

**Provider Vendor Advisory Committee  
Regional Center of the East Bay  
Meeting Minutes February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**Members Present:** Geneva Ziaoure, Manos; Sister Marygrace, East Bay Services; Craig Rose, VistAbility; Shannon Beatty; George Mark Children's Home; Mike Pereira, Ala Costa Center; Donna Feingold, Adaptive Learning Center; Leslie Visbal, Visbal Strategic Consulting; Ramsay Mashy, California Autism Foundation; Amanda Eicher, NIAD Art Center; Jennifer Carper, Arcadia Home Care & Staffing

**Guests Present:** Megan Hodapp, Full Circle of Choices; Rhonda McGlashan, Compass SLS & ILS; Amy Schwartz, RCEB; Patricia Harris, One Step Closer; Sylviah Yeh, FCSN; Elizabeth Brodersen, Creative Growth Art Center; Danon Jenkins, Futures Explored; Emily Correia, Enjoy Life More; Carol Anne McCrary, VistAbility; Joanne Rolle, The Arc of the East Bay; Monica Cardoza, CIWP; Anna Willis, Emerging Horizons; Amber Avalos, NIAD Art Center; Juan Velasquez, Pathway to Choices; Vi Ibarra, Developmental Disabilities Council in Contra Costa County; Megan Benando, Trilogy Adult Services; Maria Mendiola, Royal Palm Residential Home; Peggy Davis, The Speech Pathology Group; Nancy Brum Keystone, Adult Learning Center; Cecilia Connolly, The Arc of the East Bay; Presha Ponnell, ALIVE Central; Kelly Nguyen, Asian Resource Network from DHTI; Kelly Derr, Pacific Homecare Services; Bil Pelter, Ability Now Bay Area; Lori Surney, FRIENDLY JUNCTION; Michael Minton, RCEB; Arlene Ruiz, Malama Home; Kulwinder Kaur, A Brighter View Day Program; Maureen DeCoste, Ability Now Bay Area; Scott Brooks, Futures Explored; Murri Banis, VistAbility; Jay G, MHDP; Maria Ramirez, Parent Advocate, Racial Equity Committee; Sheraden Nicholau, State Council on Developmental Disabilities; Guy Houston, Mission Hope; Jan Bauchou, AWD Program/Noll Center, Esther Chow, Helping Hands East Bay; Angelique Goldberg, Future Explored; Armando Valadez, Lucchesi Group Adult Residential Facility; Joe Cashel, Las Trampas; Lesa Mellion, Broadmoor House

**Guests by phone:**

**Call to Order:**

Meeting called to order at 11:05 a.m. Introductions. Approval of January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 minutes. M/Ramsay Mashy; S/ Craig Rose. Unanimously approved.

**RCEB/State - Lisa Kleinbub**

- Lisa mentioned that the governor made a statement on Monday regarding prioritizing individuals with I/DD for vaccination, and that an announcement would be made on Friday. She added that nothing had been released as of yet. Additionally, Lisa stated that this won't help with fact that supplies are limited.
- Lisa mentioned that with the possibility of approval of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine and that the Biden administration stated that they contracted with for additional Moderna and Pfizer supplies to vaccinate all adults in the US, that things are looking hopeful.
- Lisa mentioned that the Association of Regional Center Agencies has weighed in with some comments on the Governor's budget and sent those to the Senate and Assembly for comment.
- Lisa announced that there will be an Assembly Budget meeting on Wednesday, 2/17, and a Senate Budget meeting on 2/24.

- Lisa mentioned items in budget for the developmental services system which includes the proposal to continue the rate increases from both last January and this January through 2022 instead of sun-setting in 2021.
- Lisa added that the budget also included proposals for a few positions at the regional center, noting that it was unclear where these positions would be located. The proposed positions included:
  - Positions that are focused on making sure there are continued supports available for children who are foster youth who deal with multiple agencies.
  - The position of a forensic specialist
- Lisa mentioned an additional proposal to have emergency coordinators at each regional center, which would be responsible for emergency response to disasters, and for the prevention and planning of emergencies.
- Lisa mentioned that for a number of years as part of the POS Disparity Funds programs had a lot of community based organization that had proposed and carried out promotora programs, or family navigation programs, which mostly supported families of children to access services. Lisa added that the Governor's budget proposes 21 projects for community navigators to be headquartered at family resource centers across the state. Lisa noted that this is additional funding, so does not get drawn away from the equity project.
- Lisa noted a concern that regional centers statewide are about 850 case managers service coordinators positions short, and that ARCA has made a budget request there be consideration, at least a down payment be made towards the case management deficit. She added that ARCA has proposed that the down payment be made in 20% increments to look towards meeting the goal of fully funding those requirements over the next five years.
- Lisa mentioned another request from ARCA which was for an upgrade to the uniform fiscal system, which is what processes and pays bills, and is involved in all the authorizations.
- Lisa mentioned that DDS issued letters for people in various roles of direct support for being prioritized as health care workers for the vaccine, and then issued guidance that family members who provided direct service to individuals with different conditions would be prioritized for the vaccine. Lisa added that the California Dept of Public Health issued a letter indicating this because the DDS letter was not honored by many health departments and many providers. Lisa noted that these letters had a few more limitations on which family care givers were eligible to be prioritized, but included people with epilepsy, cerebral palsy, and other conditions requiring specialized health care, and including people with down syndrome. Lisa added that case managers have a letter that they will complete for family care givers, and that RCEB is collaborating on a letter with Alameda County and will be also doing so with Contra Costa County.
- Lisa mentioned a directive that came out from DDS on January 29 requiring regional centers contact every individual served within the next 30 days to check in on their health and safety, what needs they may have for PPE, and also checking in on vaccination status and Covid positive status.
- Lisa announced that RCEB just had their Medicaid Waiver audit. She added that many providers were contacted, some to provide documents, while others had full scope visits. She also mentioned that many people served were interviewed. Lisa noted that this was the first regional center to have the audit and all the visits completed virtually.
- Lisa mentioned that has not yet solidified a consultant to look at the experiences of black providers and overall experience of providers of color. She added that she is close to getting a good proposal now that data has been provided, and is intent that things will be in place next month.

