

Alta California Regional Center
Provider Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, March 10, 2022
Minutes

Present:

Eric Ciampa, UCP of
Sacramento, Inc., Chair
Michelle Ramirez, On My Own,
Co-Chair & Design. Dir.
James Astorga, F&A Astorga Care
Home
Garrett Broadbent, Creative
Living Options
Andrea Croom, INALLIANCE
Bonnie Douglas, Turning Point
Lindsey Dyba, Futures Explored,
Inc.
Kate Halecky, Southside
Unlimited
Joe Jaquez, EGACT
Jessica Knuth, Reach Adult
Development
Antonio Ranit, Antelope Hills
Manor
Adam Ruggles, Medstar LLC
Laleh Sharpe, Maxim Healthcare
Services
Yvonne Soto, DDSO
Paul Traglio, Kadiant

Absent: (* excused)

Janet Brandon*, A.I.M. &
Associates
Jacquie Dillard-Foss*, STEP
Sergio Pinto, BEST Consulting,
Inc.
Joy Scott, Tri-County Caregiver
Relief
Carole Watilo, Progressive
Employment

Visitors

Shelia Abrams
Jody Bailey
Vikie Black
Breeanne Burris
Maureen Fitzgerald
Jennifer Gomez
Braydon Holtzinger
Jennifer Jones
Natasha Mosely-Simpkins
Kelli Nuttall
Michelle Ramirez
Jen Roney
Kathleen Short
Jasmine Vollenweider
Katherine Wallen

Staff:

Lori Banales, Executive Director
Jennifer Bloom, Associate Client
Services Director
Tracy Brown, Associate Client
Services Director
John Decker, Director of Community
Services
Camelia Houston, Director of Intake &
Clinical Services
Mechelle Johnson, Director of Client
Services
Jean Onesi, Manager of Community
Services
Andy Ponce, Intensive Case Unit
Manager
Olivia Procida, Manager of
Community Services
Johnny Xiong, Associate Client
Services Director
Lisa West, Executive Secretary

The Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) met at 9:33 a.m. on Thursday, March 10, 2022, by Webex/teleconference to discuss: 1) Board Update; 2) Executive Director's Report; 3) COVID-19 Impact Discussion; 4) System Reform and Legislative Update; 5) PAC Committees & Reports; 6) PAC Matrix & Bylaw Review; and 7) Announcements/Comments. All present provided self-introductions.

Without objection, Eric Ciampa made the motion to approve the Provider Advisory Committee meeting minutes of February 10, 2022 as submitted.

1. ***Board Update***

- Ms. Ramirez shared that the next Board meeting is scheduled for March 24th.

2. ***Executive Director's Report***

- Ms. Banales is aware that service providers are watching the budget closely and hoping for the acceleration of the rate study. We are all hopeful that it will assist with the issues surrounding the workforce.
- Although many ACRC staff have been coming into the office, Ms. Banales is inviting staff back two-days per week beginning March 21st. This will allow staff to reconnect with each other. Managers have been coming into the office four-days per week since March 1st. New employees are coming in three-days per week during their introductory period.
- Recently, ACRC has seen a net gain in our workforce. Over the last quarter, we have brought on 60 employees, and termed out 19 (mostly through retirement or by choice). Ms. Banales is looking forward to bringing our caseload ratios down.
- There has been a great deal of interest from our client community in social recreation opportunities. Our agency is staffing multiple cases weekly, while we work to vendor new options. ACRC will be releasing two Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for camp and equine therapy; these will be posted on our agency's website. We will also be posting an additional generic social recreation RFP shortly.
 - Mr. Decker plans on focusing an upcoming "Coffee with Community Services" on social recreation.
 - ACRC is still waiting on the Department of Developmental Services' (DDS') approval of our Social Recreation Service Policy. After approval, we have a responsibility to promote these services in our community. Staff are waiting to implement this, while fulfilling these requests.
- A few years ago, ACRC received funding to develop a Dental Clinic through our Community Resource Development Plan (CRDP). This clinic is on El Camino Avenue, close to our Sacramento office. Yesterday, they had their inspection by the Fire Marshal, which they did not pass. Our community is waiting for this resource and Ms. Banales

promises that staff will do everything in our power to assist with this process moving forward.

- Many regional centers are interested in replicating ACRC's Coordinated Future Planning. It is evident to Ms. Banales that the task force's work is being recognized. We need to make sure that plans are in place for those clients that are living with aging parents/care givers. We can make a difference, one step at a time.
- ACRC hired two Participant Choice Specialists on March 1st; another is slated to start on April 1st. A fourth position may be allocated by the department later this year. These consultants will assist Planning Teams with the Self-Determination Program (SDP) model. They also share opportunities through participant directed services (Independent Living Services [ILS], supported employment, and Personal Assistant [PA]).
- Regarding the rate study, a lot of work has been going on behind the scenes; the new rate models have been updated.
 - Mr. Decker shared that a few weeks ago, questions came up about Supported Living Services (SLS). Burns & Associates and regional center staff are working closely to break each service code apart for each service provider to make sure that the rates are correct.
 - ACRC is committed to double checking the rates to make sure there are no outliers.
 - We are making every effort to have the new rates in place for service provider's April billing.
 - ACRC will release the new rates as soon as we receive them, as opposed to the very end.
 - The first two batches are currently being reviewed and discussed by DDS and ACRC staff.
 - Mr. Ciampa and Ms. Ramirez offered their assistance in answering questions from service providers.
- ACRC currently has 79 individuals enrolled in SDP. The Self-Determination Advisory Committee (SDAC) continues to hold monthly virtual meetings.

