

Alta California Regional Center
Provider Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, May 14, 2020
Minutes

Present:

Michelle Ramirez, On My Own,
Chair
Eric Ciampa, UCP of
Sacramento, Inc., Co-Chair &
Design. Dir.
James Astorga, F&A Astorga Care
Home
Janet Brandon, AIM &
Associates
Andrea Croom, INALLIANCE
Jacquie Dillard-Foss, STEP
Bonnie Douglas, Turning Point
Joe Hernandez, Premier
Healthcare Services
Joe Jaquez, EGACT
Jessica Knuth, Reach Adult
Development
Sergio Pinto, BEST Consulting,
Inc.
Robin Rhoades, Southside
Unlimited
Yvonne Soto, DDSO
Paul Traglio, Capitol Autism
Services
Carole Watilo, Progressive
Employment

Absent: (* excused)

Ed Doonan, LIFE, Inc.
Antonio Ranit, Antelope Hills
Manor
Joy Scott, Tri-County Caregiver
Relief
Laleh Sharpe*, Maxim Healthcare
Services
Peter Stirling, Serenity Respite
Services

Visitors:

Jody Bailey
Gregg Brandon
Garrett Broadbent
Breanne Burris
Alice Fisher
Maureen Fitzgerald
Sonya Fox-Watson
Amy Fulk
Robert Garcia
Heather Hackett
Kate Halecky
Priscilla Holmes
Barry Jardini
Monique Migdol
Susan Miner
Keisha Peters
Adam Ruggles
Todd Ruggles
Nicky Schlupe
Sean Stone
Alice Tapley
Katherine Wallen
Vic Wursten

Staff:

Phil Bonnet, Executive Director
Iqbal Ahmad, Chief Financial Officer
Lori Banales, Deputy Executive
Director
John Decker, Director of Community
Services
Jean Onesi, Manager of Community
Services
Andy Ponce, Specialized Services
Manager
Lisa West, Executive Secretary

The Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) met at 9:33 a.m. on Thursday, May 14, 2020, by Webex/teleconference to discuss: 1) Board Update; 2) Executive Director's Report; 3) Elect PAC Chair & Co-Chair/Designated Rep to Board for 2020-21 FY; 4) Legislative Update; 5) PAC Priorities – Subcommittee Reports; and 6) Announcements/Comments. All present provided self-introductions.

Without objection, Michelle Ramirez made the motion to approve the Provider Advisory Committee meeting minutes of April 9, 2020 as submitted.

1. ***Board Update***

- Mr. Ciampa shared that the full Board met by teleconference on March 26th. Board Committees met earlier this week and began using Webex.
- The Board usually holds a half-day training at a remote location in May; this has been postponed.
- The Board Development Committee (BDC) has begun discussions about utilizing technology to continue training Board members.
- The Board will be voting on the 2020-21 fiscal year's (FY's) Officers at the May 28th Board meeting. Dan Lake, ACRC's Board President will term off the Board in June.
- The Board is recruiting new members. Please continue to keep this in mind when working with family members and community partners.

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

- Mr. Bonnet shared that Mike Ziegler passed away on Tuesday. He was the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of PRIDE Industries, and had recently retired. Mike's impact on our community was lasting, and he will be missed.
- Normally, the May Revise is released during our PAC meeting. We will probably break with tradition this year; it is expected to be released at noon today. The state is facing a deficit of over \$50 billion. ACRC staff have had multiple meetings with the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). This year, the budget has a very compressed process; hearings will begin on Monday. It was initially suggested that the budget that the Governor will be releasing today might be a placeholder until the tax receipts come in for July – that is no longer the case. Looking back at 2019, the tax receipts shouldn't be that bad, but the expenditures that are going out due to the pandemic has decimated this. It's going to be tough. Mr. Bonnet expects that some things will be restructured. Mistakes will be made and we will do the best we can with what we have. His understanding is that this year's budget may be driven more by the Governor and his administration

than by the legislature. Dr. Ghaly, the Secretary of California's Health & Human Services Agency, is responsible for nearly half of the budget and he is a data driven person.

