

Alta California Regional Center  
Provider Advisory Committee Meeting  
Thursday, February 11, 2021  
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, Meristem  
Andrea Croom, INALLIANCE  
Jacquie Dillard-Foss, STEP  
Bonnie Douglas, Turning Point  
Lindsey Dyba, Futures Explored,  
Inc.  
Joe Hernandez, Aveanna  
Healthcare Services  
Joe Jaquez, EGACT  
Jessica Knuth, Reach Adult  
Development  
Monique Migdol, Tahoe  
Community Integrations  
Sergio Pinto, BEST Consulting,  
Inc.  
Robin Rhoades, Southside  
Unlimited  
Adam Ruggles, Medstar LLC  
Laleh Sharpe, Maxim Healthcare  
Services  
Yvonne Soto, DDSO  
Peter Stirling, Serenity Respite  
Services  
Carole Watilo, Progressive  
Employment

**Visitors:**

Breeanne Burris  
Vikie Cole  
Jenna Darling  
Maureen Fitzgerald  
Sonya Fox-Watson  
Adriene Gaudet  
Kate Halecky  
Braydon Holtzinger  
Jenny Jones  
Jen Roney  
Hannah Thompson  
Jasmine Vollenweider  
Katherine Wallen

**Staff:**

Phil Bonnet, Executive Director  
Lori Banales, Deputy Executive  
Director  
John Decker, Director of Community  
Services  
Camelia Houston, Director of  
Intake & Clinical Services  
Jean Onesi, Manager of Community  
Services  
Andy Ponce, Specialized Services  
Manager  
Olivia Procida, Manager of  
Community Services  
Lisa West, Executive Secretary

**Absent:** (\* excused)

Janet Brandon\*, A.I.M. &  
Associates  
Ed Doonan, LIFE, Inc.  
Antonio Ranit, Antelope Hills  
Manor  
Joy Scott\*, Tri-County Caregiver  
Relief  
Paul Traglio\*, Kadiant

The Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) met at 9:33 a.m. on Thursday, February 11, 2021, by Webex/teleconference to discuss: 1) Board Update; 2) Executive Director's Report; 3) COVID-19 Impact Discussion & Vaccinations; 4) Legislative Update; 5) Discussion re PAC Goals; 6) Subcommittee Reports; and 7) Announcements/Comments. All present provided self-introductions.

**Without objection, Carole Watilo made the motion to approve the Provider Advisory Committee meeting minutes of January 14, 2021 as submitted.**

### 1. **Board Update**

- The January Board meeting included a Cultural & Linguistic Competency Training, where ACRC's diversity efforts were shared.
  - Ms. Ramirez suggested having the PAC's Cultural Diversity Subcommittee review the PowerPoint presentation from that training.
- The group voted on two returning Board members – Jackie Armstrong and Anwar Safvi.
- At each Board meeting, Mr. Bonnet shares the new services options that have been developed, as well as any closures. In December and January, ACRC opened five new care homes, as well as several behavioral service options; four care homes closed.
- ACRC is collaborating with Sacramento County's Dental Advisory Committee and Dr. Paul Glassman to assist clients who are being referred for hospital dentistry. The group is also discussing a possible Dental Surgery Center at California Northstate University in Elk Grove.
- Ms. Ramirez encouraged PAC members to attend the virtual Board meetings, which are held every other month.

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

- Mr. Bonnet's primary focus has been on vaccinations and protecting the folks that we serve. This has not been an easy task, but he remains hopeful that we might get back to some sort of normalcy soon. It has been about a year since we found out about COVID-19. ACRC offices are back to the pre-holiday surge in staffing (roughly 5%).
  - Partnering with Safeway and our provider community, we have been fortunate enough to set up a few vaccine clinics, in order to get our clients and the people that care for them vaccinated. Mr. Bonnet has seen the level of gratitude and hope from those that were able to attend these clinics.
  - Governor Newsom will be releasing his plan to vaccinate the developmentally disabled population tomorrow.
  - Experts are hoping for herd immunity, possibly by the summer.
- As people become accustomed to their new way of life, some clients/families may not want to go back to how services were

delivered prior to the pandemic. Choice will remain a factor as we work together to continue to serve our clients.

- As of this morning, ACRC has 662 clients that have tested positive for COVID-19, with 28 deaths. Four clients are currently in the hospital. We also have 348 positive direct support professionals (DSPs), with two deaths. In the last seven days, we have not added any new positive cases for DSPs. ACRC has had 26 staff who have tested positive.
- The State of California is currently tracking approximately 10,000 new positive COVID-19 cases per day, compared to 60,000 per day prior to the holidays. The variants remain a concern, as well as how long vaccines will protect folks from the virus. Mr. Bonnet believes we will be wearing masks for a long time.
- Generally speaking, the Governor's proposed 2021-22 budget is said to be a "status quo" budget until the May Revise is released.
- Mr. Bonnet was asked if some of ACRC's staff would permanently work from home after the pandemic was over. When we begin the repopulation of our offices, staff will not be coming back all at one time, but in shifts. ACRC does have a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) that would also need to address the agency's plans.
- The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) released a directive in late January requiring regional centers to submit a plan for COVID testing, vaccinations and distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE). Generally, centers will need to summarize their efforts. Early on, Mr. Decker and Ms. Houston sent letters to our ten county health departments requesting prioritization for our clients. Mr. Bonnet also created an internal workgroup to discuss vaccine opportunities.
- On Tuesday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, ACRC received information about a vaccine clinic that would be happening on February 4<sup>th</sup>. Within hours, we had approximately 2,000 clients sign-up for 300 slots. The day ended with 342 people being vaccinated.
  - We have another clinic scheduled for later this month and we will be going back to our waitlist to get people scheduled.
- As service providers, Mr. Bonnet inquired about how freely DSPs have been able to get vaccinated as health care workers.
  - Some shared that the side effects with the second shot are challenging for some.
  - Service providers need to be transparent with their staff and the clients that they serve; disclosure is important so clients/support staff know what to do.

