

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Vendor Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
February 2, 2023

Present: Suad Bisogno (Chair), Alex Kopilevich, Andrea Devers, Bob Erio, Dana Kalek, Daniel Ortiz, Don Lucas, Erica Beall, Jodie Agnew-Navarro, Lisa Williamsen, Nick Vokotic, Cal Enriquez, Rosalyn Daggs, Catherine Carpenter – **Committee Members**

Liz Chavez, Lilliana Windover, Gabriela Eshrati, Arshalous Garlanian, Cristina Preuss, Vini Montague, Malorie Lanthier, Evelyn McOmie– **Staff Members**

Michelle Heid - Legucator, Dolly Sharma -Minutes Services, Shelly Hash - Interpreter, and approximately 102 Service Providers- **Guests**

Absent:

I. Call to Order & Introductions

Suad Bisogno called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

II. Public Input

Victoria Berrey, from Family Focus Resource Center, shared information regarding upcoming events from her organization. A tax specialist will be presenting for parents who are IHSS providers and the presentation will be uploaded to the Family Focus Resource Center website. Workshops are also upcoming that include topics such as child development, developmental milestones, how to access resources for your child among others. More information can be found on FFRC's website.

Suad introduced Lillian Martinez to the Committee, Lillian currently serves as an NLACRC Board Member.

III. Consent Items

A. Approval of Agenda

The Legucator Report from Michelle Heid will be presented as Item IV in the agenda and all other topics will be moved down 1 number.

M/S/C (L. Williamsen/A. Devers) To approve the agenda as revised.

B. Approval of Minutes of January 5, 2023 Meeting

M/S/C (R. Daggs/D. Ortiz) To approve Meeting Minutes for the January 5th meeting as presented

IV. Legislative Report – Michelle Heid

Michelle reviewed this report as presented in the packet. Highlights include:

Legislative Update

The legislative session is in full swing with legislators settling in, committee assignments made, and bill packages prepared. The bill introduction deadline is coming up on February 17th and legislators have been introducing legislation and are preparing their final bills for introduction. Committee hearings are being planned and the 2-year legislative season is moving full speed ahead. With the state facing a budget problem especially on the heels of investments in the disability community with the rate study implementation, disability advocates must be prepared to advocate for no reductions in funding for services and support for Californians with developmental disabilities, as well as continued progress on improving the system.

California Budget

The Governor's January budget has been introduced which was positive for the developmental disability community including maintaining the current schedule for provider rate increases and additional funding for service coordination for children 0-5. The Governor's budget continues to support caseload growth. The Department of Finance also released a Budget Change Proposal for the Administration's proposed Autism Services Branch which seeks to create six permanent positions within DDS to support the growing population of individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) eligible for regional center services

The Legislative Analyst's Office

The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) publishes the Fiscal Outlook yearly in anticipation of the upcoming state budget process. The goal of the report is to help the Legislature begin crafting the 2023-24 budget. In the report, the LAO anticipates the Legislature will face a \$24 billion deficit in the upcoming year. Based on their analysis, the state would also end 2023-24 with nearly \$22 billion in the Budget Stabilization Account (BSA) – the state's general-purpose reserve. The report goes on to project deficits in future years as well ranging from \$17 billion which will decline to \$8 billion by 2026-27. <https://lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/4646> The LAO and the administration project that the state faces a manageable budget problem this year. The LAO states the Governor addresses the budget problem primarily with spending related solutions. Notably, the Governor does not propose using any reserves. The LAO's full overview of the Governor's 2023-24 Budget can be found at: <https://lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/4662>

Fun Fact

Even accounting for its huge population, California has far fewer legislators than other states. If California's representation was at the national average, there would be 620 members of the state Assembly instead of 80. <https://calmatters.org/explainers/california-state-capitol-how-government-works/> ~ Fun fact included in honor of Kim Rolfes' service at NLACRC.

DS Full Task Force Meeting

The DS Full Task Force met on January 19th where DDS presented an overview of the DDS 2023- 24 Governor's Budget. No upcoming dates published as of January 23rd, 2023.

SCDD Active Shooter Resource The recent tragic events in Monterey Park and Half Moon Bay bare the unfortunate reality that having a plan for what to do in an active shooter situation is a necessary part of an emergency preparedness plan. The California State Council on Developmental Disabilities has published a plain language guide for people with disabilities to help prepare them and protect themselves if they are in an active shooter situation. The guide emphasizes that awareness and preparedness are keys to increasing safety and outlines actions that may be taken before, during and after such an occurrence. Several other resources are included in the document.

