

Alta California Regional Center
Provider Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, February 8, 2024
Minutes

Present:

Lindsey Dyba, Futures Explored,
Inc., Chair
Garrett Broadbent, Creative
Living Options, Co-Chair &
Design. Dir.
James Astorga, F&A Astorga
Care Home
Janet Brandon, A.I.M. &
Associates
Eric Ciampa, UCP of Sacramento
Bonnie Douglas, Turning Point
Jacquie Foss, STEP
Kate Halecky, Southside
Unlimited
Joe Jaquez, EGACTION
Christa McClure, Tri-County
Respite Care Service
Michelle Ramirez, On My Own
Antonio Ranit, Antelope Hills
Manor
Laleh Sharpe, Maxim Healthcare
Services
Yvonne Soto, DDSO
Carole Watilo, Progressive
Employment

Absent: (* excused)

Andrea Croom*, INALLIANCE

Visitors

Sheila Abrams
Steve Andrews
Stephanie Berberich
Taylor Berry
Christa Coats
Paula Cohen
Tim DeBack
Maureen Fitzgerald
Angel Garcia
Jennifer Gomez
Stephanie Gordon

Daniella Gutierrez
Braydon Holtzinger
Dawn Horwath
Jessica Jenó
Jenny Jones
Jessica Knuth
Jay Kolvoord
Leticia Leon
Mike Lyman
Myra Montejano
Venita Parrish
Michelle Ramirez (CBEM)
Jen Roney
Summer Rowley
Rennie Saltzman
Jesse Simons
Jasmine Vollenweider
Michelle Wild

Staff:

Lori Banales, Executive Director
Scott Barr, Quality Assurance &
Compliance Manager
Jennifer Bloom, Director of Client
Services
Tracy Brown, Associate Client Services
Director
John Decker, Director of Community
Services
Michelle Duchene, Community
Services & Supports Manager
Camelia Houston, Director of Intake &
Clinical Services
Mechelle Johnson, Director of Client
Services
Rhonda Phillips, Housing Specialist
Jason Scantlebury, LEAD Community
Services Specialist
Carly Shearer, Client Employment
Specialist
Lisa West, Executive Secretary

The Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) met on Thursday, February 8, 2024, at 9:3 a.m. to discuss: 1) Board Update; 2) Executive Director's Report; 3) R&D Transportation Presentation; 4) DSP Stipend Discussion; 5) Provider Entrance/Exit Criteria and Service Needs Discussion; 6) ACRC Vendor Forum Representative Updates; 7) System Reform and Legislative Updates; 8) PAC Committee Reports; and 9) Announcements/Comments. All present provided self-introductions.

Without objection, Lindsey Dyba made the motion to approve the Provider Advisory Committee meeting minutes of January 11, 2024, as submitted.

1. **Board Update**

- Mr. Broadbent noted that at the January 25th Board meeting, the Board approved the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) contract and accepted/reviewed ACRC's independent audit for the 2022-23 fiscal year (FY). Ms. Banales gave a detailed overview of ACRC's accomplishments in 2023.

2. **Executive Director's Report**

- Ms. Banales shared that ACRC held its first quarterly Community Meeting yesterday and it was positively received; what a wonderful way to kick off the year. The next meeting is scheduled for May 1, 2024 – everyone is welcome to join. We will present our Performance Contract for public input as we look to develop new planned activities.
- ACRC submitted the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) requests to DDS eight days ago and we received word yesterday that the following projects were approved:
 - Station MD, a mobile telehealth emergency room (ACRC is partnering with North Bay Regional Center [NBRC] on this project)
 - They will provide training for DSPs who work with medically fragile individuals and also familiarize DSPs with how to utilize their services.
 - Mr. Decker will ask them to present at an upcoming PAC meeting (once they are almost through the vendorization process).
 - Updating the DSP Collaborative website with the hope of expansion.
 - Valley Mountain Regional Center (VMRC), with their new Executive Director, will continue to partner with ACRC on this.
 - Tony Anderson, now ARCA's Associate Director, will also remain engaged in this project as we work to expand this opportunity across the state.
- We continue to review the proposed budget and ARCA is working to keep in place what was and support service providers with the rate study increases.
- ACRC's Community Resource Development Plan/Community Placement Plan (CRDP/ CPP) was submitted to the department and the approved project's

Request for Proposals (RFPs) have been posted to our agency's website. The RFP Orientation will be held on February 23rd, from 11 a.m. to noon, during "Coffee with Community Services". The projects include:

- An Enhanced Behavioral Supports Home (EBSH)
 - A Residential Care Facility for the Elderly (RCFE)
 - Financial Management Services (FMS)
 - Out-of-Home Respite
 - Psychiatric Treatment
 - Outpatient Substance Use Disorder Treatment
 - Housing Access Services
 - Enhance Supported Living Services
- ACRC is hosting an Early Start Job Fair on February 23rd, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
 - A Disability Industry Career Expo (DICE) will be held on April 23rd, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Sutter One Stop in Yuba City (the flyer is posted on the DSP Collaborative's website).

3. ***R&D Transportation Presentation***

- Ms. Leon and Ms. Montejano provided an overview of their agency and shared the successes, challenges and opportunities that they have discovered since they began working with ACRC in October 2023.

