

North Los Angeles County Regional Center  
**Vendor Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

February 5, 2015

**Present:** Fredlyn Berger, Annie Cox, Mariela Feldman, Cynthia Fernandez, Michelle Heid, Kristin Hoeflin, Jonathan Istrin, Pam Jacobson, Eleshia Johnson, Ken Lane, Rebecca Lienhard, Jenni Moran, Scott Shepard, Gay Wane, and Dolly Wauls - Committee Members  
Bahman Ghahremani, Victoria Berrey, Randi Levinson-Kuzmin, Tanner Scharch, Stella Shahangian, Aleta Andrews, Dana Andrews, Marie McManus, Mandy Flower, Ruthie Rosenberg, Debra Donovan, Rhonda Bunnin, Leticia Hernandez, Victoria Greenwood, Veronica Barrera, Cyndi McAuley, Cynthia Sanchez, Rosa Hernandez, Valerie Kissell, Carol Caldwell, Israel Ibanez, Jeffrey Bentley, Joe Tighe, and Claire Moynihan - Guests  
George Stevens, Jennifer Kaiser, John Youngbauer, Yolanda Bosch, Erica Beall, Jason Trevino, Anna Polin, Sarah Rolfes, Kimberly Johnson-McNeill, and Nikisia Simmons – Staff

**Absent:** Deborah Cutter, Marina Pink, and Wayne Tashjian

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**I. Call to Order & Introductions**

Jenni Moran called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Introductions were made.

**II. Public Input** - There was no public input.

**III. Consent Items**

**A. Approval of Agenda**

**M/S/C** (J. Istrin/P. Jacobson) To approve the agenda as presented.

**B. Approval of Minutes from January 8<sup>th</sup> VAC Meeting**

**M/S/C** (G. Wane/A. Cox) To approve the minutes as presented.

**IV. Executive Director's Report**

George Stevens gave the following reports:

**A. Purchase of Service (POS) Data:** As required, we have posted our POS expenditure data on our website and community meetings will be held in

March. The meetings will be held at 2 different times to maximize attendance.

- B. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): An MOU has been established between the California Departments of Developmental Services (DDS), Rehabilitation (DOR), and Education (CDE) to phase out the sub-minimum wage and increase work opportunities for people with disabilities. There is a national movement to prepare people with disabilities to work in integrated settings earning a livable wage, sometimes referred to as “competitive integrated employment” (CIE). These 3 departments have agreed to develop a plan to make CIE a reality in California. We want to be very cautious with this as they move forward as we don’t want anyone left behind. Rebecca announced that the fore mentioned group is putting together a task force; people who want to get involved should try and join it.

**Action:** George will make this a standing VAC agenda item so he can keep everyone updated on its progress.

- C. POS Deficit: The center’s POS budget is just under \$282 million. We are currently projecting a POS deficit of about \$32 million. The deficit is attributed to under-funding, caseload growth, and utilization. Also, NLACRC is the fastest growing regional center in the state. We added 554 cases during the first 6 months of this fiscal year. All 21 regional centers are projecting POS deficits with NLACRC as second highest. George is not worried about the POS deficit as DDS has always bailed us out. But this could cause cash flow issues later in the fiscal year.

- D. FY 2015-16 State Budget: The state budget reflects a state in recovery, but our system has been left out of it. Other than some additional funding for regional centers’ utilization and growth, no additional funds were included. We were hoping that the budget would include rate increases for regional centers and their service providers. We need to make our voices heard on the desperate need for these additional dollars.

- E. Annual Family Program Fee (AFPF): The Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) is drafting a report that will show that the AFPF costs more for regional centers to implement than it does to bring dollars in. Also, ARCA is working with the Lanterman Coalition to create a document to push for a 10% across the board rate increase for service providers.

**Action:** George will forward both documents to the VAC once they are available.

- F. California Bureau of State Auditors' (BSA) Report: A new report just released by the BSA shows that DDS and regional centers' implementation of the fees paid by parents of children living in residential facilities is woefully inefficient and inconsistent and has provided recommendations on how the problem could be remedied.
  
- G. Self-Determination: We are in the process of putting together our volunteer advisory committee. This will be an 11-member committee that will oversee the center's implementation of the self-determination program. The State Council on Developmental Disabilities' local office (formerly Area Board 10), will select 5 members and we will select the other 5; the eleventh member will be our client rights' advocate. NLACRC's committee membership will include a representative from the Family Focus Resource Center, a board member, a service provider, and 2 others not yet identified at this time. We will also be posting our implementation process steps on our website and will update it on a regular basis so everyone knows where we are in the process. Ruth Janka, the center's new consumer services director, will be working with the advisory committee to oversee the center's implementation of this program. NLACRC has 174 spots for consumers to fill as part of the 3-year pilot program. It has come to our attention that DDS may take the responsibility for identifying who these 174 consumers will be.
  
- H. Behavioral Services: NLACRC is working closely with LA Care and Health Net to prepare them for taking over the provision of behavioral services. Four more stakeholder meetings will be held over the next 4 months. The state plan amendment has not been approved as yet. The center is monitoring this closely as we don't want any of our consumers to fall through the cracks and not receive the services that they need.