### 3. **COVID-19 Impact Discussion & Vaccinations**

- Ms. Dillard-Foss expressed appreciation for the partnership with ACRC, without which these vaccine clinics would not have happened. We are

- able to see the best of our community when everyone comes together for the greater good.
- ACRC strives to make sure that we are sharing as much information about the vaccine with our service providers.
    - Some service providers are having a difficult time getting staff vaccinated.
    - Some counties are challenging, while others are easier.
    - Some service providers have created their own letter to accompany the DDS letter. That, along with the employee's ID, allows staff to get vaccinated.
  - ACRC has contacted several day program sites in hopes of holding vaccine clinics for our clients. We may need volunteers to assist with these clinics.
    - Ms. Houston sent a letter to all of the Public Health Officers, identifying all of the available sites in the different counties.
    - Mr. Decker shared the letter with DDS to inquire if there was any special funding to assist with these clinics. He assured everyone that ACRC staff will meet with service providers to assist in the planning process.
    - In order for our clients to truly be safe, we need to make sure they are vaccinated, as well as their family members/care givers, and the DSPs that provide services.
  - Mr. Bonnet noted that as service providers, you will have plan for clients who choose not to be vaccinated.

#### 4. **Legislative Update**

- CDSA
  - They are working on the Disability Thrive initiative with Easter Seals to provide statewide training, support and resources on delivering alternative services.
    - Monthly webinars are being held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of the month at 3 p.m. to discuss various topics related to providing services during the pandemic.
    - Weekly "Lunch & Learns" begin tomorrow, February 12<sup>th</sup>, at 12 noon.
    - Peer-to-peer consultations and trainings are being held on alternative or remote services.
    - They also have developed an online resource library.
  - CDSA opposes any cuts and supports eliminating suspension language on supplemental rate increases from the state's budget.
  - They are pursuing a new mechanism to adjust rates for all providers when the minimum wage increases.
  - The group supports amending the Paid Internship Program (PIP) and Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) incentives.

- They are also advocating for one-time funding for people with developmental disabilities and their families to safely access services throughout the pandemic.
- CCLN
  - The group is having ongoing conversations with the Assembly, DDS and the California Health and Human Services (CHHS) Agency about paid outcomes. In the midst of this pandemic, our service system was not nimble.
  - They continue to encourage backing for in-person supports during the ongoing health crisis. Many clients rely on these services every day.
  - CCLN's two lobbyists continue to fight for our folks.

#### 5. **Discussion re PAC Goals**

- Mr. Ciampa reviewed the results of the PAC survey with everyone.
  - Received 24 responses; 17 PAC members and 7 community partners.
  - Survey will remain open – hoping for 100% participation from PAC members.
  - After one more month, the results will be forwarded to everyone. Subcommittees/workgroup will then begin to work on some of the suggestions.
- Mr. Ciampa and Ms. Ramirez will discuss the confidential feedback items.
- PAC members were encouraged to think about future leadership roles. It is vital that this group has an engaging representative serving on ACRC's Board of Directors. After June 30<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Ciampa plans on stepping down from his position as Chair.

#### 6. **Subcommittee Reports**

- Communications – the group met earlier this month and went over their 2020 goals.
  - They are revamping the annual letter to all service providers about the PAC, which will be sent out in an email blast.
  - The group created a PowerPoint in order to assist the PAC presenter at upcoming Vendor Orientations.
  - They also were successful in placing the vendor trainings on ACRC's website.
  - The group worked with ACRC staff on how to submit information to be posted on ACRC's calendar.
- Vendor Relations – Ms. Rhoades shared that the group met twice and discussed the liaison positions. Responsibilities for everyone will hopefully be defined by the March PAC meeting and then they will ask for committee feedback.
- Outreach Committee – the PAC has received a new application.

- Mr. Ciampa will contact them to discuss the qualifications that need to be met prior to consideration.

7. ***Announcements/Comments***

- Mr. Decker shared that during last Friday's "Coffee with Community Services" the group discussed the monthly rates for Purchase of Services (POS) authorizations. If your billing is submitted by the 12<sup>th</sup> of this month, checks will be cut by February 18<sup>th</sup>. ACRC staff recognize that this was a lot of additional work for service providers and we are making every effort to assure that the rates are correct.
- Ms. Fox-Watson noted all of the requirements that are needed prior to reopening day services.
  - At some point there will be a path forward.
    - The topic of the February 26<sup>th</sup> Coffee with Community Services is "Re-engaging with In-Person Day Programs (both licensed and unlicensed)".
- At the next meeting, we may have a person with Autism Speaks hold a brief presentation in advance of World Autism Month in April. The group will review the survey results and begin discussing the committee's goals.

The next PAC meeting is scheduled on **Thursday, March 11, 2021**, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. The meeting adjourned at 11:28 a.m.

Lisa West  
Executive Secretary

cc: ACRC Board of Directors  
Phil Bonnet