

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Consumer Services Committee Meeting Minutes

August 19, 2015

Present: Jessica Gould, Myriam Jovel, Marcia Leija, Caroline Mitchell, Bridget Moss, Debra Newman, Sean Stalbaum, Jeremy Sunderland, Curtis Wang, and Tavia Wooley – Committee Members
Michelle Heid and Dolly Wauls – Vendor Advisory Committee Representatives
Richard Dier – Guest
Diane Ambrose, Maria Bosch, Susana Gil, Ruth Janka, Jennifer Kaiser, Hal Kirklin, Michele Marra, and Jessica Whitney – Staff Members

Absent: Jun Antonio

I. Call to Order & Introductions

Jessica Gould, chair, called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. Introductions were made.

II. Public Input

Richard Dier announced that he was recently elected chair of the NLACRC/State Council Self-Determination Volunteer Advisory Board. In his new capacity, he asked how he could provide input about the committee activities to the board. It was explained to Richard that the advisory committee is not a board committee, so the chair does not directly report to the board. In fact, the board already put a process in place to get a report on the advisory committee's activities; they voted to have 1 of their board members actually serve on that committee and provide reports to the Consumer Services Committee and the board. Debra Newman is that person.

III. Consent Items

- A. Approval of Agenda
- B. Approval of Minutes of July 15th Meeting

M/S/C (B. Moss/D. Newman) To approve the agenda and minutes as presented.

IV. Committee Business

- A. Transportation Issues in the Antelope Valley

Southland Transit is experiencing issues with timely arrival/pick-up times and delivery/drop off times due to driver shortages. As soon as they hire and train new drivers, they tend to lose their drivers to other transportation companies who can pay them higher wages. Unfortunately, Southland Transit is not able to offer the same competitive driver wages as other public transportation providers under the current rate that they receive from regional center. They are statutorily prohibited from seeking a rate increase to cover increased operating costs due to the statutory rate freeze. As a result, earlier this month, several routes in the Antelope Valley could not be run due to the lack of drivers, which affected 182 consumers. Other regional centers are facing a similar problem with their transportation providers. The center issued a request for proposals (RFP) for a new transportation provider; 3 proposals were submitted and we have awarded the contract to one of them. However, this provider still needs to hire drivers, buy vehicles, etc. so it will take some time before they are up and running. We are hopeful that they will be able to begin providing services in about 60 days.

Action: Diane will find out how many consumers in the Antelope Valley require transportation and report back at next month's committee meeting.

B. Discussion of Committee Priorities for FY 2015-16

M/S/C (T. Wooley/S. Stalbaum) To recommend to the Board of Trustees that the committee keep its same priorities from last fiscal year for this fiscal year.

C. Self-Determination Program Update

Debra reported that the self-determination volunteer advisory committee held their second meeting last night. The committee elected Richard Dier as chair, elected Debra as co-chair, and elected Victoria Berrey as secretary. They discussed their meeting structure and pending meeting schedule; they will probably continue to meet on the second Thursday evening of each month. They did not agree on a location, but will continue meeting at the center's Santa Clarita Valley office for the time being. They also talked about reaching out to support groups by going to their meetings and talking with them about the self-determination program. The committee was also given a presentation of self-determination by Bebo Saab, client rights' advocate. The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) has posted on their website the self-determination waiver application that they will be submitting to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS); it's over 200 pages long.

Ruth reported that DDS is preparing for the structure of the self-determination program and on Monday she participated in a webinar regarding the systems and software that regional centers will be using for the program. In regards to the waiver application that has been posted, the categories of service type are voluminous! The major difference between regional center services and self-determination services is that vendorization won't be required for the providers of self-determination services. As far as the structure of the advisory committee meetings, they will be open meetings, consistent with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act of 2004. Agendas for each meeting will be sent out 10 days prior to the meetings identifying the meeting location, date and time. In addition, the meeting minutes will be posted on the center's website. And no actions will be able to be taken by the committee unless there is a quorum (a majority of members present).

Action: Jennifer will e-mail a guide on the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act to the committee members.

Action: Ruth will make hard copies of the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act to the Self-Determination Volunteer Advisory Committee.

