

**Provider Vendor Advisory Committee
Regional Center of East Bay
Meeting Minutes: Friday, April 11, 2025**

Call to Order:

At 9:36 AM, Geneva welcomed all attendees. Dan also greeted the participants and thanked Geneva for her return. A reminder was provided that a recording of the meeting and a recap, including meeting minutes, would be sent via email to those on the PVAC distribution list. Individuals not on the list were encouraged to contact RCEB@PVAC.com to be added. A roll call was conducted to confirm the quorum, and Geneva confirmed that quorum was met.

Meeting Minutes:

Geneva requested that attendees and voting members review the previous meeting minutes, referencing the YouTube recording and written notes. Attendees were asked to identify any errors or corrections needed. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Dan and seconded by Teresa. Carlos also expressed support for approving the minutes. No corrections were identified. All remaining voting members submitted their votes via the chat or vocally.

RCEB Leadership and Community Services Update, Michael Minton:

Michael Minton provided updates on behalf of Steve and was joined by Ava, Chelsea, and Priscilla to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the information shared. Relevant links were posted in the chat during the presentation.

Clarification on the DDS Directive – April 1, 2025:

The most recent directive update was released on April 1, 2025.

Service Acknowledgement Forms (SAFs):

- The original submission deadline of March 31, 2025, has been extended to Friday, May 30, 2025.
- DDS clarified that new letters do not need to be sent out when QIP amounts change. SAFs only need to be completed once, streamlining the process for regional centers.
- As a related note, regional centers are required to provide DDS with regular updates on the status of SAF submissions. Chelsea will address this in more detail later in the meeting.
- If service providers fail to sign rate letters, regional centers may consider de-vendoring the provider due to noncompliance. However, Michael indicated this is unlikely to affect many providers.

Quality Incentive Program (QIP) and Provider Directory:

- Moving forward, all providers and regional centers will receive a base rate with the potential to earn an additional 10%, which constitutes the full rate.
- An additional 10% may be earned by completing the Quality Incentive activity designated by DDS for the year.
 - For the current cycle, this activity is the Provider Directory, which runs from January 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026.

Provider Directory Updates:

- Service Provider Categories:
 - The new provider directory categorizes service providers into three groups:
 1. QIP Eligible
 2. Need Survey
 3. New Providers
- Tutorial on Accessing the DDS Provider Directory:

- Michael demonstrated how to navigate the DDS provider directory at:
<https://www.dds.ca.gov/initiatives/provider-directory/>
- To locate your vendor's information:
 1. Open the QIP Eligible list and search for your vendor's name and number.
 2. If your vendor is not QIP eligible, check the Need Survey or New Providers lists to determine if any additional steps need to be met.
 3. If your vendor's name and number are not listed in any of these categories, contact providerdirectory@dds.ca.gov for assistance.
- Scroll down to the bottom of the page to view the categories: QIP Eligible, Need Survey, and New Providers. Click on the categories to access the corresponding lists. If a service provider is listed in the QIP Eligible category, they will receive the 100% rate effective January 1, 2025, even if retroactive payment is required.
- Non-QIP Eligible Providers:
 - Service providers who are not listed as QIP eligible must complete the necessary steps on the provider directory by May 30, 2025, to be eligible for the full 100% rate, retroactively effective from January 1, 2025, unless the provider is classified as "hold harmless." If service providers fail to submit their directory information, DDS will work with regional centers to assist providers in completing the process. This will be done around mid-May, and support will be offered to help ensure all data is submitted. This is now a vendorization requirement by DDS.
- Impact of Missing the May 30th Deadline:
 - Service providers who miss the May 30, 2025, deadline will not be eligible for the 10% QIP portion of the rate until the next quality incentive measure is identified for the year starting July 1, 2026.
 - Until then, rates will be set at 90% until the new quality incentive measure takes effect.
- New Update – Billing Suspension:
 - Service providers who do not submit the required directory information by May 30, 2025, may have their billing suspended starting July 2025. Billing will resume once the required information is submitted and validated.

Licensed Homes Update:

- The Regional Center has held multiple meetings and presentations with licensed homes.
- Key Changes Identified for Level 3 Homes and Above:
 - All Level 3 homes (current and 4A and 4B homes) must begin incorporating consultation hours as part of their operations.
- Accessing Relevant Documentation:
 - Service providers can visit the Regional Center website for more information:
 1. Go to the For Providers tab.
 2. Scroll to the For Service Providers section.
 3. Click on Facility File Forms or Home File Forms to access two important documents:
 - Consultation Considerations for Levels 3, 4, 5, and 6 Homes
 - Level Changes PowerPoint (used by Michael in his training and presentations).
- Meetings for Level 3 Homes:
 - Starting at the end of May, meetings will be held for all Level 3 homes to review what these changes mean and explore available options.

Self-Determination Program (SDP) Update:

Process for Service Providers Working with SDP Participants:

- Service providers working with individuals in the Self-Determination Program (SDP) should follow these steps to include updated rates:
 1. SDP participants must request a rate revision from their case manager to include updated rates in their SDP budget.
 2. Retroactive increases will be applied as appropriate, effective January 1, 2025.
 3. Service providers are encouraged to support their SDP participants in making these requests.
 - For cases from July 2024 to present, a review will take place in April or May of 2025 to reflect the new rates for the applicable period and adjust budgets accordingly.

