representative Updates*

- Community Care Licensing (CCL) Regulations Discussion
 - Stephenie Doub, CCL's Regional Manager, will be rescheduled.
- ACRC vendor forums will resume in May.

3. *Executive Director's Report*

- Mr. Decker shared that the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) released a Directive on March 6th, entitled "Remote Services – Day Programs and Independent Living Services."
 - It is still ACRC's understanding that for medical and behavioral day programs, consultations must be in-person. Mr. Decker is seeking additional guidance from the department.
 - This is a Planning Team discussion – the client must decide what is best to support their needs. Any barriers that the service provider may face in providing said services should not be a factor.
- Regional centers are required to verify usual and customary rates. We are on the precipice of getting changes to the transportation rates, as well.
- At last Friday's "Coffee with Community Services," a Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) presentation was shared. Mr. Decker

believes ACRC should have offered this presentation to the PAC first – it is available if this committee wishes.

- Consultants must be identified in service provider's program designs by the end of December.
- ACRC staff are updating the exemption form. At the end of April, we will be offering office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11 a.m. to noon, to assist providers in completing theirs.
 - Please reach out to your Community Services & Supports (CSS) Specialist if you would like extra support.
 - Ms. Duchene will provide updates at upcoming "Coffee with Community Services" meetings.
 - She clarified that a provider's exemption freezes their rate and service code during the "hold harmless" period, while DDS reviews the exemption.
- Regarding the DDS' Provider Directory, ACRC has processed 160 vendor changes, with an additional nine pending. Data issues continue.
 - ACRC staff continue to direct service providers back to the department if they have additional questions.
- ACRC's CSS Department is working with R&D Transportation to make sure all of the transportation workbooks are accurate prior to being sent to providers. Out of the 53 transportation providers that ACRC has, 29 have signed acknowledgements.
 - Mr. Decker clarified that DDS has not instructed regional centers to move daily rates to hourly rates. Those providers that have daily rates should not sign any acknowledgement for hourly rates at this time.
- The Association of Regional Center Agencies' (ARCA's) Grassroots Day was held last week at the State Capitol. ACRC's group attended ten meetings; five with the representatives, and the remaining were with staffers.
 - In total, 21 regional centers attended 114 meetings, with 200+ participants statewide.
 - These meetings provided an opportunity to promote the initiatives that impact clients and families.
- The Assembly Budget Subcommittee #2 on Human Services Hearing is scheduled for March 26th, at 1:30 p.m., and the Senate Subcommittee #3 on Health and Human Services Hearing is scheduled for April 24th, at 9:30 a.m.
 - Ms. Banales believes there will be a virtual option; testimony will be in person.
- Ms. Banales and Mr. Decker will be providing an update on the DSP Collaborative at the California Community Living Network (CCLN) Annual Leadership Conference 2025. This group has engaged with the seven Los Angeles regional centers, who are all supportive of it and will be promoting the collaborative to direct support professionals (DSPs) in Southern California.

- ACRC and Valley Mountain Regional Center (VMRC) have spoken to DDS, who support this opportunity. We will have a kick-off meeting for this expansion.
- ACRC will be holding one last opportunity to pick up available furniture this Saturday at the Harvard location.
- ACRC's Annual Purchase of Services (POS) Data meeting is scheduled for March 18th, from 5 to 7 p.m. On March 25th, from 1 to 2 p.m., we will continue the discussions. More information, including the presentation, is posted on our agency's website.
 - Input is welcomed throughout the calendar year at posequity@altaregional.org.
- Ms. Banales noted that ACRC shared the annual caseload ratio report at Monday's Finance Committee. It is a strategic balancing act to hit DDS' mandated caseloads.

4. ***System Reform and Legislative Updates (Capitol Coalition, CCLN, CDSA, CRA, PAVE, CaAPSE & Master Plan Workgroup)***