ARCA Webinar Series

<https://www.cal-collab.net/public-webinars/>

The Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) has a series of webinars on topics relevant to the disability community in CA. These webinars can all be viewed at the website above and include topics such as employment, regional centers and how services start, social recreation (one webinar for providers and another for individuals and families), understanding the HCBS final rule, and emergency preparedness. In addition to the webinar recordings resources on the topics are often provided.

Cal-TASH Conference

<https://www.caltash.org/conference>

TASH is an international organization that advocates for human rights and inclusion for people with significant disabilities and support needs, and works to advance inclusive communities through advocacy, research, professional development, policy, and information and resources for parents, families and self-advocates. Cal-TASH, the California chapter of TASH will hold 34 Page 14 of 15 Engaging and Empowering the Disability Community their 40th Anniversary Conference March 3-4, 2023 in Los Angeles. The event's theme is "Reconnect, Reflect, Reimagine: Building Back with Inclusion in Mind" and will be held at the Westin Los Angeles Airport. Keeping the Lanterman Promise Webinar Series <https://youtu.be/3fU7Za01Nlw> The Golden State Pooled Trust and The Arc of California presented Part 1 of a two-part webinar series on "Keeping the Lanterman Promise." Part 1 begins with an introduction to the Lanterman Act and its history, and discusses the importance of advocacy to ensure that services, rights, and funding endure with each legislative budget cycle. Individualized Program Plans (IPPs) are the documents which outline how the rights promised in the Lanterman Act will be granted to each individual. The second half of the presentation dives into how to manage the Individualized Program Plan (IPP) process, what is written in the Welfare and Institutions Code about the IPP process, dealing with disputes, and the need for continued advocacy.

REV UP Voting Campaign Webinar

<https://www.aapd.com/advocacy/revup/>

The American Association of People with Disabilities hosted a webinar to learn more about the REV UP Voting Campaign, which stands for "Register, Educate, Vote, Use your Power!" REV UP's mission is to foster civic engagement and protect the voting rights of Americans with disabilities. The REV UP network is composed of grassroots coalitions and partner

organizations that work to advance the Disability Vote. Outreach materials and resources are available at the website. Mark your calendars for Disability Voting Rights Week, September 18th-22nd, 2023.

V. Executive Director's Report – Ruth Janka

Ruth shared a desire for continued service provider success with the Committee. The success of the Service Providers is the success of NLACRC and NLACRC is committed to providing support, technical assistance, and collaboration to address regulatory requirements with service providers. Ruth reviewed the items in report as presented in the packet. Highlights include:

Regional Center Performance Measures (RCPM) Program

The RCPM program is voluntary and has six focus areas: Early Start, Employment, Equity and Cultural Competency, Individual and Family Experience and Satisfaction, Person-Centered Services Planning, and Service Coordination and Regional Center Operations. Each focus area has one or more performance measures tied to specific desired outcomes, with corresponding performance targets and incentives.

DDS issued guidance in December for the following focus areas:

Early Start Desired Outcome

- Children who are eligible for Early Start are identified and enrolled in a timely manner.
 - Measure 1 Child Find Plan identifying how a regional center intends to address and target underserved populations identified in federal regulations: unhoused children and families, children in foster care, and Native American children and families who reside on tribal lands; due April 1, 2023.
 - Measure 2 Number of children ages birth through age one and birth through age two determined eligible for Early Start services and have an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).
- Year 1 is baseline information and subsequent years will result in recognition of performance posted on DDS' website. Details of incentive types for subsequent phases of this measure will be provided in future directives from DDS.
- Desired Outcome: Children and families have timely access to Early Start services to minimize the impact of developmental delays. Measure Rate of IFSPs completed within 45-day timeframe from receipt of referral.
- Incentive Baseline data – no incentive
- Person Centerer Services Planning Desired Outcome: Regional Center Service Coordinators demonstrate person centered planning skills.
 - Measure: Number of certified Person-Centered Plan Facilitation Trainers employed by the RC and qualified to deliver plan facilitation training. One certified Person-Centered Planning Trainer for every 10,000 people served in FY22/23.
- Incentive: \$70,000 for submission of evidence of one certified Person-Centered Plan Facilitation Trainer for every 10,000 people; an additional incentive of

\$15,000 per each additional certified trainer up to \$30,000 in additional incentive payments. NLACRC is currently in the process of securing an agency to certify 7 staff in Person Centered Planning by June 1, 2023 to qualify for the incentives.

