

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Consumer Services Committee Meeting Minutes

Virtual meeting via Zoom

Wednesday, February 16, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

Present: Gabriela Herrera, Alma Rodriguez, David Coe, Rocio Sigala, Nicholas Abrahms, Cathy Blin, Sharoll Jackson, Rocio Sigala – **Committee Members**

Ana Quiles, Angelina Martinez, Lety Garcia, Lillian Martinez, Jeremy Sunderland – **Board Members/Guests**

Erica Beall, Kimberly Bermudez, Suad Bisogno, Michelle Heid - **Guests**

Lizeth Chavez, Lilianna Windover, Dr.Carlo DeAntonio, Dr.Jesse Weller, Ruth Janka, Alan Darby, Cristina Preuss, Dr.Michael Fernandez, Evan Ingber, Gabriela Eshrati, Jazmin Zinnerman, Jennifer Williamson, Michele Marra, Dr.Sandi Fischer – **Staff Members**

Nancy Gallardo, Isabel Romero - **Interpreter**
Richard Brown - **Minute Services**

Absent: Jennifer Koster, Deshawn Turner, Jennifer Siguenza

I. Call to Order & Introductions

Gabriella Herrera, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. She welcomed the Committee and participants to the meeting. Lizeth Chavez recorded the attendance of the Committee members; quorum established.

II. Public Input

There was no public input provided during the meeting.

III. Consent Items

A. Approval of Agenda

M/S/C (N. Abrahms / C.Blin) To accept the agenda as presented.

B. Approval of Minutes of the January 19th Meeting

M/S/C (C.Blin / A.Rodriguez) To approve the January 19, 2022 minutes as presented in the packet.

IV. Committee Business

A. 2nd Quarter Exceptions Report Update

Report reviewed with the committee. Jesse Weller confirmed that there was a previously identified error in data reporting on the exceptions spreadsheet from last month and would be corrected in the next quarterly report.

B. 2nd Quarter Notice of Action Report Update on Ethnicity of Appeals

Report reviewed with the committee. The ethnicity of consumers filing a notice of appeal will be reported and available for review in the next quarterly report.

C. Consumer Diagnostic Report Status Updates

Report reviewed with the committee. The variances in report totals were a result of the different methodologies used to build the reports and noted that work was underway to add a description of what data is reflected in each report.

D. Purchase of Services Public Meeting Format

In response to feedback received from consumers and the Disparity Committee, the Purchase of Services public meeting will be conducted in the virtual meeting platform that allows participants to see each other.

Ana Quiles noted that some participants had been unable to ask questions due to the duration and format of previous virtual meetings. Jesse Weller confirmed that structure of the meeting as well as the move away from the previous webinar format will better accommodate the needs of participants who wish to be more involved in the Zoom meeting.

E. Self-Determination Program Report (SDP)

As of February 1st, there is 81 individuals fully enrolled in the program. There are 394 individuals that have completed Orientation, 95 certified budgets, 21 budgets in process, and 81 spending plans approved. Counts of individuals in the various stages of the program were also listed. NLACRC is still recruiting for two new bi-lingual, participant choice specialist to help support participant directed services and SDP that is funded by and a requirement for each Regional Center to have. Orientation Meetings are being held monthly. The Local Volunteer Advisory Committee (LVAC) is meeting tomorrow and will be going over the FY2021-22 priorities for the allocations of \$149,331. There are still funds available from FY2019-20 and asking for an extension from the Department for the projects to continue from that year. There is a Support Group by Claudia Wegner the first Wednesday of every month. Disability Voices United (DVU) will continue to work with the LVAC with the committee charter process. Rosie is the new board liaison and board representative.

Rocio noted that Claudia Wagner was concerned about the extension of her contracts and not receiving enough referrals, a recommendation to promote the services on NLA website was made. Jesse responded that an extension has been requested to the Department to extend the services.

1. Self-Determination Spending Plan:

NLA is assessing the process with spending plans and how to streamline to make it more accessible with feedback from the LVAC Chair, Community, and the Team. One of the more focused areas is how to get the plan approved to get more individuals approved to get through the process and in the program.

Rosie Sigala noted that the extended duration of the current process may seem slow and daunting to consumers and their families. Jesse Weller acknowledged the concern and discussed the efforts being made to engage with consumers during the process.

2. FMS Rates:

Jesse Weller confirmed that work is underway to verify how FMS providers assign additional percentage charges to the standard rates for the services they provide. Additional information will be provided in March.

F. Monthly Consumer Competitive Employment Report - Alan

The Consumer Competitive Employment Report is sorted by Residence Type and by Ethnicity for age range 18-77-year-old and working age consumers with no employment ages 18-59.

The Consumer Competitive Employment Report as of the end of January 2022 shows every individual that is competitively employed.

For the Month of January 2022, the total number of all competitively employed consumers and working age consumers within NLACRC's area = 11,800.

Of that total, the number of 'Competitively Employed Consumers' = 2,090, which is 17.71%. The number of 'Working Age Consumers with No Employment' = 9,710.

