

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Strategic Planning Committee Meeting Minutes
December 6, 2021

Present: Orli Almog (VAC), Marianne Davis, Lety Garcia, Ruth Janka, Lillian Martinez, Ana Quiles, Kim Rolfes, Curtis Wang, Jesse Weller, Sharoll Jackson, and Christina Cannarella - Committee Members

Cheryl Blizin, Lizeth Chavez, Alan Darby, Michael Fernandez, Michele Marra, Evelyn McOmie, Jennifer Williamson, and Ana Maria Parthenis-Rivas – Staff Members

Ami Sullivan, - Guests

Lucy Paz – Interpreter

Seth Tanner – Minutes Services

Absent: None

I. Call to Order & Introductions

Marianne Davis called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Lizeth Chavez was introduced as the new Executive Administrative Assistant to NLACRC.

II. Public Input

No input was received.

III. Consent Items

A. Approval of Agenda (Page 2)

M/S/C (L. Garcia/R. Janka) To approve the December 6th, 2021 agenda as written.

B. Approval of Minutes from the November 1, 2021 Meeting (Page 3)

M/S/C (L. Garcia/R. Janka) To approve the minutes from the November 1st, 2021 meeting as presented.

IV. Committee Business

A. Kinetic Flow – One-on-One Interviews

Consultant Ami Sullivan stated that the One-on-One report document shared with the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) the oft-repeated themes from the sample. The interview sample captured interviews from 17 participants that crosscut all

target demographics. Ms. Sullivan stated that the results were anecdotal and therefore did not include graphic representations. The final results of the survey were to be presented at the retreat with both exact counts and visual maps to display concept weight.

B. Kinetic Flow – Next Steps: Strategic Thinking Survey (Page 9)

Ms. Sullivan stated that the attachments on page nine covered both methodology information and a draft of the survey. The goal of the survey was to gain a representative picture of the community in quantifiable data.

Concerning methodology, committee feedback and discussion included the following points:

- The number of participants per stakeholder would be included.
- Priorities needed to drive the data presentation and needed to be broken out by community/perspective.
- The survey should include all individuals and families served as, all staff and current board members, the family resource center, State DD council, parent organizations, advocacy groups and other groups from the regional center.
- The entire list of active service providers posted to the website should be utilized to contact this community group.
- Special attention would be made to include the disparity committee and the local volunteer advisory committee for self-determination via their agendas in upcoming meetings.
- To encourage leadership and community responses, the survey would come from NLACRC; language would be to asks for help; communication would be interesting, short, and engaging; requests would be sent multiple times including a request via the website; and communication would be advertised via internal word-of-mouth.
- A telephone campaign would run concurrently with the email blasts and website posting. Finally, there were to be in-person interviews for the survey as appropriate for the demographic.
- Ms. Sullivan assured the committee that, due to the large size of the group, a reasonable yield would be forthcoming.
- Bi-lingual participants would be called back or switched to their preferred.

Ami Sullivan shared that next steps included incorporating the committee's recommendations, formulating a final draft from any subsequent edits, translating,

and programming the survey, creating a list for telephone calls, and drafting invitation language to be approved by the SPC via email. Any feedback on the invitation draft was to be incorporated. The target stakeholders were to be contacted starting January 11th via email, telephone, and in-person. The data was to be closed February 5th.

Ami Sullivan read the draft language. Concerning the survey draft, discussion to finalize the language included the following ideas and recommendations:

- The survey included SWOT analysis, environmental scan, needs assessment, strategic issues, and focus areas proprieties.
- The individuals and families served should be listed first in the to-line to emphasize the focus of NLACRC.
- Language should be simplified. Avoid terms of art or specialized vocabulary.
- Discussion included the value of personalized experience versus generalized wording to avoid bias toward a single recent event, positive or negative.
- **Action Item: Marianne Davis** to revise the language, so the group can get the reworked, simplified (6th grade reading level) language to Ms. Sullivan by the 13th of December.
 - It was explained that the survey is a conversation, a two-way tool between the Center and the community. Elements on the list that don't apply to a person would be ignored, while items that could be of value would be made aware to the community.
 - The telephonic interview was adaptive based on responses of the interviewee. Five to seven question options would be created for each question on the telephone version to allow for that flexibility.
- Plain language wording format questions should be used first, as the community would respond to those most readily.
- Recommendation for question eleven regarding unmet needs to be reworded.
- Online, a drag-and-drop exercise is included. Ami Sullivan asked if any of the options for question nine (page 14) could be removed to truncate the question. The committee elected to make the following changes and ask respondents to prioritize their first six from the list.
 - “HCBS Final Rule” should be added to bring that issue into the mind of community stakeholders.
 - “Funding” should be listed separately from “legislative advocacy”.