4. ***DSP Stipend Discussion***

- Ms. Brandon held off on launching the Direct Support Professional (DSP) Stipend program so that the kinks could be worked out. She has heard that there are issues with reconciling for whom you are receiving payment.
- The DSP provides the certificate to the service provider, who then needs to match the payment with those that have completed the training.
 - Several large providers have established a centralized person to focus on the bookkeeping for this new program. Another provider has their staff use an internal system to sign up for these trainings; this is for tracking purposes.
 - ACRC will provide the names of individual recipients after payments are issued upon request.
 - Suggestion to have PAC members reach out to other providers to help encourage participation in this program – this is a wonderful opportunity for DSPs.

5. ***Provider Entrance/Exit Criteria and Service Needs Discussion***

- This item will be discussed next month.

6. ***ACRC Vendor Forum Representative Updates***

- The Supported Living Services (SLS) vendor forum was held on January 30th.
 - The group reviewed procedures and rental exceptions.

- The next Transportation vendor forum is scheduled for February 28th from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

7. System Reform and Legislative Updates (ARCA, CDSA, CCLN, PAVE, Community Respite Association and DS Taskforce & Workgroups)

- ARCA
 - They continue to advocate to keep the acceleration of service provider rate increases.
 - ARCA's Annual Grassroots Day is scheduled for Tuesday, April 2nd, at the State Capitol.
 - Ms. Banales noted that ACRC is sometimes call upon to assist other regional centers who may not be able to attend, so we are seeking volunteers to participate in this important event.
- CDSA
 - The California Disability Services Association's (CDSA's) Legislative Affairs Conference will be held next month.
 - One of their priorities is the rate study's implementation this year.
- CCLN
 - California Community Living Network (CCLN) has started to reengage the bigger community of advocates to get everyone on the same page – "Don't Delay".
 - They met with DDS to discuss the sick pay accrual issue. Seeking their interpretation, CCLN was told that the department is working on a methodology for SLS providers to request a rate increase.
 - CCLN's Annual Leadership Conference 2024, "Protect the Progress", is scheduled for April 24th thru 26th in San Diego.
 - DDS is creating service definitions for Independent Living Services (ILS), SLS and Personal Assistants (PAs); CCLN has submitted their feedback.
- CRA
 - California Respite Association (CRA) is concerned about the implementation delays and will be joining the advocacy efforts at the State Capitol.
 - The group is working to secure Quality Incentive Program (QIP) funding.
 - They are also focusing advocacy efforts on the fact that DSP respite wages continue to be below minimum wage.
 - CRA is working on a wage differential for those DSPs that work with more than one client and mileage reimbursement issues.
- PAVE
 - They have moved forward with the operational service definitions for ILS, SLS, Respite and Supported Employment.
- Statewide PAC Collaboration

- Ms. Dyba shared that the Vendor Advisory Coalition's letter, which the PAC has agreed to sign on to, has been updated. She provided a brief overview of the edits.

M/S/C (Ciampa) Move to have the PAC sign on to the newly revised Vendor Advisory Coalition's letter.

8. PAC Committee Reports

- Ms. Dyba shared that Sergio Pinto is no longer a PAC member.
- A suggestion was made in the recent PAC survey to hold a "closed" session for service providers. Ms. Dyba noted that because the PAC is an advisory committee to ACRC's Board of Directors, minutes would still be taken.
- Vendor Relations Committee
 - Mr. Broadbent shared that the group met yesterday afternoon and reviewed their priorities and how this group has worked with Mr. Decker's team over the last few years.
 - They are seeking additional input from community partners to see what areas we may need collaboration on. The committee will be drafting an electronic survey to be sent out to all service providers.
- Legislative & Budget Committee
 - Ms. Foss shared that this active group meets monthly.
 - The committee will continue to track the ongoing transportation issue.
 - The "Don't Delay" rally at the State Capitol is scheduled for February 28th, the same day as the first in-person Assembly Hearing (1:30 p.m.). The Senate's first in-person hearing is scheduled for March 21st (time TBD).
 - Ms. Ramirez shared that On My Own is requesting an emergency rate increase due to the passage of SB 616. She is sharing a template for an "Unanticipated Rate Increase Request" letter with those present. The deadline to submit this request to DDS is February 29th.
 - Ms. Ramirez also joined a diverse workgroup for Private Attorneys General Act (PAGA) reform.
- Communication & Outreach
 - Mr. Ciampa sent an email to PAC members seeking input on ways to communicate with service providers. PAC members are encouraged to join the Facebook link to see if this is a viable option – the PAC will need to decide at the March meeting.

9. Announcements/Comments

- Mr. Jaquez shared that the Kelso Library is now open at the Elk Grove Adult Community Training, Inc. (EGACT).
- Ms. Ramirez noted that On My Own will be rolling out a database for client roommate matching in March.

- Please send any suggested agenda items to Ms. Dyba for the March meeting.

The next PAC meeting is scheduled on **Thursday, March 14, 2024**. The meeting adjourned at 11:32 a.m.

Lisa West
Executive Secretary

cc: ACRC Board of Directors
Lori Banales