- Mr. Bonnet created an ACRC COVID-19 Task Force at the end of February. In mid-March, ACRC had outbreak concerns with some of our larger day programs. Ms. West submits a workbook to DDS by 10 a.m. every workday, which tracks testing for clients, service providers and regional center staff.
 - Of the clients that we have been tracking, ACRC has had four clients test positive (one death). Five direct service providers (DSPs) have tested positive, and no ACRC staff have tested positive to the virus.
- Our regional center offices remain closed to the public and 97% of our staff are working remotely. Service Coordinators (SCs) are making regular contact with our clients.
 - Ms. Banales shared that in the month of April, we had 1,837 client birthdays; staff completed 255 more Individual Program Plans (IPPs) than that (2,092 total). Over 600 quarterlies were completed, as well as multiple Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs) and transitional planning conferences with Local Educational Agencies (LEAs). Individuals are continuing to be referred to the regional center; staff are completing intakes.
- During this crisis, DDS has released many directives for regional centers. Mr. Decker shared that many requirements are being waived by the department at this time. ACRC is trying to provide a path so that there are no disruptions in service provider billing, but this remains a challenge. In May, DDS provided guidance for April's billing.
 - Mr. Ahmad noted that the department's correspondence is trying to prevent service providers from "double dipping". He believes there will more guidance released soon.
 - If a service provider has applied for one of the various payroll loan forgiveness or reimbursement programs and been denied, they should save the denial letter for their records.
 - Mr. Ahmad understands that banking institutions have 60 days to notify applicants whether the loan will be forgiven.
 - Several service providers are questioning the legal authority of DDS for requiring them to apply for federal funding.
 - Mr. Decker noted that regional centers are trying to protect service providers from getting audited a year from now and having to reimburse the department.
 - Mr. Ahmad noted that when submitting an application for this type of loan, service providers must indicate that they receive money from the regional center to pay their staff.

- It was noted that the non-residential billing directive does not have a sunset date.
- Mr. Bonnet shared that the state has incurred a lot of expense preparing for the surge that is supposed to happen.
- Mr. Decker shared that an Adult Day & Employment Program Webex meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 21st. These meeting are very important right now. Not only are the DDS directives being discussed, best practices are being shared between service providers.
- ACRC's Community Services Department is always available to assist service providers. DSPs are essential in providing the services and supports that our clients need.
- Concern remains for the clients that receive Independent Living Services (ILS). These individuals have been in isolation during the state's shelter-in-place order. Once the doors start opening, we will need to work together to help our clients navigate the new normal.
- Mr. Bonnet believes we all have to be realistic about what may or may not work. We also need to be creative. We cannot fight amongst ourselves.

3. ***Elect PAC Chair & Co-Chair/Designated Rep to Board for 2020-21 FY***

- The PAC's job is to provide technical assistance to the regional center. We are mandated to have two positions – the Chair who hosts the meetings and the Co-Chair/Designated Representative to the Board. The Board representative cannot serve more than three consecutive years at a time.
- Mr. Ciampa noted that the Board representative's position is the PAC's voice to the Board of Directors and the regional center. This individual is essential, and the position requires additional time.
- The 2020-21 FY begins on July 1, 2020, and since we are in unprecedented times, Mr. Ciampa is willing to Chair the PAC for one additional year, while he and Ms. Brandon provide assistance to Ms. Ramirez as she serves as the PAC's designated representative if this committee chooses to put their names forward. He also encourages PAC members to consider whether they might want to Chair this committee beginning in July 2021.

Without objection, Janet Brandon made the motion to elect Eric Ciampa as the PAC Chair and Michelle Ramirez as the PAC Co-Chair/Designated Representative to the Board for the 2020-21 FY.

4. ***Legislative Update***

- CSLN
 - This group has participated in several calls with DDS and legislators.

- The department have questioned whether staffing can be shared when utilizing Supported Living Services (SLS). Providers cannot convert to Family Home Agencies (FHAs).
- DDS may try to access the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Discussing the possibility of hazard pay for essential workers. When you see the statewide numbers, it is clear what regional centers and service providers have done to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- The 8.2% rate increase may sunset on January 1, 2021 instead of December 31st, 2021.
- The group has a meeting scheduled with DDS at 6 p.m. tonight.

5. ***PAC Priorities – Subcommittee Reports***

- Communications
 - Mr. Hernandez shared that this workgroup is revamping the PAC brochure/application.
- Training
 - The group worked collaboratively with ACRC staff and developed a way to share information about upcoming service provider trainings on ACRC's website.
- Transportation
 - Mr. Ciampa shared that this workgroup has not met, but there have been some changes with Sacramento Regional Transit (SacRT) and Paratransit. He has invited them to come to one of our upcoming meetings to share more information.
 - The recent Transportation Vendor Forum went well. It is imperative that transportation providers and day programs work together as we begin to re-open.

6. ***Announcements/Comments***

- As we move forward, the PAC will be creating a SLS/Day Program Workgroup to start talking about ways to create mutual supports to assist in serving our folks.
 - Volunteers include: Janet Brandon, Eric Ciampa, Andrea Croom, Jacquie Dillard-Foss, Amy Fulk, Joe Hernandez, Joe Jaquez, Michelle Ramirez, Robin Rhoades, Adam Ruggles, Todd Ruggles, Yvonne Soto & Carole Watilo
- ACRC is working with UCP, Meristem and some residential providers to convert program sites to surge centers.
- Mr. Ciampa reminded everyone about UCP's Safe Trip, which is a free service.
- Mr. Decker shared that Darline Dupree is leaving ACRC; she will be working for the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) beginning in mid-June.

- The PAC will continue to discuss the state budget at the June meeting.

The next PAC meeting is scheduled on **Thursday, June 11, 2020**, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. The meeting adjourned at 11:27 a.m.

Lisa West
Executive Secretary

cc: ACRC Board of Directors
Phil Bonnet