

North Los Angeles County Regional Center  
**Vendor Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

August 4, 2022

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

Ruth Janka, Jesse Weller, Evelyn McOmie, Vini Montague, Malorie Lanthier, Liz Chavez, Cristina Preuss, Nancy Salyers, Arsho Garlanian, Robert Dhondrup, Stephanie Margaret, – **Staff Members**

Michelle Heid – Legucator, Gil Villalobos-Interpreter, Minutes Services, and approximately 85 Service Providers- **Guests**

**Absent:** Cal Enriquez

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**I. Call to Order & Introductions**

Suad Bisogno called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.  
Lizeth Chavez took attendance; a quorum was met.

Suad welcomed new Committee Members: Andrea Devers, Rosalyn Daggs and Lisa Williamsen.

Andrea Devers introduced herself as the Director for People Creating Success. She oversees locations in the San Fernando Valley and in the Antelope Valley that provide SLS/ILS Services.

Rosalyn Daggs introduced herself as a representative of ASAP Home Health.

Lisa Williamsen introduced herself as the CEO at Partners for Potential, a role that she has held since November 2021, but has been with the company for 6 years. Partners for Potential, which provides Adult Day Program, Community Integration, Training and Transportation for 10 Regional Centers.

Members of the Committee Introduced themselves, Guests were asked to introduce themselves in the chat. It was noted that Kenny Ha has resigned from the VAC Committee, leaving a vacancy on the Committee. Suad encouraged anyone who is interested in serving on the Committee to reach out for more information.

**II. Public Input**

Jessica Gould works with the DDID Housing Industry. She stated that HUD is looking for public input from individuals impacted. She entered her email address in the chat for anyone

in the housing system for more information on how to be put onto the input list. Jessica's email is [jdg.consitation33@gmail.com](mailto:jdg.consitation33@gmail.com)

Theresa Quarry from Family Focus Resource Center. She stated that there will be a Resource Fair on October 16, 2022 from 11am -3pm at Cal Ridge Northridge. Vendor and Sponsorship opportunities are available for those who would like more information. She shared the link to the event in the chat.

### III. Consent Items

#### A. Approval of Agenda – (Page 2)

Suad would like to revise the order of the Committee Business Section A., moving Item 4 to Item 1. Also, add Item H: Committee Breakouts to Committee Business.

**M/S/C** (A. Kopilevich/D. Kalek) To approve the agenda as revised. The agenda was approved.

#### B. Approval of Minutes of June 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting – (Page 4)

**M/S/C** (K. Shields/ A. Kopilevich) To approve Meeting Minutes for the June 2 meeting. The motion was approved.

### IV. Executive Director's Report – Ruth Janka

Legislation - Senate Bill 1092 largely sought to address the Fair Hearing Process, Senate Bill 1092 is currently on suspense in Assemblt Appropriations and has until August 20 to move off.

FY 22-23 Budget- There has been a POS system-wide increase of 1.8 billion dollars due to projected utilization, case load growth and personal services related to COVID-19. Operations were also increased by \$83 million due to the reduction of case loads. Regional Centers will be looking to increase Service Coordinators to continue to decrease case load. DDS Headquarters Funding decreased by \$7 million, the American Rescue Plan Funding will 1.4 billion dollars for Rate Model Implementation. DDS has funding for ongoing efforts related to Emergency Preparedness. As part of the Governor's May Revise there will be funding for Service Coordinators to support the inclusion of children 0-5 in Preschool program. This will include funding for a School Transition Liaison position for each Regional Center to support families in the transition from Early Start to Special Education Services. The FMS fee that was required to be paid out of the individualized budget is no longer required to be out of the SDP budget, will now be funded out of traditional POS.

Rate Form Acceleration Funding is \$254 million. The increase to 50% of the differential providers will receive based on current rate, fully funded rate and service code will be implemented January 1, 2023 versus July 1, 2023 and full reformed rate implementation has moved from July 1, 2025 to July 1, 2024.

Regional Center Performance Measure Workgroup- DDS is putting together performance measures for NLACRC regional centers and for service providers, called Regional Center Performance Measures and Quality Incentive Measures, respectively. For Regional Centers, regional center performance will be measured in the areas of consumer competitive employment, meeting IFSP and intake timelines. DDS will be issuing directives regarding implementation of the measures in the next month or so.

Quality Incentive Measures for Service Providers - A few of the measures that will be implemented include:

- Measuring access to preventive services in Adult Residential Facilities including physical exams, dental care, etc.
- Measuring access to competitive, integrated employment
- Measuring of Vendors Placement Capacity and other factors such as Staff Turnover Rate, Average Staff Tenure and Staff Training. Measurement of individuals accessing early intervention services within 31 days of the referral for early intervention services will be included in Phase 2.