Service Provider Acknowledgement Form Update, Chelsea Kalbaugh:

Chelsea is actively working to identify vendors whose forms have not been sent and to address any corrections requested by RCEB.

- Current Status:
 - 956 forms have been completed.
 - 544 forms are awaiting provider signatures.
 - 252 forms are awaiting RCEB signatures.

If issues are noticed, service providers should contact rateimplementation@rceb.org if they notice any issues with their Service Acknowledgement Forms or have not received an email with the necessary codes.

- When contacting, include:
 - Vendor Number
 - Service Code
 - Desired Signer's Name and Email Address
- Quality Incentive Payment (QIP) Errors:
 - If the form lists a 90% rate but the provider has completed QIP prerequisites, DDS has clarified that the rate on the form does not need to be revised. A new form will not be reissued.
- Other Errors:
 - If any other errors are found on the form, do not sign it, as no changes can be made once signed. Additional steps will be required to get a revised form reissued.
- Service Code 113:
 - DDS is still in the process of correcting the current workbooks for service code 113, so rate updates are currently on hold.
 - Rate updates for 2025 are also on hold, with no further updates at this time.

Additional QIP Updates, Eva:

- Early State, Early Intervention Payments:
 - RCEB has received all QIP payments for Q2 to Q4 of 2024 related to Early State, Early Intervention. While it is a large volume of work, RCEB is actively processing the payments and expects to have them issued by May of 2025.
- ACR/CSP Employment Capacity Payments:
 - Payments for ACR/CSP Employment Capacity from fiscal years 2023 and 2024 are scheduled to be distributed in April 2025.
- 2023 Workforce Survey:
 - RCEB has not yet received a payment list for the 2023 Workforce Survey QIP. This list is still under review by DDS.

Community Questions/Comments and Responses:

- Question (Mike): Mike wanted to clarify whether the Service Acknowledgement Forms would be functioning as rate letters. Previously, it seemed to be stated that rate letters would be sent to service providers regarding the July 1st, 2024, increase and the January 1st, 2025, increases.
- Response (Michael): Michael may have misspoken when referring to "rate letters." The correct term is Service Acknowledgement Forms. At regional centers, these terms are often used interchangeably.
- Response (Chelsea): Rate letters for July 1st, 2024, update and January 1st, 2025, transitional rate update is currently on pause due to other upcoming deadlines for various projects. If there are any questions regarding rates, please contact Chelsea directly.
- Additional Comment (Mike): To confirm, for service providers, the rate letters will establish any modifications to rates, while the Service Acknowledgement Forms are to verify that service codes are correct.
- Question (Dan): For 113's, there is a rate model with different categories that are estimated for costs. However, upon reviewing the workbooks, the categories do not match. How will DDS be addressing this and will service providers receive a copy of the original submission and the current workbook to identify changes?
- Response (Chelsea): When workbooks for any service code are ready, they can be requested. Workbooks will only be provided upon request. If any scenario arises where the benchmark rates are lower, and 113 rates are higher, these will be held harmless until June 30th, 2026.
- Additional Comments (Dan): Dan expressed his desire to continue working together and have ongoing conversations with regional centers to ensure that the homes stay open.

HCBS Updates, Michael Minton:

- The next round of HCBS funds is now available, and a request for interest has been posted on the website.
- During listening sessions with vendors, the major requests included:
 - Peer-to-peer support
 - Easier training processes
 - Guidance on preparing for evaluations.

The Regional Center of the East Bay plans to hire 15-20 consultants who will be paired with different programs to assist with these requests.

Consultants will provide support for training at home and assist with preparations for evaluations.

Connected Employment, Sara Trail:

Connected Employment continues to offer their training sessions. The next training will focus on employment training and preparing individuals for future employment opportunities. This session will also address how to begin residential support for employment readiness.

- The training is aimed at ILS, SLS, and Group Home staff and will take place on April 30th, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

Toolworks HCBS Evaluations, Carolanne Forge:

Toolworks is offering peer-to-peer advocacy training. These sessions will be held at the Walnut Creek Library throughout May 2025. Toolworks is also partnering with community-based day programs to conduct second evaluations.

Community Comments/Questions and Responses:

- Comment (Donna Feingold): A recent family training session was held with Hireable, and the next session is scheduled for May 21st at 10:00 AM. Although it is primarily intended for families, all are welcome to attend.
- Question (Mike): There is some confusion regarding how to work with SDP participants to get their budgets updated, as the workbooks are yet to be verified. Who is coordinating with FMS agencies?
- Response (Michael): Michael is unsure at the moment but will follow up with Steve and Lindsey for an update.
- Additional Comments (Mike): Mike affirmed that he wanted to ensure everything aligns with what is being reported.
- Question (Dan): Are there minimum requirements for the number of hours that must be spent with a service provider? Dan would like clarification as he does not see minimum expectations listed.
Response (Michael): RCEB will not be setting minimum expectations regarding how long a service provider will work free of charge. Fruck will train individuals, but no specific hours have been set, as needs can vary. The goal is to tailor the training based on what the home requires, helping them prepare for HCBS evaluations and addressing any outcomes. Consultants will also be available to answer any questions.
- Question (Teresa): If there are any questions, can individuals reach out to Michael?
- Response (Michael): Yes, individuals are welcome to reach out to him anytime.