D. DDS Letter re: Service Standard Changes

We submitted several proposed changes to our service standards to DDS to bring them current with new laws and statute. They sent us a letter on July 23rd asking us to make some additional minor changes. Copies of the letter were provided to the committee. We are in the process of making those changes and will be sending them back to DDS for approval.

E. 4th Quarter Exceptions/Exemptions Report

The report that was sent with the meeting packets was incorrect and a revised report was provided. The exceptions report lists requests from consumers and families for services that are outside of the center's service standards and whether those services were approved or denied. During the 4th quarter of last fiscal year, the center approved 383 requests and denied 13. Twelve of the 13 denials were requests for the center to pay families' co-payments for behavioral health services; this request can only be approved if families meet specific financial criteria.

The exemptions report lists requests made for services that have been suspended or reduced as a result of the trailer bill language. The report showed that during the 4th quarter, no exemptions were approved or denied.

F. 4th Quarter Consumer Diagnosis Report

Copies of the report were provided to the committee for their review. The report showed diagnostic information about the center's consumers each quarter since FY 2012-13. Consumers who have more than 1 disability are put into the category of their primary diagnosis. Of the 21,404 consumers that the center serves, the diagnosis breakdown is as follows:

1. Intellectual Disability: 8,492 (4.6% increase since July 1st of FY 2012-13)
2. **Autism: 7,863 (28.9% increase)**
3. Cerebral Palsy: 535 (3.7% increase)
4. Epilepsy: 228 (3.6% increase)
5. Other developmental disability: 1,026 (5.9% increase)
6. Status 0, 1, 2: 3,260 (18% decrease)

Diane added that autism now affects 1 in every 62 live births and although there is a lot of speculation as to its cause (environment, genetics, vaccines, etc.), there are no definitive answers.

G. Annual Consumer Diagnosis Report (broken down by each valley)

This report was part of the quarterly diagnosis report (above). The report showed the number of consumers and their diagnosis broke down by the 3 areas the center serves, the San Fernando, Santa Clarita, and Antelope Valleys.

H. 4th Quarter Appeals & Hearings Report

Copies of the report were provided and reviewed. During the 4th quarter of FY 2014-15:

1. Eligibility: 378 Notices of Action were sent and 10 were returned (appealed).
2. Service: 191 Notices of Action were sent and 14 were returned.
3. Hearings: 11 fair hearings were held:
 - 5 eligibility hearings (4 denied, 1 dismissed)
 - 6 service hearings (3 denied, 1 granted, 2 dismissed)

I. Monthly Community Placement Plan (CPP) Report

The CPP report for July 2015 was provided to the committee. The center's goal for this fiscal year is to place 10 consumers out of the developmental centers. So far, the center has placed 1 of the 10 consumers and we have another placement scheduled in about 2 weeks. We want to get all 10 consumers placed early in the fiscal year so we can focus on planning for placements next fiscal year. We currently have 35 consumers living in a developmental center that we will eventually move into the community and have 12 consumers living in the secure treatment area of Porterville, which are court-ordered placements and they will not be moved.

J. FY 2014-15 Committee Action Log

Copies of the action log were provided for the committee's information. The log lists all of the formal and informal actions that were taken by this committee last fiscal year.

K. Questions re: Monthly Quality Assurance and Special Incident Reports

These 2 reports are always part of the director's report that George gives at the monthly board meeting. They are listed on the agenda in case anyone had any questions. There were no questions regarding either report.

L. Board Audit: Review Current Service Trends

Action: Diane will respond to this board audit question at next month's committee meeting.

V. Board Meeting Agenda Items

The following items were identified for the committee's section of the September 9th board meeting agenda:

- A. Minutes of August 19th Meeting
- B. Self-Determination Program Update
- C. 4th Quarter Exceptions/Exemptions Report
- D. 4th Quarter Consumer Diagnosis Report
- E. 4th Quarter Appeals & Hearings Report
- F. Approval of Committee Priorities for FY 2015-16

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, September 15th, at 6:00 p.m.

VII. Adjournment

Jessica adjourned the meeting at 6:43 p.m.

Submitted by:

Jennifer Kaiser

Jennifer Kaiser
Executive Assistant

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