

Alta California Regional Center  
Provider Advisory Committee Meeting  
Thursday, April 14, 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  
Garrett Broadbent, Creative  
Living Options  
Andrea Croom, INALLIANCE  
Kate Halecky, Southside  
Unlimited  
Joe Jaquez, EGACTION  
Jessica Knuth, Reach Adult  
Development  
Sergio Pinto, BEST Consulting,  
Inc.  
Antonio Ranit, Antelope Hills  
Manor  
Adam Ruggles, Medstar LLC  
Yvonne Soto, DDSO  
Paul Traglio, Kadiant  
Carole Watilo, Progressive  
Employment

**Absent:** (\* excused)

Janet Brandon\*, A.I.M. &  
Associates  
Jacquie Dillard-Foss\*, STEP  
Bonnie Douglas\*, Turning Point  
Lindsey Dyba\*, Futures Explored,  
Inc.  
Joy Scott\*, Tri-County Caregiver  
Relief  
Laleh Sharpe\*, Maxim Healthcare  
Services

**Visitors**

Nick Abela  
Vikie Black  
Gregg Brandon  
Breeanne Burris  
Maureen Fitzgerald  
Adriene Gaudet  
Jennifer Gomez  
Braydon Holtzinger  
Angel Johnson  
Jennifer Jones  
Harrison Lane  
Christa McClure  
Natasha Mosley  
Stan Schmidt  
Kathleen Short  
Eric Steward  
Geneva Steward  
Jasmine Vollenweider  
Katherine Wallen

**Staff:**

Lori Banales, Executive Director  
Jennifer Bloom, Associate Client  
Services Director  
Charlotte Clarke, Human Resources  
Manager  
John Decker, Director of Community  
Services  
Camelia Houston, Director of Intake &  
Clinical Services  
Mechelle Johnson, Director of Client  
Services  
Jean Onesi, Manager of Community  
Services  
Olivia Procida, Manager of  
Community Services  
Carly Shearer, Client Employment  
Specialist  
Johnny Xiong, Associate Client  
Services Director  
Lisa West, Executive Secretary

The Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) met at 9:34 a.m. on Thursday, April 14, 2022, by Webex/teleconference to discuss: 1) Presentation – Meristem’s TAP Program; 2) Board Update; 3) Executive Director’s Report; 4) Hiring Collaborative Effort between ACRC & VMRC; 5) System Reform and Legislative Update; 6) PAC Committees & Reports; 7) May Election Discussion re PAC Chair & Co-Chair/Designated Representative to Board for 2022-23 FY; 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 March 10, 2022 as submitted.**

1. ***Presentation – Meristem’s TAP Program***

- Mr. Steward and Mr. Lane shared that information about Meristem’s Transformative Autism Program (TAP) “Breaking Workforce Barriers” can be found at [www.tapautism.org](http://www.tapautism.org). This free five-module online course is designed to help employers understand how to work with individuals with autism. They also assist job seekers on the autism spectrum connect with potential employers.
- The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and regional centers offer job coaching and training to clients. TAP assists neurodiverse individuals and employers across the State of California.
  - PAC members are encouraged to visit the TAP website to learn more about the program and/or start the process.
  - Mr. Decker shared that ACRC would like to support this program and requested a flyer that could be promoted to other service providers. Other outreach opportunities are available, as well.

2. ***Board Update***

- Ms. Ramirez shared that the Board met on March 24<sup>th</sup> and is moving forward with developing the agency’s strategic plan.
- The PAC letter, which was sent to the Senate Budget Subcommittee, was shared with the Board. ACRC is part of the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA), who has already sent a letter to the legislature supporting the acceleration of the rate study.
  - Ms. Banales shared that ARCA is 100% supportive of this. Additionally, at the April 5<sup>th</sup> ARCA Grassroots Day, ACRC’s team had several talking points and the acceleration of the rate study was promoted during meetings with legislative staff.
- The Board will be voting on the Slate of Officers for the next fiscal year (FY) at the May 26<sup>th</sup> Board meeting; Dan Lake is nominated for Board President for the 2022-23 FY.