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More details are to come on the guidance for Performance Measures as they become available from DDS.

The DDS Employment Workgroup is focusing Paid internship Programs and the Incentive Programs for Competitive Employment. They are seeking recommendations on increasing Provider participation.

Suicide Crisis Line - Formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, this 24/7 service can be accessed through text, chat or dialing 988. This will provide a trained Mental Health Crisis Counselor to help anyone experiencing a mental health crisis or emotional distress.

Monkeypox Update- There is not a local public health order in place, but the vaccination has been made available to high-risk individuals including individuals who were exposed to a positive person, homelessness, high-risk behavior, multiple sexual partners. LA County Public Health is asking for those who have tested positive for Monkeypox to report to Public Health Department.

COVID-Related Updates – Statistics are starting to trend downward, that said, there is still a recommendation for indoor masking with the exception of healthcare workers. As a reminder, anyone who works with individuals who have developmental disabilities are considered healthcare workers by LA County Public Health. Vaccinations for children 6 months and older are available. DDS updated the directives to extend services into late-August or mid-September. Due to trailer bill language, remote IFSP and IPP Meetings may continue through June 30, 2023.

Regional Centers will no longer be assessing or collecting for FCPP or the annual Family Program Fee through June 30, 2023 as a result of the most recent trailer bill language.

NLACRCCRC is in the midst of a DDS Medicaid Waiver Audit beginning August 1 and

lasting for 3 months. Full-scope reviews will be conducted at a few Community Care Facilities and Day Programs. The audit will include interviewing staff and consumers, reviewing records, and special incident reporting.

The IRS Mileage reimbursement rate has been increased to 62.5 cents per mile effective July 1, 2022. The rate has for In-Home Respite Agency workers who use their personal vehicle to travel to and from respite sites.

DDS Employment Grant application deadline is August 24 2022. Interested parties can reach out to Ruth for the DDS grant proposal guidelines.

NLACRCCRC's Language Access and Cultural Competency Plan has been accepted by DDS; the plan includes securing a language access and cultural competency consultant, obtaining stakeholder input regarding community needs, hiring Language Outreach Specialists, an LGBTQ+ Outreach Specialist, translating documents including the Consumer Family Guide and Emergency Preparedness materials into other languages and re-designing the website for language competency and readability.

Alex Kopilevich from K&L Care, recognized NLACRC Service Coordinators and Accounting staff. The last few months have been difficult due to the rollover period, but the Service Coordinators have done a fantastic job and he would like to ensure they are recognized. Ruth thanked Alex for the recognition of staff and stated that she will pass along his sentiments to the staff.

## **V. Chief Financial Officer's Report – Vini Montague**

C3 Budget is currently \$731.7 million dollars

The Expenditures were \$50.7 million dollars

YTD Expenditures- \$649.8 million dollars

Projected Annual Expenditures - \$69.9 million dollars

Expected Surplus - \$ 40.7 million dollars

All 21 Regional Centers were reporting and anticipated surplus for the FY.

Special Check-Run Schedule - During COVID-19, special check-runs were made to help support Service Providers. These Check-Runs will continue through the end of December 31 2022. The remaining dates for 2022 are; August 29, September 28, October 27, November 29 and December 27. Normal operations will resume on January 1 2023, consisting of 1 POS Check Run per month.

## **VI. Deputy Director's Report – Jesse Weller**

Inclusion, Equity and Diversity Board Policy

This policy has recently been approved by the Board to facilitate continuous learning and training opportunities for current Staff, new Staff, Board Members and Service Providers. The policy will have at least one required learning/training opportunity focused on inclusion equity and diversity that will be provided quarterly for all NLACRC Staff and offered to Service Providers that interface with consumers including members of the Vendor Advisory

Committee. Topics identified for learning/training opportunities will be diverse, multicultural and intended to meet pressing current needs as determined through the NLACRC Strategic Plan and the ongoing solicitation of community feedback in various forms.

Service Access and Equity Grant – NLACRC was awarded an Employment Specialist position to help increase employment opportunities in underserved areas. The position has been filled effective August 15. Objectives will include promoting CIE/PIP and competitive employment, working with Service Providers to gather data and provide Trainings. An Employment Hotline is in progress as a central way of getting information regarding employment.

Camp, Social Recreation and Non-Medical Therapies Service Standards – Service Standards have been revised and assessment tools have been created. Community Services is doing Resource Development, Service Providers who provide any of these services are encouraged to reach out for more information. Families/Consumers can access camp, social recreation and non-medical therapies from active vendors (including out of area Vendors) or pursue to the 024 Parental Reimbursement process.