- Lisa stated that the first thing will probably be some outreach to get information from providers on how they identify, so focus groups can be set up and the consultant can reach out and engage with people.
- Lisa added that she received a letter from the Alameda Diversity and Equity workgroup addressing concern about the speed at which things are moving, and to ensure that right voices are on board with this issue.
- The following questions and comments were made:
  - Wendell James asked if a consultant regarding the experiences of black providers has been made, and Lisa repeated that an announcement will be made next month.

## Reports

### RCEB Update – Steve Robinson

- Steve mentioned that non-residential providers of alternative services must continue to submit the Survey Monkey, which is due by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month until further notice.
- Steve announced that transportation and group supported employment rates will become effective on March 1<sup>st</sup>, but area awaiting additional correspondence from DDS to see how that will work.
- Steve mentioned that DDS, RCEB, and Tri Counties Regional Center are working with Columbus Group, a staffing agency looking to gather a local staffing pool from non-residential staff to help in residential settings when there is not enough staff due to positive Covid cases. Steve added that they are still working on the contract with Columbus Group, but expect that a flier will eventually go out, and to hold a town hall meeting.
- The following questions and comments were made:
  - Wendell James asked if there has been any thought to using board and care homes with vacancies if a consumer needs to quarantine. Steve responded that that had been tried, but that it didn't work out. Steve added that if there are facilities that are empty and willing to take on clients who are Covid positive, to please reach out.
  - Sylvia Yeh asked what to do if POS are not showing up in billing. Steve instructed Sylvia to work with the service coordinator and billing coordinator in these cases.
  - There was a question in the chat asking if a Survey Monkey had to be done for each vendor number. Steve answered that yes, a survey would need be done for each vendor number and each service code, for example, one for the program code and one for the transportation code.
  - A Brighter View Day asked where to get the survey. Steve answered that the link is on DDS's website, and Mike Pereira shared the DDS link in the chat.
  - Craig Rose mentioned that at a few recent participant annual reviews, service coordinators had said to participants to look towards march when their program should be reopening. Craig then asked if RCEB had set a target date that they expected in person programming to resume, and instructed to service coordinators to share this date. Steve responded that RCEB has not set any dates nor given out instructions about resumption of in person services to case managers.
- Lisa asked the group to informally share vaccination rates amongst staff, and if they would put their responses in the chat.

- Steve mentioned that he received emails from day programs asking now that Covid levels are declining, when could in-person services begin. Steve said that they are looking into it, but that there's nothing specific in the guidance that's available.

#### **RCEB Board – Sister Marygrace**

- Sister Marygrace mentioned that the Board met on January 25<sup>th</sup>
- A contract with Bright Horizons Inc was approved. They are a supported living services agency for English and Spanish speaking individuals, they are based in Antioch, plan to serve both Contra Costa and Alameda counties. Additionally, they are ready to serve people who are non-ambulatory and clients who need full support. Additionally, they are able to support those with mild to moderate behavioral challenges, and can support individuals with mental health or substance abuse issues.
- The Board discussed By-laws, and passed a change to them; Section 8.6, which is an expansion regarding other committees, which is an opportunity for the Board to create one or more temporary ad hoc committees who would study specific matters with a specific time duration to complete their tasks and report findings to the Board.
- The Consumer Advisory Committee gave a report centered around Covid and how people are coping with all the challenges, and included a conversation about the vaccine and getting vaccinated.
- The Diversity and Equity Committee gave a report about discrimination, racism, the need for more effective communication, and conflict.
- Supports and Services reported a goal to develop a comprehensive brochure between June and July where all services would be listed.

