

Alta California Regional Center
Provider Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, February 9, 2017
Minutes

Present:

Eric Ciampa, UCP of
Sacramento, Inc., Chair
Janet Brandon, AIM &
Associates, Co-Chair & Design.
Dir.
Gerrit deGelleke, American River
Speech
Jacquie Dillard-Foss, STEP
Ed Doonan, LIFE, Inc.
Bonnie Douglas, Turning Point
Dawn Montgomery, HOPE
Consulting
Michelle Ramirez, On My Own
Antonio Ranit, Antelope Hills
Manor
Robin Rhoades, Southside Art
Center
Will Sanford, Futures Explored
Joy Scott, Tri-County Caregiver
Relief
Peter Stirling, Serenity Respite
Services
Yvonne Soto, DDSO
Carole Watilo, Progressive
Employment

Absent: (* excused)

Becky Brubaker*, EGACT
Sergio Pinto*, BEST Consulting,
Inc.
Laleh Sharpe*, Maxim Healthcare
Services
Paul Traglio*, Capitol Autism
Services

Visitors:

James Astorga
Sandy Bishop
Michael Creedon
Andrea Croom
Lindsey Dyba
Kate Halecky
Teri Hayes
Joseph Hernandez
Jessica Knuth
Marie McConnell
Gianina Quiming
Agnes Ranit
Nicky Schluep
Stan Schmidt
Eric Steward
Kelly Weber

Staff:

Phil Bonnet, Executive Director
John Decker, Manager of
CPP/Forensics Unit
Darline Dupree, Manager of
Community Services
Andrew Ponce, Community Services
Specialist
Helen Thomas, Cultural Diversity
Specialist
Robin LeMay, Executive Assistant

The Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) met at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, February 9, 2017, in the Brenda Smith Conference Room at Alta California Regional Center to discuss: 1) Executive Director's Report; 2) Vendor Forum

Update & Liaison Assignments; 3) ACRC RFP Update; 4) Sub-Committee Updates; 5) Updates; 6) Legislative Update; 7) Board Update; and 8) Announcements/Comments. All present provided self-introductions.

Without objection, Eric Ciampa made the motion to approve the Provider Advisory Committee meeting minutes of January 12, 2017 as submitted.

1. Executive Director's Report – Phil Bonnet

- Developmental Centers
 - Yesterday's Developmental Center meeting was encouraging and it was nice to see people reaching out to concerned families.
 - We are getting so close and I think it was a turning point meeting.
 - Sonoma is closing and that's been a hard thing for people to hear.
 - The quality of programs we offer clients coming out of the developmental center is outstanding.
 - DDS has advised that after the closure of the Developmental Centers, CPP money will continue to be available to support other community services.
 - December 2018 is the closure date for the developmental centers and 3 months later is the date that programs will meet the new requirements of the federal CMS waiver.
- State Budget
 - No changes since the last meeting.
 - The Department refers to this as a continuation budget, meaning money remains available for DC closures, and caseload growth, but no money for enhancement of rates or community investment.
 - DDS budget this year will exceed 6 billion dollars.
 - Alta will continue to work with the Department to see how we can loosen up some of the restrictions with the use of the budget.
 - Legislative hearings coming up in March. Mr. Bonnet will attend on March 1st.
 - Peggy Collins is back. She has been a huge part of the RC system in the past.
- **Cultural Diversity Specialist – Helen Thomas (ACRC)**
 - Ms. Thomas has been selected to be the Cultural Diversity Specialist at the RC, which is a full time job.
 - The emphasis of the position is addressing cultural issues within the RC and reach out to the diverse communities around Sacramento and the outlying areas.

- Ms. Thomas noted that there is a perceived disparity. RC's call it variances in purchase of service utilization.
 - Data shows that there is a gap in access for utilization of vendor services among different ethnicities of the RC population. That is not a new issue and has been going on since the 1990's.
 - It's hard to pinpoint exactly what it is or what causes the gap in the services utilization.
 - Last year it was put into law that RC's were mandated to look into this area of concern.
 - We are not alone, it's not just the developmental disability system that has this concern; its' the healthcare and school system as well. This is primarily because of the projected 2050 year of the population being a majority minority.
 - During the first year the main focus will be providing orientation sessions for the Spanish and Hmong speaking communities as well as a cultural competency training.
 - The two targets for the training will be RC staff and providers.
 - A part of this job will be working closely with Community Services, the Training Department, the SC's, and CSM's.
 - Are at the exploration/navigation phase, so it will be really good get input from PAC members.
 - Ms. Thomas will pass around her card to anybody that would like to contact her.
 - Mr. Bonnet noted that a grant was funded to work on an overall disparity study. With the support from the Department, they are going to pay for a 3 year study done by the Children's Hospital of Los Angeles.
 - Mr. Bonnet also commented that 2100 people have signed up for the Self-Determination Interest List at Alta.
 - Ms. Dillard brought up the question of working with Barbara Wheeler on the topic of cultural diversity as she has spent years studying this topic.
 - Ms. Thomas said that she envisions in the very near future Alta will be connecting with the University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities as they do a lot of research on health disparity and in particular the developmentally disabled community.
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- ***Statewide Transition Plan for the Home & Community Based Waiver – Andy Ponce, Community Services (ACRC)***
 - The expectation is that by March 2019 requirements for inclusion set by the federal government will be met.