Enhanced Service Coordination Unit (Trailer Bill for 1:40 Caseload Size) – NLACRC received funding for 6 Specialists, all have been hired and fully implemented. 137 individuals have been transferred to this unit out of 240. This is specific for individuals in underserved communities receiving less than \$2000 in POS per year, to understand barrier and increase access. Santos Rodriguez, a former Service Coordinator, was promoted to the Supervisor for this department.

Contacting NLACRC Service Coordinators Workflow Sheet– In order to provide clarity to the community in regards to timelines and points-of-contact, a Workflow Sheet was made available on the website. This Workflow sheet outlines office hours as well as information on how to contact a Service Coordinator and steps on how to proceed if the Service Coordinator cannot be reached within 24 hours or by the end of the next business day. This sheet can be accessed by clicking on an orange button in the middle of the page on the NLACRC Website. Suad recommended changing “OD Staff” and “OD Specialist” to “On-Duty Specialist (OD)” to clarify what OD means. Dr. Weller will revisit this verbiage.

Early Start Eligibility Changes – Effective June 30, 2022, there has been a change in eligibility criteria for early intervention services for an infant or toddler was changed from a 33% delay to a 25% delay in one or more areas. This lower threshold allows more infants and toddlers from birth -2 years of age to receive early intervention services. Changes were also included that separated communication development into 2 categories: expressive communication and receptive communication. This change increases the total number of developmental areas from 5 to 6, in which an infant or toddler referred to Early Start will be assessed and evaluated. Lastly, a revision was made to list Fetal Alcohol Syndrome is listed as a risk factor for an infant or toddler who may require early intervention services.

Any infants and toddlers who had an assessment/evaluation from January 2022 to June 2022 at NLACRC and who may be eligible for services under the new changes are being contacted.

DDS Bulletins – There are 2 bulletins listed on the DDS website regarding Excessive Heat and How to Stay Healthy in the Heat as well as Preventing Dehydration.

August Town Hall - Topic: Individual Rights Under the Lanterman Act. The Town Hall will take place on Thursday, August 18 at 1:30 pm. NLACRC Is looking to increase attendance and participation at Town Hall Meetings. Anyone interested in presenting a future topic or who has any feedback on how participation can be increased is encouraged to email Dr. Weller at [jweller@nlacrc.org](mailto:jweller@nlacrc.org).

Self-Determination – As of August 1, there are 132 individuals who have transitioned into the program with approved spending plans and active SDP IPPs. NLACRC has filled all 3 of the open Participant Choice Specialist positions. Orientation and Informational meetings will continue monthly, it was noted that Orientation can now be completed online at the convenience of the individual.

SDP Local Advisory Committee – This Committee has partnered with Disability Voices United to create SDP Best Practices for NLACRC workflows and processes to better streamline current systems. The Bagley-Keen waiver will now allow for meetings to continue virtually, everyone is welcome to attend. Lisa Williamsen asked if Vendors are part of the SDP Transition Process. There have been some trainings in the past but future collaboration between Vendors and NLACRC and general feedback in regards to SDP is something that Dr. Weller will follow up on with Lisa.

FMS Updates – DDS has removed the requirement that the cost of FMS be paid out of the Participant's Individual Budget. NLACRC will be communicating and supporting families on how to reallocate their funds. More information will be provided once it becomes available.

Suad stated that the Rate Increases and how SD Budgets are determined has been challenging. The rates increased but the SD budget for the client did not. Many Service Providers could be hesitant to take on SDP clients for this reason. Dr.Weller stated that he will bring up this issue at the upcoming Best Practices Meeting.

## **VII. Community Services Director's Report – Evelyn McOmie**

HCBS Compliance - There are currently 360 Vendors who are requiring either remediation or validation of their program. This is a joint effort between NLACRC and DDS to have these forms submitted, reviewed and accepted. There is a total of 156 Validation Forms that have been sent out, the deadline for submission was June 30 and there are 71 Providers who have yet to submit. As far as Remediation Forms, there are 204 forms that were sent out and 88 Service Providers who have yet to submit. Anyone who needs assistance in completing either form is encouraged to email [hcbcompliance@nlacrc.org](mailto:hcbcompliance@nlacrc.org) for assistance.

Evelyn thanked those who participated in providing input on NLACRC's HCBS Funding to Support All Vendors. There will be one final meeting held next week, information will be disseminated to those who have previously attended and NLACRC will be submitting the

proposal to DDS by the end of August.