#### **SCDD Regional Advisory Committee – Sheraden Nicholau**

- Sheraden announced that the State Council put out updated platform and policy priorities, and put a link in the chat.
- Sheraden mentioned that the State Council's website has some updated vaccine related information regarding how to avoid vaccine related scams.
- The State Council has been advocating for a simple and accessible approach to prioritizing people with developmental disabilities and other higher risk disabilities. Sheraden added that they are focusing on a few core groups, including people served by the regional center, IHSS recipients, and higher risk individuals who do not receive either regional center nor IHSS services.
- Sheraden thank those who have been supporting people with the Nation Core Indicator. Sheraden mentioned that letters and calls are still going out to continue scheduling interviews, which are happening over zoom, and will continue through June.
- Sheraden provided dates for the following upcoming meetings.
  - State Council Legislative and Policy Committee meeting is on 3/9
  - Statewide Self Advocacy Network 2-day meeting on 3/10-3/11
  - Self-Advocates Advisory meeting on 3/22
  - State Council meeting on 3/23
  - Regional Advisory Committee meeting on 2/24, networking at 6:15, and the meeting starting at 6:30PM. Sheraden added that they will be providing some input on emerging issues with the next state plan for California, which includes education, employment, health and safety, housing, and self-advocacy activities.
- Sheraden highlighted two free upcoming workshops that are focused on employment. She added that registration is required, so also placed links in the chat.

- A Train-the-Trainer event on 2/18, from 4PM-6PM, on building capacity of professionals to better engage families around competitive employment, and is open for agencies, professionals, school districts, self-advocates, and their parents.
- A virtual workshop for families and for people served on 2/20, which focuses on the role of employment and all the different options in employment.

#### **DD Councils -**

- Contra Costa County – Vi Ibarra.
  - Vi announced the distribution of pulse oximeters, a tool to monitor oxygen levels in the blood, and is looking to distribute the last week of February. Vi mentioned that they are working with RCEB to identify facilities where these devices would be useful, and want to make it passive receipt of this device, rather than requiring facilities to actively seek them out.
  - Vi announced that starting this morning, Open House Center began hosting a closed point of distribution (POD) to provide vaccination for RCEB clients who are currently eligible for the vaccine. Vi added that it's not just for regional center clients, but anyone eligible who might need an extra bit of special handling; someone who might need be able to access the vaccination through a more traditional site.
  - Vi announced that the next Contra Costa DD Council board meeting will be on 2/24.
  - Vi made a request to let her know when eligible family care givers within Contra Costa County who are truly eligible to get vaccinated are being turned away.
- Alameda County – Geneva Ziaoure for Ben Chen
  - Geneva announced that the registration for vendors is now live for the Alameda County Transition Fair. The county is asking for a \$50 contribution from vendors to help offset the cost closed captioning, translation, and other accessibility features. Geneva added that she will be sending out a letter at the end of the meeting with payment information. Geneva also put a link to register for the event in the chat.

#### **East Bay Legislative Coalition – Mike Pereira**

- Mike thanked everyone for attending the legislative breakfast, and announced that there have been follow up conversations with attendees from all the legislative offices, and are looking to set up appointments to discuss the communities asks.
- Mike mentioned that at a state level, meetings regarding the budget have already begun.
- Mike noted that there is an Assembly Budget meeting on Wednesday, 2/17, at 2:30PM, and a Senate Budget meeting on 2/24.
- The next EBLC meeting will be on 3/3 at 10AM, and will be discussing the outcomes from the budget hearings.

#### **Day Service Providers – Mike Pereira**

- Mike applauded Jaynette Underhill and Clausen House for sharing a video showing how they've been tackling their staff and participants are getting vaccinated.
- The group will be having discussions around the issue of staff not wanting to get vaccinated, and looking at things from an organizational and operational perspective.
- Mike mentioned another issue that has come up from providers is regarding CCL's portal for staff called Guardian, who are having significant challenges with it. Lisa mentioned that she will follow up on this.

- Mike mentioned that there is also a transportation meeting every Friday at 9AM, and reminded providers to give notice and give leeway for transportation to resume.
- Mike added that there is a vendor trouble shooting meeting on Wednesdays at 2PM.

#### **Membership - Leslie Visbal**

- Leslie mentioned that due to people's terms ending, there are currently only 11 board members, and that the position of a co-chair to replace Geneva are still open.
- Additionally, the board is seeking members from all types of providers, but would like representation from licensed living arrangements and employment services based in Alameda County, and also representation from a transportation provider.
- Leslie asked that anyone who is interested in participating to please reach out to become a member of the board. She added that membership only requires that you attend regularly, have attended at least 3 meetings.
- Geneva mentioned that being co-chair has been a great experience by networking with other providers.
- Sister Marygrace added that she would love for more people to join the board to share their talents.
- Craig Rose mentioned that the time commitment is primarily attending meetings and voting on a few things, but if anyone is already regularly attending, they should consider becoming a board member.

#### **Announcements**

- Geneva announced that she placed a link for a distribution list in the chat, for anyone to add their contact information to receive updates from PVAC.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:33 PM

Respectfully submitted for review by Craig Rose, Secretary