

North Los Angeles County Regional Center

Vendor Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

February 4, 2016

Present: Fredlyn Berger, Annie Cox, Deborah Cutter, Mariela Feldman, Cynthia Fernandez, Michelle Heid, Jonathan Istrin, Eleshia Johnson, Ken Lane, Kristin Laurino, Marina Pink, Scott Shepard, and Dolly Wauls - Committee Members
Deborah Cutter, Rebecca Lienhard, Richard Dier, Rita Zelaya, Fayma Ishaq, Max Krauss, Sharoll Jackson, Dana Andrews, Darrell Bunch, Julio Gramajo, Debra Dinielli, Jamie DeWitt, Lori Sivazlian, Charles Oyibu, Cyndi McAuley, Phil Motherspaw, Randi Levinson-Kuzmin, Ella Win, Lorraine Babcock, Andrea Lemus, Chelsea Rivera, Shellie Bader, Tanner Scharch, Shaun Farrell, Victoria Greenwood, Charles Devlin, Rafael Carbajal, Ralph Stokes, Adam Stokes, Orli Almog, Elena Schechtman, Arno Nazarian, and Verjine Egian - Guests
George Stevens, Jennifer Kaiser, Kim Rolfes, Arsho Garlanian, Yolanda Bosch, Erica Beall, Annette Sinanian, Arpi Arabian, Anna Polin, Sarah Cox, Erin Broughton-Rodriguez, and Kimberly Johnson-McNeill - Staff

Absent: Staci Jordan and Wayne Tashjian

I. Call to Order & Introductions

Michelle Heid, VAC chair, called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m. Introductions were made.

II. Public Input

- A. Sharoll Jackson reported that there will be a lot of changes to be made as the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) rolls out its new rules, which will go into effect in March 2019. It is very important that service providers are aware of these new rules and what changes they will bring. New Horizons is willing to host a town hall meeting for providers to make them aware of the coming changes. More information to come!
- B. Richard Dier is the chair of NLACRC's Self-Determination Volunteer Advisory Committee. They hold meetings on a monthly basis and Richard invited anyone interested to join their meetings. They are usually held at 7:00 p.m. on the 3rd Thursday of each month; however this month's meeting will be held on the 4th Thursday (February 25th). The meeting will be held in the center's 1st floor conference room.

III. Consent Items

A. Approval of Agenda

Item VII.C. was added to the agenda.

M/S/C (J. Istrin/D. Cutter) To approve the agenda as modified.

B. Approval of Minutes from the January 7th VAC Meeting

M/S/C (S. Shepard/F. Berger) To approve the minutes as presented.

IV. Executive Director's Report

George Stevens gave the following reports:

A. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS): The Southern CA regional center directors will be meeting with their Vendor Advisory Committee chairs and directors of community services next week to understand and help shape the implementation of the CMS final rules. And afterwards to develop and implement a collaborative approach to interpreting and applying the rules across Southern CA.

B. NLACRC's Budget for FY 2015-16: The center's operations budget is \$40,194,737 with no projected surplus or deficit. The purchase of service (POS) budget is \$324,916,385 with a projected deficit of \$19,615,472 (in the worst case). We anticipate that the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) will provide the center with additional funds to cover this shortfall by the end of the fiscal year. In the meantime, we will continue to fund needed services as identified on our consumers' Individual Program Plans (IPPs).

Also, DDS is looking for surplus dollars from the regional centers to help cover an overpayment given to them by the federal government.

C. Managed Care Reform: It is essential that this reform pass as it would address Medi-Cal rates, sustain In-Home Support Services (IHSS) rates and provide increased funding for developmental services.

D. Proposed State Budget: There is currently money in the budget for consumer growth and for the implementation of the CMS final rules, but nothing substantial to address the regional center operations issues or service provider rates.

- E. The Center's Main Office is Moving: We will be moving our main office to a building in Chatsworth in October 2016. We have outgrown this building and have no more parking spaces to accommodate our new staff. There is ample space at the new building which will accommodate our consistent growth.
- F. Self-Determination: The federal government returned the self-determination waiver to the state asking for responses to about 180 different questions. As such, the 90-day clock will be re-set once the state submits their responses to the feds. We understand that DDS is in the process of developing training materials for the regional centers, but we have not received anything from them as yet. The center has hired a self-determination specialist who will be spearheading a massive outreach effort once we receive information and the go-ahead from DDS.
- G. POS Expenditure Report Meetings: The center will be holding 2 meetings: 1) March 14th at 6:00 p.m. (Van Nuys office); and 2) Monday, March 28th, at 2:00 p.m. (Antelope Valley office).