Transportation Monthly Reimbursement Rate

DDS has authorized providers of transportation services to use a monthly reimbursement rate for the provision of transportation services to individuals effective January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023. Providers are encouraged to offer services beyond the normal hours of operation and/or their typical destinations, thereby increasing opportunities for individuals to access transportation services. For each individual, providers may submit reimbursement claims for the following: One-quarter (0.25) unit for 1-6 trips, Half (0.5) unit for 7-12 trips, Three-quarters (0.75) unit for 13-18 trips, One (1.0) unit for 19 or more trips.

Quality Incentive Program

DDS has completed the validation of providers eligible for an \$8,000 incentive payment for completing the Direct Support Professional Workforce survey, 2,101. Regional centers may begin processing incentive payments. Data Submission for Prevention and Wellness for ARFPSHNs on or before February 28, 2023 for those who have lived in the facility for at least 6 months, for vendored facilities in good standing, may receive an incentive payment.

Staff Training

Lanterman Act and System Reform training will be conducted in January, February and March for all Consumer Services staff (service coordinators, supervisors, managers, and directors); the training is open to additional staff from other areas of operation. The Lanterman Act portion of the training will focus on service coordination and program planning.

Certified Person-Centered Planning Trainers.

NLACRC will certify staff in Person-Centered Planning; these staff will conduct the Center's new staff orientation and participate in the training of tenured staff on this topic.

DDS Direct Service Professional Training Stipend and Incentive Program Pilot

The Center will be conducting a pilot of the department's DSP Training Stipend and Incentive Program and will be providing technical assistance to DSPs to ensure they are able to access the online trainings. The program will provide DSPs with up to two (2) \$500 stipends for participating in the program. DSPs employed by regional center vendors or who provide services to Self Determination Program participants and spend at least 50% of their time providing direct services to consumers are eligible to participate.

Regional Center Staffing

Contract Administration and Privacy Manager Megan Mitchell, a long tenured employee of the Center, has promoted to Contract Administration and Privacy Manager. Megan has served the Center in the capacity of CSC, Forensic Specialist, Consumer Services Supervisor and Consumer Services Manager.

New hires for December and January include 15 Consumer Services Coordinators (8 Bilingual Spanish), Deaf Specialist, Public Information Manager, Public Information

Supervisor, Employment Specialist, Human Resources Information System Analyst, Human Resources Specialist I, Office Assistant II – DEIB, and Executive Assistant – IT. Efforts toward retention include the provision of a “Hero Bonus Payment” of \$1,000 per employee (except the Executive Director) at the conclusion of the last fiscal year, the creation of Lead Consumer Service Coordinator positions, and an analysis of compensation for all positions. The Lead CSC positions will be non-case carrying positions and will be dedicated to training and support of new service coordinators. The compensation analysis was conducted by a consultant for all positions to assist in the establishment of fair market salary ranges and economic proposals for negotiations.

VI. Chief Financial Officer’s Report – Vini Montague

Vini reviewed this information as presented in the packet.

D1 Allocation: \$882,180,063

Expenditures for Month: \$4,454,346

YTD Expenses: \$29,241,808

Projected annual expenditure: \$80,290,040

Expected POS Surplus: \$61,075,203 (6.92%)

It was noted that there were a few vendors rates that were not able to be implemented due to technical difficulties. NLACRC will be reaching out to the affected vendors by the end of the week. Rates will be implemented before the February service month and a special check run will be sent for the retroactive payments by the end of February. Vini also reminded the Committee that the extra COVID check run was discontinued as of December 31, 2022 and POS is back to 1 check-run per month.

VII. Chief Consumer and Community Services Officer Report – Evelyn McOmie

Evelyn does not have any items to report at this time.

VIII. Community Services Director’s Report – Arshalous Garlanian

Arshalous reviewed items in the report as presented in the packet. Highlights include:

HCBS Compliance

Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Final Rule deadline to comply or have an approved remediation plan with NLACRCCRC is March 17, 2023. As of February 3rd, NLACRC is at a compliance rate of 52%, 162 providers in compliance, 121 providers who have incomplete documentation. Compliance is defined as having programs policies or design written to comply with HCBS Final Rule. NLACRC continues to offer weekly office hours, schedule 1:1 consultation, and provide updates on the status of service provider submissions. For any questions, contact the NLACRCCRC HCBS team at hcb compliance@NLACRCCrc.org. For more information on the HCBS Final Rule, visit:

<https://www.NLACRCCrc.org/service-providers/hcbs-cms-final-rule>

Arshalous shared that 40% of DDS funding for POS comes from the Center for Medicaid and Medicare services. HCBS Final Rule must be followed state-wide in order for the state of California to continue to qualify for this federal funding.