Residential Service Orientation (RSO) Registration for Fall 2022 is open. RSO will take place September 12. This will be a 5-week course, broken down in to 2 sessions per week (9 sessions total) and the Final Exam will be held on October 10, 2022.

Camp, Social Recreation and Non-Medical Therapy RFPs- Requests for Vendorization remains open. There are 9 relevant service codes. No start-up funds are associated with this RFP and the projects will be posted until the resources are met.

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)- NLACRC has 37 Providers who have yet to complete this verification. Any Personal Care Service Provider (falls under Respite, SLS, Personal Assistance and Homemaker) who has not completed EVV process is being asked to do so as soon as possible. If you are unsure of your completion status, reach out to [resourcedepartment@nlacrc.org](mailto:resourcedepartment@nlacrc.org). Home Health Care Services (nursing, home health, speech, physical and occupational therapy) will need to be in compliance with EVV by January 1, 2023. Currently, DDS is hosting information on EVV, the next webinars will take place August 4 and August 5.

Provisional Eligibility Program (PEP) - Community Services Dept tolled out a 1-page addendum to update program design for vendors who are interested in providing services to individuals deemed provisionally eligible for services. For more information on adding this component to your program design email [resourcedepartment@nlacrc.org](mailto:resourcedepartment@nlacrc.org).

Virtual Vendor Fair - NLACRC will be hosting 2 fairs in September. Registration will open for all Service Providers on August 15. Vendors will be able to register through Event Brite and will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis. The fair will take place over 4 days, 4 hours each with 1 hour break out which will accommodate 25 programs at a time. CSCs will move from room to room to see various programs.

Antelope Valley and Santa Clarita Valley Service Early Start and School Age Services Virtual Fair will be held September 13.

Antelope Valley and Santa Clarita Valley Transition and Adult (Day Programs, ILS, etc.) Virtual Fair will be held September 15.

San Fernando Valley Early Start and School Age Virtual Fair will take place on September 20 San Fernando Valley Transition and Adult Virtual Fair will be held on September 22. More information is to come.

Special Incident Report and Risk Mitigation training for Service Providers will take place August 24 from 10am to 12pm. Registration on Eventbrite August 4 at 3 pm.

SB 1264 - adopts new Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Provisions for Providers. This includes adult residential facilities, social rehab facilities, enhancement behavioral support homes, community crisis homes and residential care. NLACRC will send information on preparing for extreme heat public safety power shut offs and wildfire emergencies.

Please inform NLACRC when updating your agency. NLACRC needs to continue to ensure that insurance, charts and all other documentation associated to vendorizations remain

current. Updated information can be submitted to [contracts&compliance@nlacrc.org](mailto:contracts&compliance@nlacrc.org).

Rate Study implementation - Most updated information is available on the NLACRC website, DDS has not provided an update on state-wide median rates that would reflect the increases that have been issued. Rate Model Benchmark grades do not currently align with the state-wide median rates and as a result, new Vendorizations will be implemented at the median rates set on January 1, 2020, pending DDS guidance.

DS1891 Compliance- DS 1891 Forms were due on August 1, 2022. There are currently 601 Vendors who have expired DS 1891 Forms. This is a regulatory requirement from DDS, please update forms as soon as possible to OIG Vendor Compliance.

### **VIII. Legislative Report – Michelle Heid**

Michelle gave a brief overview of the report, which she linked in the chat. This includes a Legislative Calendar that lists important deadlines for the legislature. For the 2022 Election, California's top 2 candidates from the Open Primaries will move on to the General Election. A full list of candidates is provided in the report.

DDS Directives- DS task force held a meeting to review the budget on July 14. All of the meetings are summarized on the report and are also available to watch the recordings online.

Resource Information for Vendors and Individuals are also listed in the report. This includes the State Council on Developmental Disabilities -a great resource for grants, self-advocacy chats, upcoming meeting date and virtual training dates are listed in the report.

### **IX. Committee Business – Ruth Janka**

#### **A. Annual VAC Orientation**

##### **1. Public Input and Public Participation during Committee Business**

In order to comply with Committee bylaws, a new structure is needed to distinguish Committee Members from Public Attendees. During Public Input, Committee Members do not engage in dialogue or answer questions. Once Committee Business has begun, only Committee Members are able to participate in discussion and vote. Suad suggested conducting the next Committee Meeting in a Panelist View format on Zoom. Committee Members will receive the link to join the meeting as a panelist and will be the only discussion participants with the exception of an approved Service Provider who has been scheduled to present during Committee Business.

**M/S/C** (K. Bermudez/ J. Agnew-Navarro) To approve the Panelist View format on Zoom for the next Committee Meeting. The motion was approved with 1 opposition from Erica Beall.