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

- A. NLACRC Audit: Lautze & Lautze completed their annual audit of the center; it was an outstanding audit with no findings or management letter. The auditors will be presented the audited financial statement to the Board of Trustees at the February 10th board meeting. Once the board accepts the audit, we will post it on our website.
- B. Joint Legislative Audit Committee (JLAC): The JLAC is statutorily charged with ascertaining facts and making reports and recommendations to the legislature concerning the State, its agencies, departments, and political subdivisions. In carrying out these duties, the JLAC reviews requests for audits by the legislature, establishes priorities among the requests for audits, and approves the audit requests. Assembly Member Santiago has made a recommendation to audit the rate-setting policies and expenditures related to in-home support services (IHSS) administered by DDS. As such, it is likely that our IHSS providers will be audited.
- C. State Controller's Office: The State Controller's Office has randomly selected 6 regional centers to review their state claims processes. The purpose of the audit is to verify that controls and procedures are in place to ensure that the amounts billed to the State Controller's Office are supported by source documents. NLACRC was not one of the centers selected for an audit.

D. NLACRC's Budget:

1. FY 2014-15: We are projecting a POS deficit of about \$750,000.
2. FY 2013-14: We are projecting a POS deficit of about \$2 million.

VI. Community Services Director's Report

Yolanda Bosch gave the following reports:

- A. NLACRC Grass Roots Week Visits with Legislators: Sara Iwahashi is once again organizing teams of NLACRC representatives to meet with our local Assembly members and Senators. Each team will consist of a NLACRC staff lead, board member, service provider, and consumer. Sara will be setting up the teams and then contacting them with the dates of the meetings.
- B. Requests for Rate Adjustments: Requests that have been submitted by our service providers to cover sick leave, AB 1522, and the minimum wage increase are being processed by our accounting department. The rate adjustments will be retroactive to when the additional costs began.
- C. The Next Minimum Wage Increase: DDS is currently working with the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) to identify a process for service providers to request rate adjustments to accommodate the City of L.A.'s minimum wage increase that will go into effect July 1, 2016.
- D. NLACRC's Website: Is new and improved! Please take a look as it has lots of good information – and it is updated frequently.
- E. DS 1891 Forms: Service providers must submit updated DS 1891 forms every 2 years. We just began the new 2-year cycle on January 1, 2016.
- F. CMS Meeting: Yolanda will be participating in the CMS meeting with George Stevens and Michelle Heid next week (see Section IV.A. above).
- G. Residential Provider Interagency Meetings: We are going to begin holding quarterly meetings with our residential providers in the Antelope Valley to foster better communication. The first meeting will be held Thursday, April 28th, from noon to 2:00 p.m., at the center's Antelope Valley office.

Erica Beall gave the following reports:

- H. Direct Support Professional (DSP) Meeting: Will be held Wednesday, May 1st, from 10:00 a.m. to noon, for our residential providers.

- I. Community Placement Plans (CPPs):
 - 1. FY 2013-14 Projects: There are 4 projects – all for adult specialized residential facilities (SRFs) for 4 non-ambulatory residents each. Three are ready to be licensed and the fourth is awaiting approval of building permits by the city.

 - 2. FY 2014-15 Projects: There were 3 projects. The first was a SRF for 4 non-ambulatory adolescent residents, but the project was discontinued due to the inadequate median rate structure. The remaining 2 projects are for SRFs for non-ambulatory adult residents; potential properties are being sought in the Antelope and Santa Clarita Valleys.

 - 3. FY 2015-16 Projects: There are 3 projects. All for SRFs for non-ambulatory adult residents in the San Fernando Valley. The requests for proposals (RFPs) will be awarded in early April.

VII. Brief Committee Business

- A. New Legislative Strategy: Rebecca Lienhard, in coordination with other service providers, proposed a new legislative strategy for our system, which NLACRC's Executive Committee voted to support. The Lanterman and San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Centers are also in support of this legislative strategy, which will train individuals with a single message and then to participate in vigils from March 1st through June 30th, at the offices of local legislators who are in strategic budget positions. Essentially, the message will be “do not support a state budget that doesn't include funding for our system.” We plan to have advocates posted at our legislators' offices all day, Monday through Friday. We ALL need to get behind this effort. A legislative training will be held to prepare everyone for their participation on Wednesday, February 24th, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the center's main office.