Ruth shared that additional funding to support HCBS compliance is coming from the FY 2022-23 enacted budget of 15 million to assist providers in complying with Final Rule.

Winter 2023 Open Proposal Period (OPP)

The Open Proposal Cycle was published on January 23, 2023, and we are accepting proposal submissions until March 5, 2023. Interested applicants can submit a request for any currently vendorizable service/service code. Applicant's Conference: an informational meeting to answer questions about the Winter 2023 Open Proposal Period: February 1, 2023, at 10 am.

Social Recreation RFV

NLACRCCRC continues to have the Request for Vendorization open for Social Recreation, CAMP, and Non-Medical Therapy services. For more information about the Social Rec RFV, please visit our website at [RFV Announcement-Social Recreation, Camp and Non-Medical Therapies | NLACRCCRC](#)

Request for Proposal (RFP)/Grant

Enhanced Community Integration for Children and Adolescents. Submitting the Social Recreation Grant deadline was January 8, 2023. NLACRCCRC is preparing to submit a proposal to the department by January 31, 2023. o All awardees must have fully executed contracts by March 2023.

Tailored Day Services (TDS)

On 12/1/2022, DDS rolled out a one-page addendum to update program designs for vendors interested in providing Tailored Day Services. To find the Addendum, please visit the NLACRCCRC website. Tailored Day Services Addendums. Please submit the TDS addendum to the NLACRCCRC Resource Development team at resourcedevelopment@NLACRCCrc.org

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

Effective January 1, 2023, Home Health Agencies must be registered and use the electronic visit verification (EVV) system. Visit the DDS EVV page at <https://www.dds.ca.gov/services/evv/>

- o DDS hosts Open office hours for Providers to ask questions.
- o Upcoming Office Hours: ♣ February 7, 2023, from 11:00 am-12:00 pm
- o February 14, 2023, from 2:00 pm-3:00 pm
- o February 16, 2023, from 5:30 pm-6:30 pm

DS 1891 Forms

Updated forms were due in 2022. Please log in to the online portal if you still need to submit the form per vendor number in 2022. <https://sanctionscreeningnow.com/OIGComplianceVendor/Customer.aspx>

The Community Services team has contacted 180 remaining service providers to notify you if you are out of compliance.

Annual program evaluations:

In-home respite agencies (service code 862) annual program evaluations are due for 2022 to Contract&Compliance@nlacrc.org by Friday, March 31.

Rate increases

January 1, 2023, minimum wage: ARM rate change effective 01/01/2023 should be reflected in e-billing. To request an adjustment based on an increased payroll cost of \$15.50/hour per CA State min wage, submit the request by March 1, 2023 Negotiated rates: Submit a request to NLACRC Accounting at raterequest@nlacrc.org DDS-set rates: Submit a request to the DDS Fiscal team at RateAdjustRequest@dds.ca.gov o o <https://www.dds.ca.gov/rc/vendor-provider/minimum-wage/>

Next vendor support forum is scheduled for March 15 at 1:00 to 1:00 to 3:00 PM. Please e-mail agenda items to David Ramos at dramos@nlacrc.org

IX. Committee Business

A. DSP University Levels 1, 2 & 3 Rate Models - Suad Bisogno

This section will be a placeholder on the agenda to provide continuous updates from DDS, there are no updates at this time.

B. In-Person VAC Meeting

Due to being a Board of Trustees Committee, it is not possible to host in-person meetings for at least the remainder of the fiscal year. This issue will be revisited once directives have been approved by the Board.

C. Complaints re: Overtime Work/Pay

Concerns from the community were raised in regards to workers being paid regular time when having worked overtime, and concerns from families that respite and personal assistance services are limited to either 8 hours per day or 40 hours per week. Ruth informed the committee that agencies have the right to set limits to the number of hours worked per day and/or per week to control overtime costs, as NLACRC does not pay providers for overtime. Additionally, Ruth informed the committee that service coordinators may authorize a portion of hours under the parent conversion service code for respite/PA and a separate number of hours under the agency service code for respite/PA, if that will meet the needs of the family. Lastly, some workers are employed by different agencies which allows the worker to meet the needs of a family without an agency incurring overtime costs.

Lastly, the majority of respite and personal assistance is through parent conversion and not through the participant directed service delivery model. PDS respite or personal assistance allows a parent to hire/coordinate their services however does not solve overtime issues as labor law rules around overtime apply to workers hired to provide respite or personal assistance.