- Additionally, the Kelso Library is seeking a new home for their lending library. ACRC has provided Mrs. Kelso with a space for several years and now that ACRC is utilizing the hybrid model, office space is limited. Mrs. Kelso sent a letter to the Board asking for assistance. The library is near and dear to her heart – Dr. Kelso was a developmental pediatrician.
  - Mr. Jaquez (EGACT) can offer space for the library; he will reach out to Mrs. Kelso.
- The Board held a special session Board meeting on April 11<sup>th</sup> to approve the revised Social Recreation Activities, Camp and non-Medical Therapies Service Policy, which was originally approved by the Board at their January 27<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. DDS had suggested some minor revisions for clarity.
  - Ms. Banales shared that ARCA is holding a meeting this afternoon to discuss how regional centers will be able to fund this service. She is hopeful that service providers have registered to participate in this opportunity.
  - ACRC must make sure that social recreation follows the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Rule, allowing clients to integrate into their own communities.
  - DDS is following a fine line of balancing equity with access.
  - Discussions happen at Planning Team Meetings (PTMs). Different considerations need to be followed for children and adults; parents of minors have a responsibility, while considering the finances of the family. Assessments will be used.
  - ACRC is looking to partner with Social Recreation Departments across our catchment area.
    - The revised policy has been sent to DDS. As soon as we receive approval, it will be posted on our agency's website.

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

- Ms. Banales shared that ACRC received word that Training Toward Self-Reliance (TTSR) is closing its doors effective April 15<sup>th</sup>, with the business officially closing on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. ACRC staff are working to ensure continuity in staff, while transitioning clients served to other agencies. We had nine agencies (service providers) reach out to ACRC to share that they can provide support to these affected clients. We will be monitoring to make sure that every transition occurs, minimalizing the effect on clients.
- The long-awaited Dental Clinic will be opening on May 2<sup>nd</sup> (soft opening). The Health Clinic's opening will follow soon.
  - ACRC will be assisting with the referral process.
- As she mentioned earlier, ARCA held their Annual Grassroots Day earlier this month and our team, consisting of Board members and ACRC staff, met with ten different offices.

- We have new champions in Senator Eggman's office – they are partners with regional centers.
- Ms. Banales introduced Carly Shearer, ACRC's new Client Employment Specialist, to the group. She will be attending PAC meetings moving forward.
- ACRC's public meeting regarding our caseload ratios is scheduled for Tuesday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, from 1 to 2 p.m. Ms. Banales explained that since regional centers are receiving funding in the budget, there is a requirement that stakeholders are able to provide input on our hiring ideas.
  - Due to the outdated core staffing formula, regional centers will not meet the mandated caseload ratios again next year.
  - ARCA is asking assistance from the legislature in updating the formula.
  - Regional centers have not yet been notified the number of positions that they are receiving in the next FY's budget. Ms. Banales believes ACRC will be funded for 72 to 85 positions. Regional centers will also receive policy and growth positions.

#### 4. ***Hiring Collaborative Effort between ACRC & VMRC***

- Tony Anderson, the Executive Director of Valley Mountain Regional Center (VMRC), reached out to Ms. Banales to discuss an idea of marketing the regional center service system and looking at the continuum – regional center staff and direct support professionals (DSPs). The goal would be to attract people, based upon their location.
  - Ms. Banales invited Mr. Ciampa and Ms. Ramirez to join in on the early conversations.
  - The thought would be to collectively leverage our resources and develop a website (the more people interested, the less expense). We need to be innovative and work together.
    - Each vendor may want to post a summary of what their agency does and have a link to their website's job postings; being able to sort by zip codes and areas of interest.
- We are hopeful that this could be a tool that all of us can utilize to draw in potential applicants, understanding that this is still in the early stages of development.
- Mr. Ciampa noted that the level of interest needs to be determined and then a media campaign will be developed that centers around the individuals that we serve. The goal is to inform the community that these needs exist, adding a hashtag for the movement in general.
  - We will continue to discuss this opportunity at the May PAC meeting.
- Concern was expressed that some service providers may be weary that regional centers will have more of an opportunity to hire since they can pay more.

