

North Los Angeles County Regional Center  
**Consumer Services Committee Meeting Minutes**

March 15, 2017

**Present:** Jessica Gould, Michelle Heid, Erika Hernandez, Shant Kotchounian, Caroline Mitchell, Debra Newman, and Tamar Witmer – Committee Members  
Breanne Burris, Steve Miller, and Sonia Ojeda - Guests  
Joan Daniels, Jennifer Kaiser, Michele Marra, and George Stevens – Staff Members

**Absent:** Adelina Castellanos, Meagan Miller, and Curtis Wang

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**I. Call to Order & Introductions**

Jessica Gould, chair, called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. and introductions were made.

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

**III. Consent Items**

A. Approval of Agenda

Several items were added to the agenda.

**M/S/C** (D. Newman/C. Mitchell) To approve the agenda as modified.

B. Approval of Minutes of February 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting

**M/S/C** (C. Mitchell/D. Newman) To approve the minutes as presented.

**IV. Committee Business**

A. Purchase of Service (POS) Equity

Yesterday, the Senate Human Services Committee held a hearing on difference in POS expenditures titled, “Moving Toward Equity,” addressing perceived disparities in services provided by the regional center system. Three panels were held:

1. Disparities in service provision in the regional center system.
2. Ensuring cultural competency and identifying systemic barriers.
3. Identifying best practices and formalizing next steps.

George provided copies of testimony that was given at that hearing by the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA). George assured the committee that it is the center's intent to identify what our consumers need and provide them with the most appropriate services to help them. However, due to previous state budget crises, several services were suspended, including respite, and camp, and reductions were made in social recreation services which have had a disproportionate impact on families with children. For NLACRC, 69% of our consumers are under the age of 22 and 80% of our consumers live at home. These consumers and families could benefit from these services, but we are prohibited from providing them. Our Board of Trustees supports the restoration of the suspended services and also supports the elimination of the family fee programs (Family Cost Participation Program and the annual family program fee) which also separates consumers and families from needed services. We want to partner with our community to make sure we provide fair and equitable access to needed services.

The Senate Budget Subcommittee #3 on Health and Human Services will be holding its hearing on developmental services issues at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, March 16<sup>th</sup>. It will be live streamed at [senate.ca.gov/calendar](http://senate.ca.gov/calendar).

B. The Affordable Care Act (ACA)

Last week, Congress introduced a plan to change the ACA and Medicaid. For many adults with developmental disabilities, Medicaid is their health insurance. It pays for care from doctors, specialists, and hospitals, as well as prescriptions. California, like all states, receives Medicaid funding (Medi-Cal) to help pay for the cost of long-term supports that people with developmental disabilities receive. Medicaid currently pays for about half of the cost of many community services provided through regional centers. If the proposed changes are made to the ACA and Medicaid, we would be significantly impacted.

C. Medicaid Caps and Block Grants

Caps on services will inevitably slash federal support for what is already a lean program and force California to cut services and eligibility requirements that put the health and well-being of people with disabilities at significant risk. The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) strongly opposes any service caps. Copies of their bulletin about the possibility of service caps and their impact were provided to the committee.

D. Family FAQ Sheet reflecting the Performance Standards

At last month's committee meeting, after reviewing the new performance standards for the center's service coordinators, the committee felt that some of this information would be beneficial for parents to have knowledge of so they would know what to expect and what to look for. As such, they recommended the development of an informational sheet for consumers and families using information from the performance standards. Joan reported that staff have a meeting scheduled on Wednesday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, to begin drafting the information sheet.

**Action:** Joan will give an update on the information sheet at next month's committee meeting.

E. Monthly Community Placement Plan (CPP) Report

Copies of the monthly report were provided and reviewed. The center's goal for this fiscal year is to place 10 consumers out of the developmental centers and into the community. As of February 28<sup>th</sup>, the center has placed 8 of the 10 consumers in the community. This leaves only 14 NLACRC consumers living in a developmental center or similar facility.

F. Self-Determination Program Update

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) has not yet re-submitted the federal waiver application to the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS). In the meantime, our Self-Determination Volunteer Advisory Committee continues to meet, but now only every other month until the waiver is submitted. Agendas and minutes from the meetings are posted on the center's website. The next volunteer advisory committee meeting will be held tomorrow night at 7:00 p.m. at the center's Santa Clarita Valley office. These meetings are open to the public and guests are welcome to attend.

G. Board Audit: Does any action impact the availability or quality of service?

George reported that there are many actions that are impacting services, including the local and state minimum wage increases and inadequate service provider rates.

V. **Board Meeting Agenda Items**

The following items were identified for the committee's section of the April 13<sup>th</sup> board meeting agenda:

- A. Minutes of the March 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting
- B. Self-Determination Program Update
- C. Purchase of Service (POS) Expenditure Equity
- D. The Affordable Care Act

## **VI. Announcements / Information Items / Public Input**

- A. Complete Meeting Evaluations

Jessica asked the committee members to please complete evaluation forms after the meeting and submit them to her with any comments.

- B. Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 p.m.

## **VII. Adjournment**

Jessica adjourned the meeting at 6:59 p.m.

Submitted by:

*Jennifer Kaiser*

Jennifer Kaiser  
Executive Assistant

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