

Alta California Regional Center
Provider Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, April 10, 2025
Minutes

Present:

Lindsey Dyba, Futures Explored,
Inc., Chair
Garrett Broadbent, Creative
Living Options, Co-Chair &
Design. Dir.
Janet Brandon, A.I.M. &
Associates
Eric Ciampa, UCP of Sacramento
Andrea Croom, InAlliance
Bonnie Douglas, Turning Point
Kate Halecky, Southside
Unlimited
Joe Jaquez, EGACT
Jay Kolvoord, STEP, Inc.
Christa McClure, Tri-County
Respite Care Service
Michelle Ramirez, On My Own
Antonio Ranit, Antelope Hills
Manor
Yvonne Soto, DDSO
Carole Watilo, Progressive
Employment

NaTasha Harden
Braydon Holtzinger
Erica Horn
Brian Johnson
Jessica Knuth
Marc Laver
Letty Leon
Michael Lyman
Susana Magana
Maria McConnell
Kelli Nuttall
Lois Orcutt
Branee Owens
Amy Parkin
Becca Pressnell
Agnes Ranit
Jen Roney
Royisha Singh
Cynthia Teel
Jennifer Todd
Jasmine Vollenweider
Rob Watilo
Michelle Wild
Max Woodford

Absent: (* excused)

James Astorga*, F&A Astorga
Care Home
Laleh Sharpe*, Maxim Healthcare
Services

Visitors

Sheila Abrams
Bezawit Admassu
Jessica Anderson
Jody Bailey
Robyn Bajema
Stephanie Berberich
Taylor Berry
Gregg Brandon
Allan Bravo
Emmalynn Chaubard
Jeff Chenu
Christa Coats
Beth Conn-Ossenfort
Stephenie Doub
Loretta Duncan-Fowler
Maureen Fitzgerald
Angel Garcia
Gizelle Garcia

Staff:

Lori Banales, Executive Director
Scott Barr, Quality Assurance and
Compliance Manager
Kylee Draper, Home and Community-
Based Services Specialist
Michelle Duchene, Community Services &
Supports Manager
Camelia Houston, Director of Intake &
Clinical Services
Mechelle Johnson, Director of Client
Services
Carly Moorman, Client Employment
Specialist
Helen Neri, Community Services &
Supports Manager
Jason Scantlebury, LEAD Community
Services Specialist
Aliesia Van Eck, Home and Community-
Based Services Specialist
Lisa West, Executive Secretary

The Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) met on Thursday, April 10, 2025, at 9:30 a.m. to discuss: 1) Resource Sharing/Vendor Collaboration; 2) Board Report; 3) Executive Director's Report; 4) ACRC Vendor Forum Representative Updates; and 5) Announcements/Comments. All present provided self-introductions.

Without objection, Lindsey Dyba made the motion to approve the Provider Advisory Committee meeting minutes of March 13, 2025, as submitted.

*Due to time constraints, the agenda was modified.

1. ***Resource Sharing/Vendor Collaboration***

- Ms. Dyba noted that the Outreach Committee asked to add this agenda item so that PAC members could share resources and troubleshoot issues that they have encountered.
- Recently, A.I.M. & Associates encountered an issue when one of their employees got into an accident while transporting a client.
 - Mr. Brandon shared that when one of their employees got into an accident, the employee's insurance would not pay for the damage to her vehicle or the car that she struck, even though she was at fault. The company's insurance covered any injuries from the accident and damage to the other vehicle, but the company's insurance policy did not cover damage to the employee's vehicle. A.I.M. & Associates had to pay close to \$7,000, out-of-pocket, to repair their employee's vehicle.
- Mr. Chenu, with Newfront Insurance, stated that there is a gap in coverage.
 - Most providers require direct support professionals (DSPs) who drive clients in Supported Living Services (SLS), Independent Living Services (ILS), and respite to show proof of their auto insurance and have acceptable driving standards. The way that personal auto insurance works is that drivers are typically "rated" for personal and/or business use. Most employees will purchase the least expensive insurance with low limits, under the personal use auto insurance policies. Purchasing a commercial use/business auto policy is quite expensive, and the employer is also responsible for picking up the expenses of anything that is not covered. There is also a mechanism that you can have a personal use auto policy and purchase an endorsement for business use, which costs more money, and not all personal auto insurance companies will offer that.
 - Often, in the event that there is an accident on the job, the employee's insurance company will state that they did not know the employee was using their vehicle for work and deny the claim. If an employee's insurance company denies coverage, most providers have hired a non-owned auto liability as part of their commercial insurance package, which would cover any autos that are not owned by the

