

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

June 2, 2016

**Present:** Fredlyn Berger, Annie Cox, Deborah Cutter, Mariela Feldman, Cynthia Fernandez, Michelle Heid, Jonathan Istrin, Ken Lane, Kristin Laurino, Marina Pink, Scott Shepard, Wayne Tashjian, and Dolly Wauls – VAC Members

Riva Kestenbaum, Alana Yorkshire, Tessa Graham, Dana Kalek, Anita Zelaya, Leticia Leon, Victoria Greenwood, Mindy Hughes, Dana V. Andrews, Sharoll Jackson, Nick Vukotic, Ricardo Martinez, Jose Perez, Janet Schilling, Cyndi McAuley, Linda Cobuzzi, Debra Dinielli, Lori Sivazlian, Chelsea Rivera, Andrea Lemos, Joel Smollett, Ralph Stokes, Adam Stokes, Alejandra Bartecek, Phil Motherspaw, Jessica Morrow, Lizeth Corral, Natalie Zhitnitsky, and Olga Reyes - Guests

Jennifer Kaiser, George Stevens, Yolanda Bosch, Kim Rolfes, Arpi Arabian, Arsho Garlanian, Anna Polin, Kimberly Johnson-McNeill, Evin Broughton-Rodriguez – Staff Members

**Absent:** Eleshia Johnson and Staci Jordan

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**I. Call to Order & Introductions**

Michelle Heid, VAC chair, called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m. Introductions were made.

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

**III. Consent Items**

- A. Approval of Agenda
- B. Approval of Minutes from May 5<sup>th</sup> VAC Meeting

The agenda and minutes were approved as presented.

**IV. Executive Director's Report**

George Stevens gave the following reports:

A. Appreciation

George expressed his appreciation to the VAC for their good work this fiscal year; a lot has been accomplished. George said a special thank you to

Jonathan Istrin, Ken Lane, and Dolly Wauls who are terming off the VAC at the end of this month after serving for 6 straight years on the committee. Over these last many years, Jonathan represented the VAC on the Nominating Committee, Ken represented the VAC on the Administrative Affairs Committee, and Dolly was very involved with legislative activities as part of the Government & Community Relations Committee. They all attended lots of meetings and did their best to represent the service provider community in these activities.

B. NLACRC's FY 2015-16 Budget

The center's operations budget is currently \$40.9 million with no projected surplus or deficit. The purchase of service (POS) budget is \$328.7 million with a projected deficit between \$9 and \$11 million. NLACRC has the largest POS deficit in the state, but DDS will eventually cover the shortfall, and we do not anticipate that we will need to borrow any money from our credit line. Also, there are a significant number of regional centers currently projecting POS surpluses, which is very unusual.

C. Behavioral Services Transition

Regional centers are in the process of transitioning their behavioral health treatment services to managed care and NLACRC's transition month is coming up. Adaptive skills will also be transitioned to managed care if they are used as part of a behavioral services plan. We have about 750 consumers who will need to be transitioned, so we don't believe that this many consumers can be transitioned within a 1-month period. The center is committed to as smooth of a transition as possible and will not let any consumers "fall through the cracks."

Dolly Wauls publicly thanked Dr. Arpi Arabian for providing a behavioral services training to service providers in the Antelope Valley. Arpi responded by saying she was happy to support providers and is willing to do additional trainings as needed.

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

A. Minimum Wage Increases

The City and County of L.A. will have a minimum wage increase go into effect on July 1, 2016 and this will be followed 6 months later by a statewide minimum wage increase that goes into effect January 1, 2017. The center will

work with providers to pursue health and safety exemptions in order to receive a rate adjustment. Providers who have a DDS set rate must pursue a rate increase directly with DDS. The minimum wage will continue to increase until it reaches \$15 per hour, after that the minimum wage will be increased based on the current consumer price index (CPI). Trailer bill language is being proposed to increase provider's rates in order to cover the increases.