- Capitol Coalition
 - The group is meeting again today after the PAC meeting. They have finalized their logo and Mission statement and continue to discuss advocacy opportunities.
 - New members are welcome.
- CCLN
 - The CCLN Annual Leadership Conference 2025 will be held in San Diego from April 16th – 18th.
 - Self-advocates will be sharing their stories, and attorneys will be discussing "safe spaces."
- CDSA
 - At next Tuesday's California Disabilities Services Association (CDSA) reception, an award will be presented to a legislator.
 - Their Legislative Conference is scheduled for April 7th, 8th & 9th.
 - The group is focusing their efforts on Medicaid advocacy.
- CRA
 - Today, DDS held a stakeholder's meeting to discuss the standardized family assessment, inclusive of respite, personal attendant (PA) and day care; they sent out internal documents.
 - If you have concerns, Mr. Ciampa encourages you to attend these meetings.
- PAVE
 - ACRC staff met with Dr. Julie Beadle-Brown and discussed a potential pilot project with ACRC, which Mr. Decker would like to discuss further at the May PAC meeting.
 - We will be recruiting 30 to 40 individuals to be a part of this.
 - Working on the month-to-month roll out with CCLN.

- CaAPSE
 - The California branch of the National Association of People Supporting Employment First (CaAPSE) is working on employment services – meeting with representatives to discuss SB 639, which would end sub-minimum wage, and working with a group of providers across the state that have worked with employment exemptions. They are also looking at tailored day services.
 - The National APSE Conference will be held in Washington, D.C. in June.
 - CaAPSE and CDSA met with the Department of Rehabilitation to discuss their 90% rate. They were unclear and confused about the Quality Incentive Program (QIP).
 - Another meeting is scheduled for next week.
- Master Plan Workgroup
 - The draft Master Plan has been released.
- Robin LeMay, ACRC's POS Manager, has been working on the bilingual pay differential; Ms. Duchene will provide an update to the PAC next month.
- Regarding DSP internships and working with All's WELL, it is Mr. Decker's understanding that some interns have been hired.
 - It would be helpful for regional centers to receive guidance from DDS on how to promote this opportunity.
- Crosswalk Ad-Hoc Committee
 - The meeting is scheduled for next Monday, March 17th, at 11 a.m.

5. ***PAC Committee Reports***

- Communication & Outreach Committee
 - Beginning at the April PAC meeting, members will have the opportunity to discuss those things that they have encountered while running their businesses.
 - They are updating the PAC matrix, so that they can target those regions or service categories that are not currently reflected in PAC membership.
 - Please make sure to send your updated matrix to Ms. West.
 - The next meeting is scheduled for May 6th.
- Vendor Relations Committee
 - The group has been working with Ms. Johnson and Ms. Bloom – the service guides are posted on ACRC's website.
 - The next meeting is scheduled for March 24th at 1 p.m.
- As a reminder, each PAC member must sit on at least one of these committees.

6. ***Announcements/Comments***

- At the April PAC meeting, an insurance broker is scheduled to lead a discussion about employees driving personal vehicles for work.

- CDSA is currently proposing legislation on this issue – AB 815 (Ortega) Vehicle insurance: vehicle classification.
 - Employees are not commercial drivers (e.g., Uber or Lyft drivers).
- Ms. Ramirez shared that the roommate app has matched five clients.
 - If a client is interested in creating a profile, On My Own is willing to assist.
 - Information is posted on On My Own's website under "Client Service."
 - She will share information at an upcoming "Coffee with Community Services", as well.
- Futures Explored is holding a "Spring Fling Dance" on March 29th – this event is for individuals 18 and over.
- Ms. Watilo believes that service providers need to get involved with what might be happening to Medicaid. If they are going to place a work restriction on Medicaid services, it will be difficult for some individuals. She encouraged everyone to talk with their representatives.
 - Congressman Kevin Kiley is hosting a virtual town hall on March 17th at 6:30 p.m.
 - "Resources for ALL Californians" are posted on ACRC's website. ARCA has sent out resources, as well. Our job is to talk about what is most important to the individuals that we serve. ACRC will continue to provide as much information as possible on these issues when it is released.
- Recently, Mr. Decker attended a HUD (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development) opportunity in Woodland regarding a two-year planning grant. He is seeking service provider volunteers to join him in these discussions so that feedback can be shared on ways to expand services for individuals with developmental disabilities.
- Housing Now officially closed and donated their remaining funding to the Supported Life Institute (SLI) for their upcoming conference.
- ACRC is hosting the Lanterman Housing Alliance's (LHA's) 2025 Spring Housing Summit on March 19th & 20th.

The next PAC meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, April 10, 2025**. The meeting adjourned at 11:23 a.m.

Lisa West
Executive Secretary

cc: ACRC Board of Directors
Lori Banales