**V. Chief Financial Officer's Report (Kim Rolfes)**

Kim was not present to give a report.

**VI. Community Services Director's Report (Yolanda Bosch)**

A. Draft Guidelines: Out of Community/Out of State Travel

1. Residential Service Providers
2. Supported Living Providers

These guidelines were drafted to reflect the center's process to assess and make decisions regarding requests to provide services and supports to

consumers who are traveling outside their community or outside of the state. Copies of both draft guidelines were provided to the VAC with their meeting packets. We want to make sure that any safety issues can be addressed and proper supports are in place. We also want to make sure it is the consumer's choice to travel. These guidelines will be shared again at next month's VAC meeting for vendor input. Once the guidelines are finalized, they will be presented to the Board of Trustees for their approval. Once approved, the guidelines will be incorporated into the center's service standards.

- B. Blocked Rate Increase: On December 31, 2014, the United States District Court in Washington, D.C. issued a temporary restraining order staying the revised definition of "companionship services" for 14 days, until January 15, 2015. These regulations were due to go into effect on January 1, 2015. As a result of the US District Court's action, the 5.82% rate increase for supported living, personal assistance and in-home respite agency services scheduled to begin January 1, 2015, will not go into effect at this time.
- C. Request for Proposals (RFPs): The center has released an RFP for transportation services in the Antelope Valley. An applicants' conference will be held at the center on Tuesday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. We have also received proposals in response to our other RFPs and are in the process of reviewing them.
- D. DS 1891 Forms: All service providers need to submit a completed "Applicant/Vendor Disclosure Statement" (DS 1891 form) to the regional center. This form discloses information about the service provider's ownership and control interests. The form is available on our website and can be submitted through our portal. We will be sending out 30 day notices to providers who have not submitted the form as required. The center will be forced to take action that will affect a provider's vendorization if they do not submit the form.
- E. Minimum Wage Increase: Thirteen of our providers submitted requests for additional funding to cover the minimum wage increase. We are working with DDS to process these requests. Payments will be retroactive to July 1<sup>st</sup>, when the increase went into effect. VAC members were concerned about the minimum wage increase that went into effect July 1<sup>st</sup> and wanted to know if they could request additional funding for that wage increase. Yolanda reported that DDS should let us know within the next month or 2, what the process for this will be. In addition, Yolanda stated that the process for the July 1<sup>st</sup> increase was very challenging for a number of reasons including incomplete or incorrect information being submitted by the service providers

and a lot of back and forth to get matters resolved.. The next time around, Yolanda will have a meeting with providers to explain to them exactly what needs to be submitted in order to get additional dollars to cover the minimum wage increase.

- F. Service Provider Audits: All providers who have billing in excess of \$250,000 must have an audit conducted and provide a copy of that audit to the center. This is a Title 17 requirement for continued vendorization, so please get your audits done and submit them to us so we are not forced to take any negative action.
- G. Department of Labor Training: The department held a training at the center last week and over 100 people were in attendance. The training primarily focused on the expectations of employers. The center will be arranging for a second training; information about it will be posted on our website. Yolanda stated that it is prudent for providers to attend this training as the department is conducting unannounced visits to make sure providers are in compliance with their regulations.
- H. E-mail Blasts: If you haven't already, please go to the center's website and sign up to receive our e-mail blasts. It's a great way to get current information sent to you by e-mail!
- I. Contact Yolanda: If providers have any questions about anything Yolanda reported on today, they should contact her by e-mail at: [ybosch@nlacrc.org](mailto:ybosch@nlacrc.org).

## **VII. Brief Committee Business**

### A. Draft Employment First Policy

The Employment First policy that was developed by the VAC was presented to the Board of Trustees last month for their review. The board referred the policy back to the Consumer Services Committee for final review. That committee reviewed the draft policy, suggested no changes, and will be presenting it at next month's board meeting for approval.

## **VIII. Agenda Item for the Next Board Meeting**

The following item was identified for the VAC's section of the February 11<sup>th</sup> board meeting:

### A. Minutes of the February 5<sup>th</sup> VAC Meeting

## **IX. Announcements/Public Input**

- A. Next Meeting: Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, at 9:30 a.m. (full meeting)
- B. DDS Safety Net Presentation: Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, at 11:00 a.m. (immediately following the VAC meeting).
- C. Gay asked if anyone had resources for LGBT consumers. Erica reported that the Los Angeles LGBT Center is a great resource and she should check out their website.

## **X. Committee Work** (The committee breaks into their workgroups)

- A. Early Start/Prevention Services (Annie Cox, Chair)
- B. Children's Services (Wayne Tashjian, Chair)
- C. Adult Services (Rebecca Lienhard, Chair)
- D. Mental Health Issues (Gay Wane, Chair)

## **XI. Adjournment**

Jenni adjourned the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

Submitted by,

*Jennifer Kaiser*

Jennifer Kaiser  
Executive Assistant

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