A lot of discussion followed among the VAC members as the minimum wage increases will have to be paid long before providers receive the additional money to cover them. This is an extreme hardship on providers and may result in many having to close their doors. In addition, the increases do not cover compression that would address increases for their non-minimum wage staff. This is such a problem for the provider community that the L.A. Coalition of Service Providers are sending a letter to Nancy Bargmann, director of DDS, explaining the problem and to ask that payment be expedited to providers to cover the minimum wage increases. They will be sending copies of that letter to:

1. Five CA Senators: Hertzberg, Nazarian, Thurmond, Beall, and Mitchell.
2. Diana Dooley, secretary, CA Health and Human Services Agency
3. Eileen Richey, director, Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA)
4. The LA County Board of Supervisors
5. LA County Council Members
6. All 7 LA County regional centers

**Action:** Ken will e-mail the LA Coalition's letter to Jennifer Kaiser and she will forward it to the VAC.

Ken Lane added that Kelly White, director of Villa Esperanza, wrote a very powerful letter about this issue that would make a great sample letter for providers to use.

**Action:** Ken will e-mail a copy of Villa Esperanza's letter to Jennifer so she can pass it on to the providers on her e-mail list.

For more information on the minimum wage increase, go to: [wagesLA.lacity.org](http://wagesLA.lacity.org).

The VAC asked if the regional center would organize informational meetings for various provider groups to facilitate discussion on the impact of the minimum wage increase and how to respond to it.

**Action:** Yolanda Bosch will meet with Michelle Heid to discuss this idea.

B. Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Surveys

Kim reported that, to date, 41 of the 50 surveys DDS sent to our providers were completed and returned. Michelle Heid thanked the center for their follow-up and assistance with the service provider community in helping to get these surveys completed.

C. Joint Legislative Audit Committee

This committee has randomly selected several regional centers for an audit of their in-home respite providers; NLACRC was 1 of the centers chosen. The audit will be conducted from June 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>.

D. Relocation of NLACRC's Main Office

The center will be moving its main office to 9200 Oakdale Avenue in Chatsworth in the fall. The center's phone and fax numbers will remain the same. We are going to be moving in 2 phases: staff who will occupy the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floors of the new building are scheduled to be moved on Friday, September 16<sup>th</sup>; the staff who will occupy the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors of the new building are scheduled to be moved on Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup>. Also, as our I/T department will be moved as part of phase 1, the center's I/T system is scheduled to be moved over the weekend of August 19<sup>th</sup> and will be completely shut down that weekend with no access to computers, e-mail, etc.

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

- A. New Vendor Audit Requirements: Yolanda provided the VAC with copies of draft "frequently asked questions" (FAQs) for the new vendor audit requirements. Once finalized, they will be sent out to our providers and posted on our website.

**Action:** VAC members will review the draft FAQs and provide Yolanda with any input by early next week.

- B. Pending Rate Increases: A list of FAQs is also being developed for the pending rate increases.

**VII. Brief Committee Business**

A. Report on April 6<sup>th</sup> Advocacy Meeting (Michelle)

This was a statewide coalition meeting of providers and stakeholders; the meeting was canceled.

B. Report on April 7<sup>th</sup> and May 5<sup>th</sup> Budget Hearings (Michelle)

Michelle explained that the reason she missed the last 2 VAC meetings is because she was in Sacramento attending the budget hearings.

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

The following agenda item was identified for the VAC's section of the June 8<sup>th</sup> board meeting agenda:

A. Minutes of the June 2<sup>nd</sup> VAC Meeting

**IX. Announcements/Public Input**

A. Annual NLACRC Board Dinner: Michelle reminded the VAC that the annual board dinner will be held Saturday, July 25<sup>th</sup> and we will be honoring Jonathan Istrin, Ken Lane, and Dolly Wauls who are terming off the VAC. Michelle thanked the 3 VAC members for the countless contributions they made over the last 6 years and hoped they would continue to come to future VAC meetings as guests.

B. Next VAC Meeting: Thursday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, at 9:30 a.m. (no July meeting)

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

- A. Implementation of the Behavioral Services Transition (Mariela, Chair)
- B. Implementation of CMS Final Rule/WIOA (Eleshia, Chair)
- C. Implementation of the Self-Determination Program (Dolly, Chair)
- D. Adult Services (Scott, Chair)

**XI. Adjournment**

Michelle adjourned the meeting at 10:48 a.m.

Submitted by,

*Jennifer Kaiser*

Jennifer Kaiser  
Executive Assistant

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