- To clarify, an addition to quality assurance improvement should be made: “making sure people do what they are supposed to do”.
- “Technology for all stakeholders” should be removed.
- Blank spaces could sometimes be understood as “I’m unaware of this concept”, or “I do not understand”.
- Staff only questions included items to prioritize an internal focus. The committee decided to add “professional development” and “future plans” to the list of internal foci.

The survey’s goal was discussed, which is to find challenges, unmet needs, and identify community priorities across stakeholders with the purpose of helping NLACRC determine where to focus efforts. Thus, the strategic thinking first steps would be created at the retreat after the survey was completed.

Recommendations re: specific wording or additional thoughts should be returned to Ami Sullivan separately. Rounds of edits will occur via email offline.

Recommendation: A. Sullivan recommended the committee to shorten the list of priorities that are included in the survey.

Recommendation to include “Not applicable”, “Unaware”, and “Do not understand” as responses on the survey.

Recommendation to separate funding and legislative initiative into two separate items; add at the end of quality assurance “making sure people do what they are supposed to do”; remove technology for all stakeholders and add HCBS final rule. Otherwise, the list is fine and ask people to prioritize first 5-6 items.

Staff survey recommendation: Add “Professional Development”.

C. FY21-22 Committee Priorities (Page 17)

Ruth Janka explained that the list included the last known list of priorities as penned in 2018-19. The list included competitive integrated employment, self-determination, in-home supportive services, housing, services access and equity, and the home and community-based services (HCBS) Final Rule.

For priority one, the committee was enthusiastic about competitive integrate employment as a priority, yet recommended changes to extend service from 18 years of age until 14 years of age. The terminology should be broadly understood

to include all competitive employment: career exploration, planning and development, strength assessments, transition services, IEP planning, opportunities for paid internships, and the incentive program. Individuals under 18 years of age were served via the DOR track through the LEAs.

For priority three, in-home supportive services, the committee wanted to make the services actionable and thus changed the wording to “increase access in service delivery with regional center support”. This includes mental health support and social resources. For example, obtaining the appropriate amount of IHSS, with a Med-Cal waiver, services to support a person’s family had been a difficulty. This can also fall under the community services committee.

For priority four, housing, use the words “advocate and/or develop affordable, accessible, and specialized housing...”

For priority five, the committee discussed how to best coordinate access to service. To emphasize and remove both internal and external barriers, the language was altered to include two bullet points: “1) ...in addressing disparities in the coordinating or authorization services”; and 2) “...in addressing barriers to directly accessing services and supports”. To summarize the difference, “(internal)” and “(external)” were added to point one and point two, respectively.

Ruth Janka revised the priorities to reflect the committee’s recommended changes, and committee reviewed the revision.

M/S/C (L. Garcia/A. Quiles) To accept the priorities for the 2021-22 year as discussed and revised.

D. Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) Policy Proposed Revision (Page 18)

Ruth Janka shared a red-line draft to include the committee’s responsibility to “***participate*** in the development and monitoring of the Center’s strategic plan” including to make recommendations to the board.

It was discussed whether to maintain SPC as a board-member driven group rather than including equal membership of regional center staff. The committee agreed to revise the policy to state committee membership should be 60% board members, at a minimum. Committee also discussed updating the policy to reflect that committee membership “may” include members who are or represent consumers, family members, service providers, State Council and staff versus

“shall”. Committee agreed; it was recommended that the board bylaws be reviewed to ensure the policy and bylaw are consistent.

M/S/C (C. Cannarella/L. Martinez) To approve the recommended changes to the board policy regarding the committee composition.

E. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Policy Steering Committee Update

Dr. Jesse Weller shared the potential options for an hour and a half policy steering committee meeting times together with the proposed composition of the committee. The final composition and times were to be provided in January. The committee provided input that Thursday, January 27th from 9-10:30 AM seemed to work best.

Marianna Davis voiced the need to including neurodiversity in NLACRC’s SPC DEI focus. The committee accepted this as a component within the scope of the policy to include gender identity, ethnicity, culture, etc.

F. Update on retreat location / schedule for March 11th & 12th, 2022

Several venues have been reviewed for the strategic planning retreat, including the Lexen in Newhall, Valencia Hyatt and hotels off the 5 freeway, however Embassy Suites in Santa Clarita represents the most cost effective location and can accommodate participants and staff with social distancing. Arrangements to be finalized, and an accommodation will be sought regarding cancellation should COVID impact the ability to assemble a large group in person.

G. Review Proposed Timeline: changes, concerns, suggestions

No discussion occurred as no new concerns or suggestions arose since the previous meeting. (Item brought forward from the previous meeting.)

H. Performance Contract Updates

The Center’s Performance Contract was submitted to the department on time, and receipt was acknowledged.

I. Community Integrated Employment / Paid Internship Program (CIE/PIP)

1. Statewide DDS CIE/PIP Summary Reports (*Page 20*)

Evelyn McOmie submitted the quarterly report from DPS as it was not available for November.

Due to Assembly Bill 136, which required changes to the contracts for around 42 vendors, accurate numbers were not available as billing amounts were going to change. The service codes, subcodes and rates were being transitioned. Billing changes include those incentives for CIE had increased and PIP had been altered to 1,040 hours rather than \$10,400. Accurate numbers were to be returned at the leisure of the vendors once they were able to bill retroactive back to July 16th for PIP and to July 1st for CIE.

On the next quarterly report, when billing would be completed, CIE data would reflect the number of vendors and authorizations paid out for 30-day, 6-month, and 12-month windows. PIP would show the number of vendors and participants who had received a payment for an internship.

An employer seeking to provide CIE/PIP opportunities needed to work via a vendored service provider to bridge the support necessary. NLACRC would have a conflict of interest (COI) in providing CIE/PIP. A service provider would be needed, and the funding would need to flow through an FMS or the vendor. The delineation must be clear.

Additionally, POS would need to be kept separate from OPS. PIE programs were reimbursed from the purchase services budget. State funding for NLACRC staff flowed through OPS. Reimbursements via POS for PIE employees would create an audit exception.

Discussion revolved around offering paid internships at NLACRC. Job coaches on site were not a COI, so hiring can flow via OPS. Marianne Davis suggested that more about how internships can be structured could be provided at a later time.

J. Quarterly reporting of Health & Safety, CIE/PIP, Vendor Closures & New Vendorizations

This was postponed to a later date due to Bill 136.

K. Strategic Plan Year 4 Update (Page 22)

The Center's Strategic Plan Year 4 Update was provided to committee members for review, no further inquiries regarding the plan or the update were made.

V. Board Meeting Agenda Items

A. Minutes of the December 6th, 2021 Meeting

B. DDS Approval of 2022 Performance Contract

While this had been submitted, the approval would not be back by the next meeting.

VI. Announcements / Information Items

A. Next Meeting: Monday, January 3rd at 6:00 p.m.

B. Ana Quiles encouraged those present to get the COVID-19 boosters.

C. Lety Garcia shared that the Sylmar Moose Lodge of San Fernando was having a Christmas/Holiday party on Sunday, December 19th. Details for the event were provided.

D. Marianne Davis recommended PBS's American Experience Services program on Hellen Keller's advocacy for disability rights and services.

E. Christina Cannarella shared news of an inclusive, live table-read of *It's a Wonderful Life*. She extolled the value of such events for all involved.

VII. Adjournment

M. Davis adjourned the meeting at 8:48 p.m.

Submitted by,

Ana Maria Parthenis-Rivas

Executive Admin. Assistant

The majority of these minutes are taken from the minutes service submission and reviewed/edited as presented herein by NLACRC staff.

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