

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Vendor Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

August 4, 2016

Present: Orli Almog, Fredlyn Berger, Shelly Briggs, Deborah Cutter, Mariela Feldman, Michelle Heid, Sharoll Jackson, Eleshia Johnson, Staci Jordan, Marina Pink, and Wayne Tashjian - Committee Members

Leticia Hernandez, Rebecca Lienhard, Cyndi McAuley, Claire Moynihan, Jonathan Istrin, Alona Yorkshire, Ken Lane, Angie Cortez, April Steward, Pat Night, Yaniv Gellor, Alisa Prewitt, Judith Vargas, Joanne Alvarez, Alberto Areliz, Paula Avelar, Danielle Sheehy, Tiffany Mandelbaum, Sarah Blitzstein, Moira Letzer, Lee Whaley, Mindy Hughes, Uju Okeke, Nick Vukotic, Charles Devlin, Jessica Morrow, Mercedes Shamlo, Jose Davila, Juan Davila, Rhiannon Maycumber, Joel Smollett, and Nancy Parelskin - Guests

George Stevens, Jennifer Kaiser, Arpi Arabian, Joan Daniels, Donisha White, and Kim Rolfes - Staff

Absent: Cynthia Fernandez, Kristin Laurino, Jenni Moran, and Scott Shepard

I. Call to Order & Introductions

Michelle Heid, VAC chair, officially called the meeting to order at 9:48 p.m. once a quorum of members was present. Introductions were made. Michelle welcomed new members Orli Almog, Shelly Briggs, and Sharoll Jackson to the VAC.

II. Public Input

A. Joan Daniels, consumer services director, introduced Donisha White, the center's new federal revenues supervisor. The center's annual Medicaid waiver audit will take place later this month and Donisha explained to the providers present what the auditors will be doing, which will include site visits of some of the provider's programs. Donisha assured the providers that the auditors are here to help.

III. Consent Items

A. Approval of Agenda

Several items were added to the agenda and one item was deferred.

M/S/C (W. Tashjian/M. Feldman) To approve the agenda as modified.

B. Approval of Minutes from the June 2nd VAC Meeting

M/S/C (D. Cutter/W. Tashjian) To approve the minutes as presented.

IV. Group Photo of FY 2016-17 VAC for NLACRC's Website

The group photo was deferred until next month when hopefully more members would be present.

V. Executive Director's Report (George Stevens)

- A. Computer Shut Down: At noon on August 19th, the center's computer systems will be coming down for several days, so there will be no e-mail communication, access to e-billing, etc. This must be done in preparation for our main office's move to Chatsworth in September. Notices are going out to our community to make everyone aware of the shut-down. The center's telephones will still be operational during that time.
- B. Behavioral Services Transition: Dr. Arpi Arabian reported that the center is in its second month of transitioning its consumers' behavioral services to managed care. We have about 840 consumers to transfer and so far have only transferred 165 consumers, as the process is so time consuming. We are in the process of clarifying whether or not adaptive skills training will also be transitioned to managed care.
- C. Trailer Bill Language: AB 1606 contains the entire trailer bill this year. George urged service providers to read this bill and all that it contains. George has assigned various staff members to oversee each section to make sure the center addresses each area and assists our providers with their compliance.
- D. Candidates Forums: The center will be holding 2 candidates' forums in the fall to give our community the opportunity to meet the candidates and to introduce the candidates to the developmental disabilities system.
- E. ABX2-1 Equity/Disparity Funding: DDS was given an \$11 million allocation in ABX2-1 funds to assist regional centers in implementing strategies to reduce purchase of service disparities and DDS is seeking proposals from the centers to utilize this funding. The proposals are due back to DDS within 45 days, which is a very short turnaround time. However, George has some ideas already in mind, including using CSUN students to do outreach and education. With such a short time to get stakeholder input, the Board of

Trustees will be asked to join the disparity stakeholder meetings with the center's performance contract community meetings.

- F. DDS Disparity Meetings: DDS will be conducting 4 meetings throughout the state to discuss and develop strategies for addressing disparities in purchase of services. They are asking each regional center to send 1-2 staff members to their local meeting. The meeting will be held from 9:00 am to noon on the following dates and locations:

1. Monday, August 15th (Campbell)
2. Wednesday, August 17th (Sacramento)
3. Thursday, August 25th (San Bernardino)
4. Friday, August 26th (South Central LA Regional Center, Los Angeles)

The center will be posting information about these meetings, but George believes that it will not be easy for members of our community to get to south center Los Angeles on a Friday morning by 9:00 am.