Action: Anyone who wants to host a legislative training should contact Michelle Heid at mheid@abparthways.com.

Action: Anyone who has a “natural” meeting and would like a legislative presentation given at that meeting should also contact Michelle.

- B. AB 1565 (Lackey - R): The bill addresses sustainability of the system and provides for an immediate infusion of funds for regional center operations. ARCA and NLACRC both support this bill. Assembly Member Lackey serves the Antelope Valley area so he is well aware of our issues.

Action: Encouragement was given to write letters to support AB 1565, especially to our Democratic legislators.

Action: Scott will e-mail Jennifer a short 1-page fact sheet about AB 1565 that she can distribute to everyone via e-mail.

- C. Developmental Center Closure Discussion: DDS is developing a plan to close the last 2 developmental centers in California (Fairview and the general treatment area of Porterville). Any input for their plan should be submitted to them by Tuesday, March 1st, in the following ways:

1. By E-mail: Fairview.closure@dds.ca.gov or Porterville.closure@dds.ca.gov
2. By Phone: (916) 654-1706
3. By mail: DDS, 1600 9th Street, Room 240, MS 2-13, Sacramento, CA 95814 (Attention: Amy Wall)

VIII. Agenda Item for the Next Board Meeting

The following item was identified for the VAC's section of the February 10th board meeting agenda:

- A. Minutes of the February 4th VAC Meeting

Michelle encouraged service providers to attend the monthly NLACRC board meetings. Typically, she is the only service provider who attends those meetings.

IX. Announcements/Public Input

- A. Transition to Managed Care: A town hall meeting will be held Wednesday, March 9th, at 7:00 p.m., at 15315 Magnolia Boulevard, Suite 306, in Sherman Oaks. The meeting will be held in English and in Spanish. Arpi Arabian explained that the transition is only for consumers who are already actively receiving behavioral services. Children in the assessment process won't be transitioned – when they are ready, they will go directly to the managed care system for their services.

- B. Provider Feedback for CMS Meeting: As George announced earlier in this meeting, the Southern CA regional center directors are holding a joint meeting with their VAC chairs and directors of community services next Thursday to discuss the implementation of the CMS rules. Michelle will be participating in that meeting and asked for people to e-mail or text her any concerns they have so she can bring them up at the meeting; Michelle can be reached at mheid@abparthways.com.
- C. Sensory Family Planning Day: Will be held by the Jewish Family Services on Sunday, February 28th, at Vista del Mar in Los Angeles.
- D. Access Services: Fayma Ishaq introduced herself. She is a project administrator for Access Services. Please feel free to contact her with any questions, input, or complaints. She can be reached at: ishaq@accessla.org.
- E. Upcoming Meetings: Michelle gave a recap of the upcoming meetings that were discussed at today's meeting:
1. February 10th at 6:30 p.m. – Board of Trustees meeting (NLACRC, Van Nuys)
 2. February 17th at 6:00 p.m. – NLACRC Consumer Services & Government/Community Relations meetings (NLACRC, Van Nuys)
 3. February 24th at 6:30 p.m. – Legislative training (NLACRC, Van Nuys)
 4. February 25th at 7:00 p.m. – Self-Determination Advisory Committee meeting (NLACRC, Van Nuys)
 5. March 14th at 6:00 p.m. – POS Expenditure meeting (NLACRC, Van Nuys)
 6. March 28th at 10:00 a.m. – Vendor Forum (NLACRC, Antelope Valley)
 7. March 28th at 2:00 p.m. – POS Expenditure meeting (NLACRC, Antelope Valley)
 8. April 28th at noon – First quarterly inter-agency meeting between NLACRC and residential service providers (NLACRC, Antelope Valley)
- F. Next VAC Meeting: Thursday, March 3rd, at 9:30 a.m. (full meeting)

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

Before the VAC meeting ended and the committee broke into their workgroups, Michelle welcomed the guests present to participate in any of the work group meetings. The first 3 work groups always meet immediately following the VAC meetings every other month. The fourth work group meets on the second floor in room 210, from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m., on the 4th Thursday of each month.

- A. Early Start/Prevention Services (Annie Cox, Chair)
- B. Children's Services (Wayne Tashjian, Chair)
- C. Adult Services (Scott Shepard, Chair)
- D. Mental Health Issues (Deborah Cutter, Chair)

XI. Adjournment

Michelle adjourned the meeting at 10:51 a.m.

Submitted by,

Jennifer Kaiser

Jennifer Kaiser
Executive Assistant

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