D. Annual Jenny Retzinger Community Service Award Recommendations

Ruth explained that Jenny Retzinger was a longtime member of NLACRC's Board, the mother of a consumer and was a very active advocate for individuals with developmental disabilities. This award in her name is to recognize individuals who have demonstrated a similar passion and commitment in legislative advocacy. Nominations from the committee for this award should be sent to Liz Chavez at boardsupport@nlacrc.org.

E. Transportation Services Shortage

A. Participant Directed Service Model

In order to address the transportation service provider shortage, Alternative options were being considered to allow better access to services. A participant directed service model was proposed as a possible solution. The Committee was receptive to this suggestion, however it was recommended to provide vendors with a PDS vendorization checklist so services providers can aide their clients through this process.

B. 880 Vendorization

Vendors who provide day services and people are not able to access to your service because of transportation, the Provider can become a transportation provider through an 880 vendorization/contract.

F. Electronic Visit Verification Issues

A. EVV Attestation Form

Ruth reviewed this form as presented in the packet.

G. Sign Up Sheet for Grassroots Week (April 2023)

Robert Dhondrup and his team are working on the legislative events for NLACRC. NLACRC is seeking anyone interested in joining to meet with legislators, educate them on legislative priorities. Committee members and service providers interested in participating on a legislative grassroots team should contact Liz through the boardsupport email; Robert and his team will follow up with interested individuals in establishing this year's legislative advocacy teams.

H. VAC Member Recruitment Status

Several vendors or individuals who work for vendors that have expressed interest in sitting on the Committee. The Nominating Committee continues to funnel through the applicants and scheduling interviews. The selected member would sit on the Committee beginning in August.

I. Provider Questions and Concerns re: SDP

Any questions or challenges with the Self-Determination Program can be submitted online for consideration from NLACRC.

J. Open Issues for Discussion

Arshalous noted that a Survey Monkey will be utilized to collect input regarding ideas for HCBS funding for Service Providers.

X. Committee Work Group Reports

A. Early Start Services - Suad Bisogno for Dana Kalek

Suad shared that issues for this workgroup continue to be centered around receiving referrals, but lacking professionals. Solutions are being discussed.

B. School Age Services - Cal Enriquez

There is nothing to report at this time, the next School-Age Workgroup will take place in February.

C. Adult Services - Suad Bisogno, Erica Beall

There is nothing to report at this time, the next School-Age Workgroup will take place in February.

XI. Board Committee Reports

A. Administrative Affairs - Bob Erio

Bob reported that Keolis, the transportation vendor is looking at the Usual Customary Rate in order to increase rates for drivers. NLACRC is projecting a \$61 million budget surplus. It was also noted that there was discussion surrounding this issue but will be deferred until DDS has released the guidance.

Concerns were raised regarding the recruiting and retention rates. In response, NLACRC will be hosting job fairs in February.

B. Consumer Services - Erica Beall

There was nothing to report for this month.

C. Government & Community Relations - Andrea Devers

Much of this meeting was covered by Michelle's legislative report. There are no major updates to report.

D. Nominating - Suad Bisogno

Registration was closed for VAC applications, there were 7 applications total. There was 1 individual who resigned, and 3 people who are phasing out in June 2023 due to term limits. There will be 4 vacant positions. There are currently no representatives for Health Licensed Facilities and Transportation on the Committee. Anyone who is interested can reach out to Suad at: suad@irioc.org

E. Strategic Planning - Daniel Ortiz

There was nothing to report for this month.

XII. Review of Meeting Action Items

Committee members should submit nominations for the Jynny Retzinger award to Liz Chavez via the boardsupport email. Evelyn will create a PDS checklist and transportation option handout for providers and families.

XIII. Board Meeting Agenda Items

The following items were identified for the Committee's section of the next Board Meeting agenda:

A. Minutes of the February 2nd Meeting

XII. Announcements / Information Items / Public Input

- B. Next Meeting: Thursday, March 2, 2023 at 9:30 am.
- D. Committee Attendance
- E. Committee Member Roster

Public Input

XIV. Adjournment

Suad Bisogno, Committee Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:30 am.

XV. Committee Work Group Information:

- A. Early Start Services (Dana Kalek)
Contact: Dana Kalek - dkalek@cdikids.org
- B. School Age Services (Cal Enriquez)
Contact: Cal Enriquez – cenriquez@accreditednursing.com
- C. Adult Services (Suad Bisogno & Erica Beall)
Contact: Suad Bisogno - Suad@irioc.org

Submitted by:

(*) *Lizeth Chavez*

Executive Administrative Assistant

() The majority of these minutes are taken from the Minute Service submission and reviewed/edited as presented herein by NLACRCCRC staff.*