- G. Paid Internship Program: Welfare and Institutions Code was amended to add Section 4870 to encourage competitive integrated employment (CIE) for consumers. CIE is full or part-time work for which a consumer is paid minimum age or greater in a setting with others who do not have disabilities. Section 4870 also authorizes funding for DDS to offer a paid internship program. The purpose of the program is to increase the vocational skills and abilities of consumers who choose, via the IPP process, to participate in such an internship. Goals of this program include the acquisition of experience and skills for future paid employment or for the internship itself to lead to full or part-time employment. DDS just sent us the guidelines for implementing this paid internship program. More information to come.

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

VII. Community Services Director's Report (Kim Rolfes for Yolanda Bosch)

- A. Service Provider Rates (ABX2-1; Health & Safety; Unanticipated Rate Increase): As a result of ABX2-1, DDS established a variety of rate increases for eligible service providers with negotiated rates. Due to the volume of rate increases that need to be processed, the center has implemented a new process to more efficiently process the rate increases to our service providers. Typically, the center would require our service providers to enter into either a new contract or amendment prior to paying the new rate; instead, NLACRC worked with our attorney to produce a rate letter agreement. NLACRC will notify our service providers using the rate letter agreement of their new rate

effective July 1, 2016 and the center will be asking our service providers to sign and return the rate letter agreement to the center for our records. At the time the rate letter is mailed to the service provider, the center will also update our records to reflect and pay the new rate effective July 1, 2016 regardless if the service provider has signed and returned the rate letter agreement.

Beginning July 1, 2016, and then annually thereafter, worker minimum wages will increase due to local ordinances and on July 1, 2016 local ordinances increase worker paid sick time from 24 hour per year to 48 hours per year. Currently, there are two processes for service providers to seek a rate increase to comply with local ordinances: 1) regulatory unanticipated rate increase for community-based day programs and in-home respite services; or 2) a health and safety waiver exemption request for all other service providers. Both processes require that DDS review the request and approve them. Currently, the center's process requires our service providers to provide documentation that supports the request for the rate increase prior to submitting the rate increase to DDS for review and approval; and as part of this process, our accounting staff audit the service provider's documentation to verify the information supports the rate increase being requested. The audit of service provider documentation has been productive and has provided value but it takes time to review the documentation and process the rate increase requests. The center is anticipating that nearly all of the center's service providers will be seeking a rate increase to comply with local minimum wage ordinances when local minimum wage increases from \$10.50 per hour to \$12.00 per hour on July 1, 2017.

Additionally, the center has received several inquiries from our vendor community seeking information on the process to seek a rate increase to comply with local ordinances effective July 1, 2016. Currently, the center does not have the accounting staff resources to sustain this level of auditing of rate increase requests for the number of service providers that we anticipate we will receive. As such, the center has made the decision to process the rate increase requests based on the information submitted by our service providers to expedite the process.

- B. Adaptive Skills/Service Code 605/Staff Qualifications: The center has “wandered off the path” with providers using this service code and we are in the process of correcting the staff qualifications that need to be in place. Providers must have a Master's degree in order to provide director services. We will probably be using what is known as a “637 proposal” which allows regional centers to submit proposals to the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) that can request relief from statute and/or regulations, if

certain criterion is met. We will be asking our providers to work with us in this process.

- C. Minimum Wage Increases: The center has been holding meetings with its providers to help them understand the process for submitting health and safety requests for unanticipated rate increases to DDS. This information can also be found on our website and through webinars the center will be holding on August 15th.
- D. HCBS Provider Funding for Compliance Activities: DDS has \$15 million to fund changes that will be necessary for providers to come into compliance with the CMS rules by March 2019. Service providers can apply for the funds through the regional centers and all submitted proposals will be forwarded by the regional centers to DDS. Regional centers can make recommendation for funding based on local priorities, although final approval will be made by DDS. NLACRC will be developing a steering committee to identify our priorities. DDS's directions on how to apply for this funding has been posted on their website. Service provider proposals must be submitted to the center by the October 1st deadline.
- E. In-Home Respite Audit: Kim thanked the providers for their cooperation with this audit. We should expect to have the draft audit report in September and the final one in October. The final audit will be presented to the governor.
- F. Social Security Administration Audit: In order to monitor the balances in consumers' accounts, we are asking providers to help us by providing us with their account balances at the end of each month.
- G. Family Home Agency (FHA) Audit: The center's FHAs will be audited by DDS in October.
- H. Residential Services Orientation (RSO): Registration is now open and the orientation will start on Monday, August 22nd. This is the process someone must go through in order to become an administrator of a program.
- I. Antelope Valley Transportation: On July 29th, Student Transportation replaced all of the temporary transportation options and R&D Transportation is working with them to optimize routes.
- J. DS 1891 Forms: Service providers are required to update these forms every other year. They were due at the beginning of this year, so we have now

begun contacting providers to remind them that they need to update their forms. It only takes minutes, using the center's portal, to update the forms.

