

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Consumer Services Committee Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2024

Present: Nicholas Abrahms, George Alvarado, Cathy Blin, James Henry, Anna Hurst, Jennifer Koster, Laura Monge, Alma Rodriguez, Rocio Sigala, Sharon Weinberg– **Committee Members**

Angela Pao-Johnson, Vini Montague, Silvia Renteria-Haro, Venus Rodriguez-Khorasani, Kimberly Visokey, – **Staff Members**

Mark Wolfe – DDS Tech Advisor, Tresa Oliveri – DDS Tech Advisor, Marianita Mendez – DDS, Ana Quiles, Nicholas Mendoza, Lori Walker, Hortencia Garcia, Victoria Berrey, Reyna Rodriguez - **Guests**

Absent: Vivian Seda

I. Call to Order & Introductions

Rocio Sigala called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

II. Public Input

Lori Walker spoke regarding the self-determination program, with Lori expressing excitement about its inclusion in the committee's priorities but also highlighting ongoing barriers to its implementation.

III. Consent Items

- A. Approval of Agenda
- B. Approval of Minutes from the September 18, 2024, Meeting

M/S/C (George Alvarado / Laura Monge) To approve the Consent Items as presented.

IV. Committee Business - Evelyn McOmie

A. Board Audit Question – Rocio Sigala

- Ensure the Service Standards are consistent with the center's mission, vision, and values statement.

Rocio Sigala noted that La Regional Center's service standards are aligned with the Center's mission vision and values. Additionally, the service standards are reviewed and Updated in accordance with the legislative changes and DDS guidance. Rocio also noted that there have been some recent revisions to the service standards, and those included Early Start IDA, part C. And additional revisions that were made for the Social Rec. And Non-Medical therapies as well.

- Review the center's mission, vision, and values statement to determine if the center is providing adequate guidance in establishing consumer services policy.

B. Review of the Board Audit Questions – Rocio Sigala

The committee discussed the Board of Trustees audit questions. The committee

reviewed the service standards and their alignment with the Center's mission, vision, and values. There was a discussion about the frequency of reviewing the audit questions, with suggestions ranging from annually to on a yearly basis. The committee also discussed the need for more knowledge on certain areas, with suggestions for revising the audit questions and incorporating more information into their share folder. The committee agreed to send the revised audit questions to their legal team and then to DDS for review as part of their special contract language. The conversation ended with a discussion on how to onboard new board members effectively.

V. Committee Action Items

- A. Review revised copy of Committee Critical Calendar for FY 2024-25- Angela Pao-Johnson
The committee discussed the revised copy of the Committee's Critical Calendar for fiscal years 2024 and 2025, with Angela Pao-Johnson providing an overview of the revisions.
- B. SDLAC Role within Committee Discussion– Rocio Sigala
Rocio Sigala led a discussion on the role of the SDP within the committee, with Rosie suggesting an invitation to the SDP chairs to discuss their concerns during the SDP Board liaison report. The committee agreed to ask Lori, the SDP committee chair, about what information she would like to share with the committee. Lori expressed her desire for the committee to help improve the self-determination program, particularly in addressing systemic issues and improving the financial management system. The committee agreed to consider Lori's concerns and possibly address them directly in future meetings.
- C. Employment Initiatives & Programs Update – Venus Rodriguez-Khorasani
Venus Rodriguez-Khorasani, the community services manager, shared updates on the employment initiatives, including the hiring of employment specialists, the extension of a grant, and a video project to promote employment opportunities. The team also discussed the need for better communication and sharing of stories related to employment.

In the meeting, Sharon expressed her agency's participation in the casting call and its potential benefits for the community. George and Nicholas Mendoza also shared their experiences and plans, including George's participation in softball and basketball. Venus highlighted the recent employment specialist's ACRE certification, which is a requirement for their community to be vendorized for the Coordinated Career Pathways program. Sharon raised concerns about vendors struggling with being the employee of record due to workman's compensation expenses and sick time, which Venus acknowledged and assured that they meet with vendors quarterly to address such issues.

