

Alta California Regional Center  
Provider Advisory Committee Meeting  
Thursday, February 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  
Janet Brandon, A.I.M. &  
Associates  
Garrett Broadbent, Creative Living  
Options  
Andrea Croom, INALLIANCE  
Jacquie Dillard-Foss, STEP  
Bonnie Douglas, Turning Point  
Lindsey Dyba, Futures Explored,  
Inc.  
Jessica Knuth, Reach Adult  
Development  
Sergio Pinto, BEST Consulting,  
Inc.  
Antonio Ranit, Antelope Hills  
Manor  
Adam Ruggles, Medstar LLC  
Joy Scott, Tri-County Caregiver  
Relief  
Yvonne Soto, DDSO  
Paul Traglio, Kadiant  
Carole Watilo, Progressive  
Employment

**Absent:** (\* excused)

Kate Halecky\*, Southside  
Unlimited  
Joe Jaquez\*, EGACTION  
Laleh Sharpe\*, Maxim Healthcare  
Services

**Visitors**

Jody Bailey  
Vikie Black  
Rebecca Brubaker  
Breeanne Burriss  
Donna Fargen  
Clarissa Fernandez

Maureen Fitzgerald  
Sonya Fox-Watson  
Adriene Gaudet  
Jennifer Gomez  
Priscilla Holmes  
Braydon Holtzinger  
Christine Ibia  
Jennifer Jones  
Susana Magana  
Christa McClure  
Jessica Merritt  
Leslie Morrison  
Niles Overall  
Jen Roney  
Stan Schmidt  
Tiffany Spiecker  
Geneva Steward  
Jasmine Vollenweider  
Katherine Wallen  
Miesha Williams

**Staff:**

Lori Banales, Executive Director  
Tracy Brown, Associate Client  
Services Director  
John Decker, Director of Community  
Services  
Jordan Eller, Specialized Services  
Manager  
Camelia Houston, Director of Intake &  
Clinical Services  
Mechelle Johnson, Director of Client  
Services  
Hewitt Matanari, Emergency  
Response Coordinator  
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, February 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 Update; 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 January 13, 2022 as submitted.**

*\*change in agenda was noted*

### **DDS Staff Stability Survey Discussion**

- Leslie Morrison, with the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), provided a preview of the "Direct Support Professional (DSP) Workforce Survey – Spring 2022" that they are preparing and invited feedback from the PAC.
  - Clarification was made that the survey is still being revised to include questions specific to California.
  - The dashboard that will be created from this survey will be invaluable when advocating for our workforce.

### **1. Board Update**

- Ms. Ramirez shared that the Board met on January 27<sup>th</sup>.
  - The Board received a training on Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE).
    - The PAC may be interested in an update on this initiative in the future.
  - The group approved the strategic planning survey that many of you have probably already received.
    - Ms. Ramirez encourages everyone to complete this survey.
  - The Board approved the updated Social Recreation Activities, Camp and Non-Medical Therapies Service Policy.
  - The group reviewed the financial statement and approved the independent audit report.
  - Since the November Board meeting, eight new programs were opened, with three programs closing.
  - The Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) is scheduling their Annual Grassroots Day, which should be in April.
  - The next Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 24<sup>th</sup>.

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

- Ms. Banales noted that DDS needs to approve ACRC's Social Recreation Service Policy prior to its posting on our agency's website. Although this service category became available on July 1, 2021, we don't have a DDS approve policy yet. Currently, ACRC is staffing social recreation

requests through our internal Best Practice Committee so that we have consistency throughout our agency.

- In December, DDS required regional centers to submit their training plan for staff and the outreach plan for the community.
  - ACRC will be starting this process once the policy is approved.
- The policy is written to embrace full inclusion for our clients, with supports, while being as flexible as possible.
- Regional centers are coordinating services across catchment areas. Reimbursement requests are currently being approved.
- Each regional center has agreed that as soon as a camp becomes available, they are sharing that information statewide, so that Service Coordinators (SCs) know what is available for our clients.
- The strategic plan survey was released on Monday. ACRC is reliant on our community to glean information so that we draft a comprehensive plan.
  - The survey has been translated into eleven different languages and the Board is hopeful that we receive meaningful information back. Over the last several years, ACRC has documented a lot of community feedback that is being considered in this process, as well.
    - Ms. Banales is excited about our American Sign Language (ASL) YouTube video, which features ACRC's Deaf Specialist, Rima Cornish.
  - The intention is to have the strategic plan ready to implement by July 1, 2022.
- The next quarterly "Alta Connections" newsletter will be released on April 1<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Banales spoke with ACRC's Client Advisory Committee (CAC) on Tuesday about having a voice in this; she would like to extend this opportunity to the PAC, as well.
  - Mr. Ciampa suggested that the PAC's Outreach Committee speak with Mr. Decker; a meeting will be scheduled.
- The Assembly held a budget hearing yesterday. Ms. Banales believes it was a positive hearing and remains hopeful as we continue to have these opportunities to share information about our statewide service system.
  - A faster implementation on the rate study was promoted during the hearing.
- Ms. Banales will review the quarterly dashboard indicators at the March PAC meeting and also invited individuals to attend Board and committee meetings where it is reviewed in greater detail.
- Regional centers had to submit their caseload ratio report to DDS early this year so that the legislature had this information prior to the hearings. We are going to collapse our caseload ratio public meeting

into the Purchase of Services (POS) Expenditure Meetings which are scheduled for the last week in March.