VIII. Committee Business

- A. Annual VAC Orientation: Copies of the VAC's policies and procedures were provided. The purpose of the VAC is to provide advice, guidance, recommendations, and technical assistance on various matters to the Board of Trustees.
- B. FY 2015-16 VAC Action Log: This log lists all of the actions that were taken by the VAC last fiscal year.
- C. FY 2016-17 VAC Meeting Schedule: Copies of the meeting schedule were provided.
- D. FY 2016-17 VAC Roster & Terms: Copies of the VAC roster and the VAC Member and Terms sheet were provided so that the members were aware of the new members and when everyone's terms would expire. VAC members can serve a total of 6 straight years. Scott Shepard and Wayne Tashjian will be terming off the VAC at the end of June 2016.
- E. VAC Priorities for FY 2016-17
 - 1. Continuation of the FY 2015-16 VAC Priority Issue Teams?

M/S/C (D. Cutter/S. Jordan) To recommend to the Board of Trustees that the VAC continue their FY 2015-16 priorities into FY 2016-17.
 - 2. Selection of Chair for VAC Self-Determination Work Group

Action: When no other VAC members volunteered, Michelle Heid agreed to chair the VAC's self-determination work group.
- F. Volunteers to Represent the VAC on Board Committees

The following VAC members volunteered to represent the VAC on the following board committees this fiscal year:

- 1. Administrative Affairs: Fredlyn Berger
- 2. Consumer Svcs. & Government/Community Relations: Shelly Briggs

3. Nominating: Deborah Cutter
4. Strategic Planning: Wayne Tashjian

IX. Reports from the VAC Priority Issue Work Groups

- A. Implementation of CMS & WIOA (Eleshia): This group is reviewing findings to see how that can assist providers to come into compliance. CMS and WIOA will change the structure of many different kinds of programs. They are waiting to receive information from the Department of Rehabilitation. WIOA will shift how we look at work options for our consumers. Eleshia asked any providers interested in joining her group to provide her with their e-mail address.
- B. Implementation of the Behavioral Services Transition (Mariela): This group is communicating with the local managed care plans on a regular basis about the transition of behavioral services from the regional center to their plan.
- C. Implementation of the Self-Determination Program (Michelle): Michelle Heid is a member of the NLACRC/State Council Local Advisory Self-Determination Committee. This committee meets monthly at the NLACRC's 3 different offices. The next meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 18th, at the center's main office in Van Nuys. The committee is waiting to receive direction from DDS about the program, but in the meantime are educating themselves on related topics, such as the person-centered planning process and the self-determination pilot program. The meetings are open to the public and Michelle welcomed anyone interested to attend.
- D. Services for Adult Consumers (Scott): Scott was not present to give a report.

X. Report on Board Committee Meetings

- A. Administrative Affairs
- B. Board of Trustees
- C. Consumer Services
- D. Government & Community Relations
- E. Nominating
- F. Strategic Planning

Reports on the above meetings were not given due to time constraints.

XI. Open Issues for Discussion

- A. L.A. Service Provider Coalition: This coalition, which is made up of directors from many large service providers serving the L.A. area, recently sent a letter to DDS about the impact that minimum wage increases are having on their organizations' ability to provide quality services and create meaningful new ways to better serve consumers and their families in integrated, community settings. The Los Angeles Regional Center Directors Group shared their concerns and asked the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA), to work with DDS to create an improved process for obtaining exemptions to the rate freezes and other budget control measures which impede their ability to modify service provider rates.

XII. Agenda Items for the Next Board Meeting

The following items were identified for the VAC's section of the August 10th board meeting agenda:

- A. Minutes from the August 4th VAC Meeting
- B. Approval of the VAC Priorities for FY 2016-17

XIII. Announcements/Information/Public Input

- A. The Adult Skills Center (TASC) Talent Show: TASC is hosting their annual talent show on Saturday, August 20th, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. and Temple Judea on Lindley. They usually have about 600 attendees at this show!
- B. News You Can Use: Michelle encouraged anyone who hasn't already to sign up to receive NLACRC's online bulletin. You can sign up on NLACRC's website.
- C. Next VAC Meeting: Thursday, September 1st (priority issue groups meet)

XIV. Adjournment

Michelle adjourned the meeting at 11:27 a.m.

Submitted by,

Jennifer Kaiser

Jennifer Kaiser
Executive Assistant