Alan Darby reported that there had been a small increase in employment rates versus prior months. Gabriella Herrera suggested modifying the age ranges for reporting the data to assist in identifying additional needs or opportunities for increasing employment.

It was agreed that the age ranges for reporting consumer employment will be:

- 14-17 years
- 18-25 years
- 26-45 years
- 46-59 years
- 60 years and older

G. Participant Directed Services – FMS Providers Update

Jesse updated the Committee that the PowerPoint had been revised to include the vendor's participant directed rates as well as other service code offerings and rates. Staff will revise and will seek to send to the community by Friday, January 21, 2022.

H. Service Standard Discussion – Case Finding/Public Information/Intake Timelines

During the process of adding provisional eligibility to the standard, feedback regarding the timeline had been received. To improve service and reduce stress to consumers, language was suggested to streamline those denied under a first application via an expedited process. Assessment was going forward to see the impact of such a change – in terms of staffing – from Lanterman’s 120-day initial timeframe to a triggered 60-day exception timeline. The committee received a revised draft of the NLACRC Service Standards document. Jesse Weller highlighted NLACRC’s willingness to assess within a 45-day timeframe any individual found to be ineligible for regional center services after an initial evaluation that returns within a 24-month timeframe, with a qualifying regional center diagnosis based on evaluation from a third party.

The committee discussed concerns how service standards will be communicated to the community, the supports available to consumers who need early start services, and the support available to early start families with children approaching three years of age who must transition to a new program.

M/S/C (C. Blin / R. Sigala) To amend the Case Finding & Public Information Service Standard as presented by Dr. Weller and recommend approval by the Board of Trustees.

I. Presentation – NLACRC Intake Process – Dr. DeAntonio and Dr. Fischer

Jesse introduced Dr. Carlo DeAntonio and Dr. Sandi Fischer.

Dr. DeAntonio presented the Intake Process: Lanterman Eligibility Determination. In response to questions from the Committee, it was noted that:

- The eligibility assessment timeline begins when a consumer is assigned to an intake service coordinator.
- For children under the age of three years, an early-start service coordinator rather than intake service coordinator will be the first point of contact.
- Clinical psychologists conduct autism-specific testing.
- Within 15 days of an initial referral, a consumer determined to be not appropriate for assessment by NLACRC is advised of the finding and directed to agencies better able to assist them.
- In addition to a standard letter, families of ineligible consumers receive a copy of the assessment report with personalized recommendations for access to generic resources.
- Where time and staffing resources permit, a staff psychologist may speak with the family to discuss concerns, except in those cases where a foster parent is not a guardian or does not hold educational rights. The Intake Service Coordinators discuss the availability of appropriate generic resources
- With the intent of being inclusive and accessible, all information sources including verbal attestations from family members and close friends are considered when determining eligibility.

J. Board Audit: Has the Board properly referred service standard issues to this committee

Gabriella Herrera supported Jesse Weller's statement that the Board of Trustees has properly referred service standard issues to the committee.

V. Deputy Director Report - Jesse

- NLA is in the process of recruiting a new Placement Supervisor to oversee vacancies, placements, admission agreements, and centralizing processes.
- Shelly Briggs is the new Risk Assessment Supervisor who will be responsible for processing Special Incident Reports that are both reportable and non-reportable as well as provide training to Staff.
- Both parent mentors have departed from NLA. The positions have been reclassified from advocate level to a specialist level to attract interest. He wanted to acknowledge their great work and contributions in launching the program.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion completed foundational training for all NLA employees in December 2021. Next training is scheduled at the end of March for all staff on implicit bias and microaggressions.
- First meeting held for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion belonging policy on behalf of the Board of Trustees to develop template on timelines to have policy completed in April. The goal is to have presented to the executive committee and board of trustees by June 8th for approval. Disparity committee is discussing early start referrals and how to get more families referred to Family Focus Resource Center.
- NLA checked in with community-based organizations representing underserved areas about unmet needs around Covid testing and vaccines.
- Camp, social recreation services standard submitted to DDS with no tentative response time but confirmed receipt, once received NLA can implement outreach plan.
- Service Equity and Access Grant – no response yet regarding NLACRC's proposals which include funding to hire an outreach specialist and employment specialist.
- Aprendiendo Entre Nos is scheduled for tomorrow at 10:00am with a presentation on alternatives to conservatorship, in collaboration with Integrated Community Collaborative and Disability Voices United.
- Townhall is scheduled for tomorrow at 1:30pm on social, emotional, development for children with autism spectrum disorder by Dr. Spector.
- Purchase of Services stakeholder on March 10th and March 15th at 7:00pm.
- NLA is seeking to partner with AV Seed and Grow to host a clinic with Dr. Solomon from USC and other public health entities for individuals to access COVID19 vaccinations, boosters, and testing in the Antelope Valley.

VI. Board Meeting Agenda Items

- A. Minutes of the February 16th Meeting
- B. Revised Service Standards

VII. Announcements / Information Items / Public Input

- A. Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 16th at 6:00 p.m.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Gabriela Herrera adjourned the meeting at 7:34 p.m.

Submitted by:

(*) *Lizeth Chavez*

Executive Administrative Assistant

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