provider/not registered to the company. The employee's personal insurance is always primary. If the employee does not have adequate limits, then the non-owned liability will step in to provide excess insurance to cover that gap. In addition, it will step in if there is no insurance (lapses in coverage), or if the employee's auto carrier has denied the claim. It will only pay the damages for the third party – it will not pay for your employee's vehicle. That is where the main gap is – damage to your employee's vehicle.

- Mr. Chenu has advised his clients to set aside funds for instances such as this. The alternative is to purchase a stand-alone physical damage insurance policy for each of your employees' vehicles, which could cost upwards of \$50,000. And those insurance companies will underwrite not only your drivers, but they will want a list of all of the vehicles, because they will not want to insure physical damage for older vehicles.
- Some providers choose to have a policy that states that employees cannot drive their personal vehicle during the course of business; they are only allowed to use public transportation or ride sharing apps.
- Service providers could never mandate their employees purchase their personal auto insurance from a particular insurance carrier.
- The best option is to have company vehicles that are used for transporting clients.
- AB 815 (Ortega) Vehicle insurance: vehicle classification. This bill will be heard in its first policy committee on April 23rd. California Disabilities Services Association (CDSA) has been working to make sure the bill's language is correct.
 - Ms. Chaubard, CDSA's Government Affairs Director, noted that there are some protections for employees who use their vehicles when they volunteer. This bill would allow for that same coverage.
 - It is important to note that CDSA has been involved with the Insurance Department during this whole process. It will be up to the Insurance Department to work with insurance companies to figure the path forward if/when this bill passes.
 - CDSA is seeking letters of support prior to the hearing on April 23rd. It is important to get this issue at the forefront of people's minds. If you have any DSPs that are willing to share their concerns, it would be extremely helpful.
 - Ms. Chaubard will provide Ms. Dyba with a sample letter. She can be reached at echaubard@cal-dsa.org.
 - The Capitol Coalition may want to partner with CDSA on this.

- If anyone has topics that they would like to discuss at future meetings, please reach out to Ms. Ramirez.

2. **Board Report**

- Mr. Broadbent shared that the “Meeting Our Mission” segment at the March 27th Board meeting highlighted Collin Atlee, who has attended “Exceptional Minds” since 2013. Collin uses animation to show what is happening in his head, and shared an animation video, which is posted on his YouTube channel. Collin is available for freelance work.
- The Board approved the Slate of Officers for the 2025-26 fiscal year (FY) and the revised Conflict of Interest Policy, which includes the Department of Developmental Services’ (DDS’) mandated changes to regional centers’ existing policies.
- They also approved a contract with Dr. Peter Hember, who is a medical physician who will be assisting ACRC with its eligibility determination phase after his retirement.
 - Regulations related to CalPERS require the Board of Directors approve the contract, based on the needs of the agency, within the six-month waiting period prior to becoming a retired annuitant.

3. **Executive Director’s Report**

- Ms. Banales noted that ACRC’s Performance Contract public input process is starting soon. This contract includes public policy measures that DDS has put forth.
 - Flyers will be posted on our agency’s website in multiple languages.
 - We will be using the same format as in years past, sharing the draft at the May 8th PAC meeting, the May 13th Client Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting, the Board’s May 12th Executive Committee meeting, as well as ACRC’s May 7th Community Meeting.
- The Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) continues to advocate for Medicaid regarding the federal changes that may or may not happen. They are organizing a rally outside Representative Kevin Kiley’s Rocklin office on Wednesday, April 23rd, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Ms. Moorman and Ms. Banales will be attending the 3rd Annual Excellence in Equity Awards Ceremony on Monday, April 29th. ACRC has been nominated for the Sierra College Excellence in Equity Award in the category of Corporate/Community Partner.
 - DDS’ Human Resources (HR) Department has approached ACRC to improve their own inclusive hiring practices. ACRC will be assisting the department with a hiring workshop to be held in mid-June (date to be determined).
 - The department is seeking ways to set the tone and assist other state departments.
- The DSP Collaborative will soon be expanded to include the seven Los Angeles regional centers, and they are researching Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) funding options, as well.