3. **COVID-19 Impact Discussion**

- ACRC is seeing a downward trend in COVID cases, while we continue to track the vaccination status of our clients. Having staff return to the office will bring value to staff; being able to collaborate with their colleagues.
 - Ms. Johnson noted that ACRC staff must respect our clients'/families' choice on whether masks are worn during meetings/visits.

- Members discussed the confusion surrounding the mask mandate; different agencies are interpreting this in their own way.
- It is the expectation that the client and/or family decides whether they want a remote or in-person meeting. ACRC staff are taking rapid tests prior to in-person meetings to verify health status.
- ACRC is seeking the Board's approval on a Columbus Operations (OPS) contract at their March 24th Board meeting. As part of the statewide safety net for our entire regional center system, DDS in creating a staffing registry, which would assist service providers during natural disasters, not just the pandemic. Tri-Counties Regional Center (TCRC) holds the contract for Southern California and ACRC has been asked to be the contract holder for the Northern California hub. We are excited to do this, understanding that not every provider will have staff that can join this registry. Interested individuals will need to get their current employer's consent prior to being placed on the registry. Then, once there is a need, the employer is again contacted to make sure that the individual can assist.
 - This is a pilot project and there is team of experts from DDS, Columbus and TCRC available to answer questions if service providers are interested in participating in this.

4. ***System Reform and Legislative Update (ARCA, CDSA, CCLN, DS Taskforce, Lanterman Coalition)***

- PAC Workforce Letter
 - At the last meeting, the draft was reviewed and final revisions were made. The letter was released on March 1st.
 - The letter focused on how accelerating the rate study will assist clients/families.
 - In years to come, the PAC is hopeful that we can get involved with more issues that can unite us.
- Review Proposal for Statewide Meeting Assignments
 - Mr. Ciampa shared the revised statewide meeting assignments. Each PAC member will be asked to complete a form noting the groups that they are affiliated with.
 - Completed forms should be sent to Mr. Ciampa and Ms. West.
- CDSA
 - This week, at the CDSA Legislative Conference, the group discussed the importance of accelerating the rate study, with the fix of including those services that were not mentioned, and the sunset of the reduction of rates at the end of five years.
- PAC members are encouraged to look ahead for the May Revise and then the subsequent hearings. The goal of the legislature is to get the budget and on the Governor's desk by June 15th.

5. **PAC Committees & Reports**

- The Vendor Relations Committee has not met, but they are working with ACRC staff on a project – they are drafting a satisfaction survey for providers to be completed after they are initially vendorized; a follow-up survey will also be used (e.g., what is going well, how can ACRC staff be more responsive, etc.).
 - The next meeting is scheduled for March 21st at 1 p.m.
 - The group is hopeful that we will be able to implement these surveys within the next few months.
- ACRC has scheduled their Annual POS Expenditure Meetings:
 - Monday, March 28th, from 6 to 7:30 p.m.
 - Wednesday, March 30th, from 10:30 a.m. to noon

Ms. Banales noted that ACRC is seeking the Board's approval on a Service Access & Equity Policy, which will be shared at these meetings.

- The Outreach Committee will be meeting soon to discuss a recently received PAC application.

6. **PAC Matrix & Bylaw Review**

- The Board of Directors has requested that the PAC annually verify the committee's compliance with the agency's bylaws and the mandated statute.
 - Mr. Ciampa reviewed ACRC's bylaws as related to the PAC.
 - When reviewing the PAC matrix, priority will be given to:
 - Adult Services – Residential & PA
 - Family and Children's Services – Residential
 - Therapy – clinical work
 - Other categories – FMS/Money Management
 - Committee members seems to represent the clients in ACRC's catchment area.
- Ms. Ramirez believes that the Board's Strategic Plan will provide more opportunities for this committee to provide assistance/guidance to the Board and ACRC staff.

Without objection, Lindsey Dyba, made the motion to report to ACRC's Board of Directors that the PAC is in compliance with the agency's bylaws and the mandated statute.

7. **Announcements/Comments**

- Mr. Ciampa noted that the PAC will hold elections in May for the Chair & Co-Chair/Designated Representative to the Board for the 2022-23 fiscal year (FY). Please make every effort to attend this meeting.
 - Members are encouraged to reach out to anyone that they wish to nominate.

- Ms. Ramirez is eligible to serve as the PAC Co-Chair/Board Designated Representative to the Board for one more year.
- Ms. Banales is happy to announce that the Board will be holding hybrid meetings beginning this month. PAC members will be invited to come to our Sacramento office to attend the April 14th meeting in-person; members of the public will remain virtual.
 - We will continue to monitor/make adjustments as the state moves into the endemic.
- Mr. Decker shared that ACRC created a one-page flyer related to Health & Safety Waivers, which will be shared with the Vendor Relations Committee before being released to service providers.
- PAC members are encouraged to send Sonya Bingaman a note – she is retiring on March 31st.
- The April PAC meeting will include a special presentation from Meristem (special program), and a discussion regarding the upcoming elections in May.

The next PAC meeting is scheduled on **Thursday, April 14, 2022**, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. The meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Lisa West
Executive Secretary

cc: ACRC Board of Directors
Lori Banales