- The HCBS waiver which is signed by all vendors, has been in place since 1981.
- In 2014, the new settings rules was adopted through the federal waiver.
- California is in the process of developing and revising the Statewide Transition Plan.
- The latest draft was posted in late November, which can be found on the DHCS and DDS's website.
- There is a schedule for implementation and those dates are going and coming as the plan continues to be in review.
- Along with a copy of the plan, there is descriptive language that applies to the new setting rule.
- There are 8 different waivers impacted by this, Alta's being one of those.
- Included in the information are copies of provider self-assessment survey's and on sight assessment surveys.
- Both are anticipated to have a role in the monitoring for compliance with the formal plan when it's formally adopted.
- The subject matter was reviewed at vendor forums, and it was decided that targeted outreach needed to occur.
- CSS staff went out and met with providers (primarily day programs, work activity programs and residential board & care vendors).
- Tech support was provided to the vendors by CSS staff and a proposed plan and time frame was discussed as a team.
- Some of the topics discussed included: function of center activities, procedural and practice oversight, what can they do now to show compliance, good practices that should be formalized, and the level of engagement for person centered planning.
- The visits started in November and to this date there have been 21 site visits and over the course of the next 4 weeks, 9 additional visits are planned.
- The nature of the discussion during the visits have been varied in flavor. They have been driven by the longevity of the service provider, the number served, practices in place that are directly related to the original Program Design vs. the modified informal practices that are reflecting who has been accepted into their program over the years.
- There have been a lot of vendors that have modified their services of what they were originally vendored to do. This is not a negative, however in a lot of cases if there is not a greater level of formality, then a lot of good work that has been done, doesn't get memorialized.

- Was your program design originally designed to get the client from point A to Point B. There is a certain point in progression. Folks would get to a jump off point and then they would move beyond and would be ready to move to whatever that next thing was. In other cases programs have a continuum of services, where you have a certain program that folks might enter into with the option of graduating onto a different level. Is that happening? If it's not, what can be done to formalize and assist folks with this potential?
- A lot of it comes down to different comfort level of services, but you also want to make sure that the comfort level isn't being driven by a lack of confidence such as they don't want to move on because they feel comfortable and safe with the staff at the program, what is the clients voice in this. You have to look at the life expectancy for certain objectives. At a certain point you can identify that this person might need accommodation or is the real skill knowing when to ask for help and then let's move on and focus on some general areas for that person. When you go out on outings, is it true integration into the community or has it taken on a flavor that they are more going out and spectating, but they are in their segregated group.
- Ms. Watilo noted that when we call them "outings", we are making it a non-inclusive event because "we" don't go out on outings, "you" don't go out on outings, so if we are supporting going out on "outings", then we have problems. We need to start at the bottom and change what we are talking about. What are people doing when they are going out on their outings?
- Ms. Dupree advised that it's a change in thinking, but in order to explain these changes, from a language perspective this is the wording that providers have been accustomed to using, so when discussing this information we need to make it relatable.
- Ms. Watilo said that she is so excited to hear about the outreach that we are doing now and wants to know what we can do better.
- Mr. Ponce advised that at this point, it's about initial engagement as there are a lot of cases where vendors maybe have heard of the statewide transition plan, but have zero detail.
- Ms. Ramirez was hoping that during the vendor orientation we could discuss the HCBS rules and that quality assurance reviews will be ongoing.
- Mr. Ponce stated that this would be a good idea, and John Decker noted that when they do breakout sessions during residential vendor orientation, that topic is normally discussed.
- Mr. Ponce noted that at this point it has been getting vendors up to speed and reviewing old program designs, what trainings are

being done on their site that could possibly be replicated out in the community. Practices that have been shaped due to small portions of client restrictions, but doesn't address the 90% of clients that should be re-evaluated.

- Ms. Rhoades noted that if Alta is placing clients in their facility and they have a long waiting list, that vendors think that they are doing a good job and that providers have to be careful because they are partnering with the RC. We need to have trainings that are core and that people get right away.
- Ms. Dillard-Foss noted that there is a cheaper online learning exchange called Open Features Learning that might be good for supervisors to utilize.
- Ms. Watilo stated that DRC has been meeting with providers to go over presentations and trainings and they are another good resource to utilize.
- Ms. Dupree noted that Alta has been very proactive with working with the providers on meeting the statewide transition guidelines as many other RC's have not been sending out formal documents like Alta has been, so we are setting the stage.
- Ms. Dupree stated that Community Services is hiring an HCBS Specialist position which will focus on working with other agencies, putting together trainings and being a part of an Ad Hoc Committee.
- Mr. Ciampa questioned if we have updated information for the timeline as it relates to the 15 million dollar grant proposal.
- Ms. Dupree advised that DDS had a list of people they are considering for the grant and asked for recommendations from Community Services. CSS did provide some feedback and are waiting to hear back, hopefully by the end of February will have answers.