- If a service provider has any DSPs that would like to be highlighted on the DSP Collaborative website, please contact Ms. Moorman.
- Ms. Neri shared that there are significant changes happening due to the rate study. Services are being unbundled by discipline for Early Start Specialized Therapeutic Services (Service Code 116).
 - The purpose of the rate study is to provide equity and sustainability.
- Ms. Duchene noted that ACRC's Community Services and Supports (CSS) and Accounting Departments have been working to finalize the Service Acknowledgement Form (SAF) that is due by May 30th. Her team is meeting on Monday, April 14th, and then the forms will be sent to service providers.
 - Regional centers are required to notify DDS how many SAF's they have received on April 22nd, May 13th and May 30th.
 - All providers must participate in the Provider Directory by May 30th. If a provider has not completed this process, they will not be eligible for the 10% quality incentive portion of their reimbursement rate until the next Quality Incentive Program (QIP) opening which is July 2026.
 - If there are any errors in the Provider Directory, please first contact DDS (primary contact), and also inform Ms. Duchene directly.
 - Ms. Duchene recommends that service providers check to make sure everything is correct and finalized in the Provider Directory portal. She will verify the timeline with DDS for new providers.
 - DDS is mailing out acknowledgements to confirm that a service provider has put in for an exemption. After signing the acknowledgement form, any retroactive payments will be processed prior to the end of the FY.
 - PAC members are interested in knowing how many exemptions are being approved by DDS.
 - The group commended ACRC's Accounting Team for their work and availability to assist and answer questions during this process.
- At tomorrow's "Coffee with Community Services", Ms. Draper we will be sharing information about HCBS grant opportunities.
 - ACRC is seeking creative and interesting ideas this year.

4. **ACRC Vendor Forum Representative Updates**

- Community Care Licensing (CCL) Regulations Discussion
 - This conversation stems from a previous meeting where PAC members discussed whether a client's support staff was allowed to attend a community day program to assist them with their activities of daily living (ADLs).
 - Stephenie Doub, CCL's Regional Manager (Sacramento South office), reviewed the definition of an adult day program from California's

Health and Safety Code: "Adult day program" means any community-based facility or program that provides care to persons 18 years of age or older in need of personal services, supervision, or assistance essential for sustaining the activities of daily living or for the protection of these individuals on less than a 24-hour basis.

- She clarified that licenses are tied to addresses.
- CCL and Title 17 must work in tandem – whichever has the stricter guidance should be followed.
 - Service providers are vendored with the regional center and Title 17 requires that adult day programs be licensed.
 - A community-based program, that is open to the public, would not need to be licensed.
- The definition of "care and supervision" includes assistance clients with storing and administering medications (verbal reminders would be acceptable), oversight in maintaining their own monies, arranging transportation, and/or monitoring their safety.
 - Ms. Doub will send this definition to Ms. Dyba to distribute to the group and is willing to attend a future meeting for further discussion.
- Mr. Scantlebury noted that service providers should contact their Community Services Specialist if they plan to change the services that they provide.
- Ms. Halecky shared that Southside Unlimited has an addendum attached to their program design which states that any client who needs care and supervision must bring their own staff so that they can attend the program.
- ACRC vendor forums will resume in May.

5. ***Announcements/Comments***

- At the May PAC meeting:
 - Committee members will be electing the PAC's Chair and Co-Chair/Designated Representative to ACRC's Board of Directors for the 2025-26 FY.
 - An update will be provided on the Financial Management Service (FMS) grants.
- Ms. Watilo encouraged people to get involved in the rallies and community meetings regarding the potential cuts to Medicaid.
- Mr. Ciampa shared that the respite assessment tool will be released in May, although no public input has been gathered thus far. There will be a 30-day comment period once it is released.
 - Ms. Banales noted that all regional centers have been piloting this tool, and they have sent DDS their feedback.

The next PAC meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, May 8, 2025**. The meeting adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

Lisa West
Executive Secretary

cc: ACRC Board of Directors
Lori Banales