VI. Board Meeting Agenda Items

- A. Committee Summary Report – (*Rocio Sigala*)
- B. Revised copy of Consumer Services Committee Critical Calendar FY 2024-25
- C. Service Standards Revisions – E.S. Eligibility IDEA Part C – Case Finding & Public Info Section

VII. Committee Report Updates

A. Self-Determination Program Report and

B. SDLVAC Board Liaison Report – Silvia Renteria-Haro

Sylvia Renteria-Haro provided updates on the Self-Determination Program (SDP) and the SDP Local Advisory Committee Liaison Report. She reported that there were 455 consumers in the program and 30 transitions in November. She also mentioned that they are revamping their video for the orientation process. Ana raised a concern about parents being hesitant to join the program due to budget concerns, but Sylvia clarified that the program assesses individual needs and budgets annually. The meeting also discussed the California Master Plan for Developmental Services, which aims to gather information from SDP families to improve the program. The idea of a parent ambassador program was suggested by Anna, which Sylvia found interesting. Lastly, Sylvia mentioned the SDP support group held on the first Wednesday of each month.

C. Social Recreation, Camp & Non-Medical Therapies Services Report (July-September) – Angela Pao-Johnson

Angela Pao-Johnson presented the social recreation services report, which was initially intended for the first quarter of the fiscal year but was expanded to a three-year outlook due to vendors' ability to bill within that period. The report showed a decrease in payments to parents, which Angela attributed to the implementation of a new system, FMS, that pays vendors directly. The committee discussed the usefulness of the report, with some members suggesting that it should focus on the number of authorizations and services provided rather than the dollar amount. The committee also discussed the issue of delayed payments to parents and the need for a more streamlined process. Vini explained the payment process, highlighting that delays often occur due to communication issues between case management and parents. The committee agreed on the need for a more detailed narrative overview of the report to help board members understand the data. Lastly, the committee discussed the need for a mechanism for families to address concerns about outstanding payments.

D. 1st Quarter Intake Data by Location Report (July-September) – Angela Pao-Johnson

Angela Pao-Johnson presented the intake data, highlighting the steady increase in Lanterman intakes since April and the need for more psychological evaluations.

E. 4th Quarter NOAs/Appeals Report – **Deferred**

F. 1st Quarter NOAs/Appeals Report (July-September) – **Deferred**

G. Semi-Annual NOAs by Ethnicity/Location/Services & Age Range Report – **Deferred**

H. 1st Quarter Disparity Committee Report – (July-September) – Angela Pao-Johnson

Angela Pao-Johnson led the committee's discussion on the Disparity Committee's focus areas, including legislative members, emergency preparedness, competitive employment opportunities, and healthcare access. The committee members were tasked to sign up for subcommittees to address these areas. The conversation ended with a call for future topic suggestions for the next consumer Services committee meeting, with a deadline set for

January 7th.

I. Semi-Annual Consumer Diagnostic Report – **Deferred**

VIII. Meeting Action Item Review

- Board Support to add Venus Rodriguez-Khorasani to VAC meeting invite
- Board Support to send Jennifer links for Admin Affairs and Executive Committee meetings
- Angela Pao-Johnson and Lori Walker to connect about reviewing SDP policy versus operational issues
- Angela Pao-Johnson to look into having FMS pay parents directly for pending social rec/non-medical therapy reimbursements
- Venus Rodriguez-Khorasani to provide updated flyer with extended deadline for employment video casting call
- Committee members to submit suggestions for future meeting topics to board support by January 7th
- Board support to compile and send topic suggestions to Rosie
- Board support to send email requesting volunteers to work on audit questions
- Board support to send updated audit questions to legal for review after work group completes revisions
- Rosie Sigala and Angela Pao-Johnson to review suggested topics and determine feasibility for next meeting agenda
- Venus Rodriguez-Khorasani to have Kai Brennan contact George Alvarado about participating in employment video

IX. Future topic suggestions for CSC meetings:

X. Announcements / Information Items / Public Input

- A. Committee Attendance
- B. Next Meeting: February 19, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Submitted by:

Kimberly Visokey

Executive Administrative Assistant

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