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

- Mr. Ciampa noted that this group has discussed the extension of the booster mandate to March 1, 2022. The State of California is also in discussions about changing the mask mandates.
  - Service providers need to be aware of all of these changes for their workforce.
- Question – should a Health & Safety Waiver be submitted for every client affected by the Omicron variant, retroactively back to January 1<sup>st</sup>? This is costly and a liability for some providers.
  - Mr. Decker suggested discussing Health & Safety Waivers at an upcoming “Coffee with Community Services”.
  - ACRC’s Community Services Department can also create a “cheat” sheet for service providers to reference.
- Members expressed appreciation to ACRC for their distribution of rapid test kits.
  - ACRC staff distributed in Woodland on Monday and on Tuesday, we were in Yuba City. This Saturday, we will be distributing more kits in Sacramento.
  - Mr. Decker shared that ACRC hopes to secure a larger quantity of kits that are not designated for licensed facilities.
  - We have more Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that needs to be picked up from Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC). After we get these supplies, ACRC can reopen our supplies to service providers.
  - Kudos to our transportation providers who have assisted in distributing these supplies to service providers.

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

- Approve Letter to the Legislature
  - At the last PAC meeting, there was discussion about the many frustrations that service providers are facing, and the group agreed that the PAC needs to focus our advocacy efforts. Mr. Ciampa and Ms. Dyba drafted a letter, which was read aloud.
    - The letter explains the workforce crisis that we are currently facing. Service providers cannot wait for five years to raise our workforce wages. ACRC’s PAC is asking the legislature to fully fund the rate study in the 2022-23 fiscal year (FY) – this should be considered a one-time expenditure.

- At the Assembly hearing yesterday, Jordan Lindsey, with The Arc of California, requested that \$333 million of the rate study be implemented, not the full amount.
  - The group suggested minor revisions. The letter will be amended prior to being sent to Committee Chairs, Chief Consultants and local legislators.
    - PAC members who would like to sign their name to this letter should indicate their preference in the meetings “chat” or contact Mr. Ciampa and/or Ms. West.
  - Ms. Ramirez will share this letter with the Board and request that they consider taking similar action.

**M/S/C (Scott/Traglio) To authorize Mr. Ciampa and Ms. Ramirez to make the final edits and send the letter out to the designated parties.**

- Review Proposal for Statewide Meeting Assignments
  - At last month’s meeting, the group discussed assigning a representative, with an alternate, to attend external meetings so that the PAC could possibly influence statewide/local discussions. Mr. Ciampa and Mr. Pinto met and identified a list of stakeholder groups.
    - Mr. Ciampa will send the list to PAC members and request volunteers – a draft will be discussed at the March PAC meeting.
- CCLN
  - The Governor signed the trailer bill language (TBL) – the \$12.5 million service outcome pilot project was approved.
    - The quality of life indicators will be presented to DDS on February 18<sup>th</sup>. CCLN is fortunate to be working with Dr. Julie Beadle-Brown, with the University of Kent.
      - Questions will be asked (e.g., do you have the life of your choosing, do you have the support you need, are you happy with your job, etc.).

## 5. **PAC Committees & Reports**

- Diversity & Equity
  - 41 service providers completed the “PAC Diversity & Equity Survey”.
    - Received many requests for trainings.
    - The survey provided a glimpse of what languages, other than English, are offered by service providers.

- If you are interested in participating in this subcommittee, please contact Ms. Dillard-Foss and/or Ms. West. Everyone is invited to join in on these conversations.
  - The subcommittee will meet prior to the March 10<sup>th</sup> PAC meeting.

6. ***PAC Matrix Update***

- Mr. Ciampa shared that at the March PAC meeting, we will be reviewing the updated PAC matrix, along with ACRC's bylaws and the statute/regulations for the PAC to make sure that we are representing ACRC's catchment area well.

7. ***Announcements/Comments***

- At the March meeting, the PAC will review: updated information about the rate study, the statewide meeting assignments, and the PAC matrix.
- Ms. Dillard-Foss expressed appreciation to ACRC for hiring a deaf individual as their Deaf Specialist.
- At the beginning of February, Burns & Associates were hopeful to get updated employment data from regional centers for the rate tables; this has now been pushed out to March.
  - This updated information will assist service providers in identifying their new final rate. Mr. Ciampa encourages everyone to be aware of this.

The next PAC meeting is scheduled on **Thursday, March 10, 2022**, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Lisa West  
Executive Secretary

cc: ACRC Board of Directors  
Lori Banales