##### **2. Review Policies and Procedures (Page 9)**



The Vendor Advisory Committee is responsible for designating a Committee Member to serve as a Member of the Board of Trustees; this person also serves as chairperson of the Vendor Advisory Committee. It is also responsible for providing advice, guidance, recommendations, and technical assistance to the board in carrying out its mandated duties.

Members are appointed for three (3) year terms with approximately one-third of the committee being replaced annually to provide for continuity. Members may not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms

3. FY 2022-23 VAC Meeting Schedule (Page 12)

The Vendor Advisory Committee shall meet on a monthly basis with the exception of July and December. The meetings shall be scheduled for a full year following seating of the members each year. A copy of the scheduled meetings will be provided to the Board of Trustees. Other meetings may be scheduled and called by the chairperson of the committee.

4. FY 2022-23 VAC Roster and Terms (Page 13)

Suad stated that an updated roster will be created to reflect recent changes in the roster. She also suggested adding service types of each Committee Member to the roster.

B. Review Action Log for previous Fiscal Year (Page 15)

Ruth explained that the Action Log captures the actions taken by the Committee for the last Fiscal Year, including the Jenny Retzinger Award, any policies developed, etc. It also assists in tracking follow up and completion of committee items.

C. Draft Critical Calendar FY22-23 (Page 19)

Ruth reviewed the items on the Critical Calendar, there were a few revisions noted in the packet with a proposed addition for May.

**M/S/C** (E. Beall / K. Shields) To approve the revised Critical Calendar.

D. Discussion Regarding VAC Priorities for FY 2022-23 (Page 22)

Dana Kalek recommended keeping the same priorities as listed. Numbers for Early start have decreased slightly in June. Currently working with pediatricians on referrals. Parents are looking for more in-home services as opposed to Telehealth. This has caused an issue due to low staffing. Dana will add staffing to the priorities to address the issue and will return to the Committee with an update.

It was also suggested to add a priority to facilitate the access to information regarding mental health services available through school districts and community providers. See if it's possible to find professionals in the community that have the skill set and availability to provide services to families who may have mental health needs.

The Committee was asked to review the Priorities and submit any feedback to Board Support for revisions to be reviewed at the next Committee Meeting.

It was decided to eliminate the Legislative Issues and Advocacy from Priority Issues list and to include Legislative Advocacy to all other Priorities for FY2022-23.

**M/S/C** (E. Beall/ B. Erio) To approve the removal of Legislative Issues and Advocacy from the VAC Priorities.

E. Vendor Advisory Committee Policy Proposed Revision (Page 23)

The policy has not been amended since 1998, Ruth reviewed the revisions as presented in the packet and recommends the removal of the provision for “Fiscal Matters Including POS Priorities”.

**M/S/C** (L. Williamsen/ D. Ortiz) To approve the recommendation to remove “Fiscal Matters including POS” from the VAC Policy.

F. DDS Employment Grants (Page 26)

Employment grants are due to DDS by August 24th with a copy of the proposal to be submitted to NLACRCCRC. Providers were encouraged to contact NLACRCCRC regarding proposals.

G. California State Auditor’s Report: June 2022 (Page 131)

Ruth reviewed the Executive Summary in the packet, and solicited feedback on how to improve particularly in the areas of addressing access to services; opportunities identified to address issues noted in the report can be submitted to Ruth. Lizeth Chavez will add this item to the next Committee Meeting agenda for further discussion.

**X. Board Meeting Agenda Items**

The following items were identified for the Committee’s section of the August 10<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting agenda:

- A. Minutes of the August 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting

**XII. Announcements / Information Items / Public Input**

- A. Next Meeting: Thursday, September 1<sup>st</sup> at 9:30 a.m. (Break-Out Groups)

- B. Public Input

Suad stated that the Housing Recommendation report-out will be added to the next VAC Meeting agenda, including a report-out from last year. Bruce will send information to Board Support to be included in the packet for the next Committee Meeting.

**XI. Committee Work Group Information**

- A. **Early Start Services** (Dana Kalek)  
For meeting schedule and information  
Contact: Dana Kalek – dkalek@cdikids.org
- B. **School Age Services** (Cal Enriquez)  
For meeting schedule and information  
Contact: Cal Enriquez – cenriquez@accreditednursing.com
- C. **Adult Services** (Suag Bisogno & Erica Beall)  
For meeting schedule and information  
Contact: Suad Bisogno – suad@irioc.org
- D. **Legislative Issues and Advocacy** (Open)

### VIII. Adjournment

Suad Bisogno, Committee Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:07 p.m.

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 NLACRC staff.*