- Ms. Banales shared that DDS hires ACRC staff and the department has more positions that will be available beginning in the next FY. She does not see this as a competition, but a view of how our system is diverse and the needs and positions are many.
- One of the tasks at the last meeting was to get Human Resources (HR) Managers together since they see things differently.
  - Ms. Banales would like to connect Ms. Clarke, ACRC's HR Manager, with other (no more than five) so that they can have a meaningful discussion.

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

- DS Taskforce & Workgroups
  - The incentive workgroup meeting is being rescheduled.
  - Final 10% raise based on demonstrated measures. Setting correct outcome measures are imperative to incentivize the correct items. Also, concerned about unintended consequences, such as mistakenly incentivizing providers to keep bad staff to lower turnover metrics.
- Employment Committees
  - Ms. Watilo and Mr. Schmidt were able to participate in the Strategic Planning Focus Area Workgroup for Employment. They are looking forward to continuing this discussion and assisting with setting goals for the agency.
  - The California State Council on Developmentally Disabilities (SCDD) is pushing to abolish 14(c) certificates, which will provide new opportunities around employment.

**6. PAC Committees & Reports**

- Vendor Relations Committees
  - The group provided feedback on the Health & Safety Waiver process, and also discussed the provider survey regarding the vendorization process.

**7. May Election Discussion re PAC Chair & Co-Chair/Designated Representative to Board for 2022-23 FY**

- Mr. Ciampa noted that the PAC elects their new Chair and Co-Chair/Designated Representative to the Board at the May meeting. We must have a quorum.
  - Michelle Ramirez has one more year that she can serve as the Co-Chair/Designated Representative to the Board.
  - Lindsey Dyba has expressed interest in serving as the PAC Chair for the 2022-23 FY.

- If anyone else is interested, please reach out to Mr. Ciampa and Ms. Ramirez.
- Mr. Ciampa noted that this is discussed so that PAC members are aware of the time commitment, as well as promoting/developing leadership in this committee.

## 8. **Announcements/Comments**

- Mr. Decker shared that DDS has approved ACRC's Community Placement Plan (CPP)/Community Resource Development Plan (CRDP).
  - Clarification was made that DDS funds these plans from separate pots of money. CPP projects are specific to keeping and moving people out of institutions, while CRDP are community projects.
  - Approved projects include:
    - New Mobile Crisis Unit
    - A Community Crisis Home
    - Technology Demonstration Unit –looking at what types of equipment might be needed by the 15 clients that are moving into the Mirasol Village development on Richards Blvd.
    - A brand-new model of care – a group home for children with special health care needs
    - Another multi-family housing project – ACRC appreciates the department's trust in doing another project; we have a partnership with the developers.
      - This housing development is located in Elk Grove – 21 units for our clients for 55 years.
- The May PAC meeting will include the annual elections and the hiring collaborative effort. We will also discuss how to track the languages that service providers offer to clients served, which follows ACRC's Service Access and Equity Policy
- Mr. Ciampa will send a survey out to PAC members to follow-up on workgroup memberships.
- Please send any feedback regarding our hybrid meeting option to Mr. Ciampa. We want to provide flexibility, while promoting engagement.
- Suggestion to have a presentation about the Self-Determination Program (SDP) at an upcoming PAC meeting. The Self-Determination Advisory Committee (SDAC) is looking for creative ways to move forward.
  - Resources are posted on ACRC's website and can be showcased in the presentation.
    - Ms. Halecky will connect with Ms. Burris and ACRC staff.
- DDS will be joining "Coffee with Community Services" on Friday to talk about the Columbus Project. At the end of the month, Hewitt Matanari, ACRC's Emergency Response Coordinator, will be joining to talk about disaster preparedness.

The next PAC meeting is scheduled on **Thursday, May 12, 2022**, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. The meeting adjourned at 11:26 a.m.

Lisa West  
Executive Secretary

cc: ACRC Board of Directors  
Lori Banales