2. ***Vendor Forum Update & Liaison Assignments***

- Mr. Ciampa advised that vendor forums have improved over the years and the question discussed last meeting was: what role can the committee members play in those groups?
- The group wanted to offer some PAC members to participate in these forums to get direct feedback to coordinate with RC staff and add agenda items or follow up.
- The Vendor Forums Scheduled for 2017 Volunteers Sign-up Sheet was reviewed and completed.
- Ms. Dupree stated that Community Services has hired a new temporary Office Assistant (Christine Hobbs) who will be sending out invites to the providers.

- Mr. Decker it would be good to talk about PAC participation at the next Residential Vendor Forum.
- Mr. Ranit advised that he will attend the next Residential Vendor Forum and encourage PAC participation.
- Ms. Brandon and Mr. Ciampa advised that they will attend the OT/PT Vendor Forum as well and encourage PAC participation.
- Mr. Decker discussed the Telemedicine program (Federally Qualified Health Center) that is being worked on. Mr. Decker advised that the project is doing very well and there is a lot of interest from service providers, but building something from scratch takes a lot.
- There will be Dental, Behavioral, Pharmacy, and Medical Health Services.
- March of 2018 is the date that the program will be completed.

3. ACRC RFP Update

- Mr. Decker asked providers to email him at jdecker@altaregional.org if they are interested in starting up a program and they need start-up funds. Providers can get creative and should also provide an approximation of how much the program would cost.

4. Sub-Committee Updates:

- Challenging Needs
 - Committee has not met.
- Cultural Diversity
 - Ms. Brandon noted that they will be holding a March 21st meeting in which Ms. Thomas will be attending. The meeting will be at 10:00 A.M. in Sacramento and 2:00 P.M. in Woodland.
 - This information can be located on Alta's website and if anybody is interested in attending, they are more than welcome.
 - Mr. Bonnet proposed that the Diversity Group meet again and include Ms. Thomas in this meeting. The group decided they will talk after today's PAC to decide when they will meet again.
- Staff Crisis in the Community
 - There were no updates.

5. Updates:

- Self-Determination Program
 - Mr. Sanford stated that he had a conversation with Jim Knight (DDS) and they are expecting to have a phone call with CMS at the end of this month to try and answer the last 10 questions to complete the application and re-submit the waiver.

- CMS Rules/HCBS Waiver Settings
 - This was discussed earlier by Mr. Ponce.
- DS (Disability Services) Task Force 2.0
 - Mr. Sanford noted that the transition plan has been submitted and it is not on the same 90 day clock as the waiver.
 - The Task Force is meeting next Wednesday and will be discussing safety nets and employment.
 - DDS has created a one pager for consumers/families on the new setting rules, which can be found on their website.

6. *Legislative Update*

- Mr. Sanford discussed the following bills:
- AB15 on increasing Denti-Cal Rates.
- SB2 (Building Homes & Jobs Act) is a bill that would have a fee related to refinancing a home or closing a home that would then be put into low cost/low income housing.
- On March 1st at 2:30 P.M. is the Assembly Budget Committee. The Trailer Bill language is on the Department of Finance Website, which talks about the proposal for changes in the community placements plans funding and funding for 18-22 year olds.
- On March 16th the Senate Sub-Committee will be meeting which will be a critical meeting. These committee seems to be pretty quick and fast and May is when the big changes are going to be coming out.
- SB577 was passed and signed into law, but has been unable to be implemented because of the settings rule. As a result, a fix it bill will most likely come out.
- SB644 was a bill that was passed a couple of years ago to allow for internships to be used as a means to access the State LEAP Program and permission was granted for a pilot program.
- Mr. Ciampa stated that there was language for a proposed bill that would provide funding increases for providers that would otherwise go out of business.

7. *Board Update*

- Ms. Brandon attended the last Board meeting which was held on Thursday, January 26th.
 - Ms. Brandon noted that the Board accepted the audit for Alta and it was an excellent report.
 - Ms. Brandon stated that we have a great RC and the budget balances pretty much to the penny. Pete and his team did deserve a lot of credit because this affects all of us.
- The next Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 23rd.

8. *Announcements/Comments*

- Mr. Sanford noted that the California Disabilities Services Association is holding its annual meeting on September 28th in Walnut Creek and they will be doing an art exhibit display.
- Mr. Bonnet noted that Amazon is creating a large facility in Sacramento that may be able to employ some of our clients.
- Dr. Ruth Meyers is coming to a training at the end of February.

The next PAC meeting is scheduled on **Thursday, March 9, 2017**, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Robin LeMay
Executive Assistant

cc: ACRC Board of Directors
Phil Bonnet