Regional Center Statewide Update, Dr. Becky:

There are a few updates regarding new activities:

State Budget:

- As the revisions get closer, many questions remain about funding. Dr. Becky notes that we are currently seeing a ripple effect, and she anticipates families will experience more financial constraints as the effects of the new budget unfold.
- Dr. Becky shared a story about a special needs toy maker who is feeling the impact of the new tariffs. Tariff fees increased from \$26,000 to \$364,000 overnight for him, which has caused delays in his business.
- The full impact on the state budget remains unclear as we are still awaiting final budget cuts, but it is certain that cuts will occur.
- DDS's goal remains to maintain service delivery under all items covered by the Lanterman Act. However, there are certain services that are beneficial in practice, but do not fall under the Lanterman Act.

AB 1172: Anti-Seizure Medications and the Ability to Provide Medications Outside of a Clinical Setting:

- The bill has passed with a 6-0 vote and is now moving to the judiciary committee.
- The bill was introduced by Assemblymember Nguyen, who is a parent of a child with IDD.

Master Plan:

- The Master Plan has been posted on the DDS website.
- It outlines six goals that the community would like to achieve.
- The plan is a 10-year strategy developed by vendors, advocates, regional centers, and external stakeholders, and is endorsed by Governor Newsom's office.

At RCEB:

- RCEB is working on using their website to share community updates, such as the finalization of the Crescent Grove apartment complex.
 - The complex will have 72 units, with 10 designated for the IDD community.
 - A groundbreaking ceremony is scheduled for May of 2025.

- Dr. Becky highlighted that DDS had previously launched a project for Chief Equity Officers with six organizations being selected to conduct pilot testing.
 - RCEB was selected as a pilot testing site and beginning at the end of April, RCEB will start collaborating with them to identify performance measures.
 - The recruitment process for this position has been completed.

Medicaid Stories:

- Dr. Becky encourages individuals to share their personal stories and perspectives regarding how Medicaid has improved their health.

Questions and Responses:

- No questions were mentioned during this time.

PVAC Member Voting Rollcall, Geneva:

Geneva announced that there is a new member interested in becoming a voting member of PVAC. Diana introduced herself and confirmed her interest in joining. Geneva recommended Diana for the Children and Infant Services and Support Services categories.

- Votes were cast by the following members: Geneva, Lindsey Dyba, Jessica Woods, Anthony Rowe, Carlos Cienfuegos, Theresa, Dan Hogue, Ann Pringle, and Sara Trail. Geneva confirmed Diana's interest in becoming the PVAC Secretary, and the motion was granted.

RCEB Community Listening Sessions, Dr. Tracey:

Dr. Tracey expressed her appreciation for hearing from Michael and Chelsea earlier in the meeting. Dr. Tracey emphasized her intention to continue holding both internal and external listening sessions to build on the work already being done by Michael and Chelsea.

- The goal is to foster a consensus on what they aim to accomplish through these sessions.

Additional Comments, Omar Rascon:

Omar highlighted the importance of ensuring the process is approached with equity, focusing on understanding the diverse experiences of all individuals.

- He proposed offering a variety of listening session times, including mornings, afternoons, and evenings, to provide multiple opportunities for people to participate.

Additional Comments, Dr. Becky:

Dr. Becky reiterated her commitment to making all events and listening sessions as inclusive as possible by addressing language barriers and other potential obstacles.

- She requested community feedback on how to best approach these initiatives at this stage, rather than waiting until implementation to address any concerns. Feedback can be submitted through PVAC.

PVAC Email Lists, Geneva:

Geneva noted that PVAC often exceeds the number of email recipients allowed through Google Mail. As a solution, she proposed exploring the option of moving some communications to Google Groups, rather than purchasing additional space on Google Workspace. Geneva opened the floor for thoughts or comments:

- Google Groups would allow forums and the ability to send mass communications.
- However, Google Groups requires some form of moderation or post approval before sending, which may create a slight delay.
- Other options, such as MailChimp or Discord, were mentioned but noted to lack the same flexibility that Google Groups provides.

Community Comments/Questions and Responses:

- Diana expressed support for the idea, if it would help streamline communication.
- Dan suggested that PVAC might consider adding a mission statement or civility clause to the communication guidelines.
- Geneva noted that this might be something the voting members could discuss in smaller groups first before bringing it to the larger group for consideration.
- Mike agreed that decisions on this matter should be made by PVAC members through voting.
- Geneva thanked everyone for their feedback and highlighted that there may be some learning curve with a new program so she wanted to provide context on why the change may be necessary.
- Donna mentioned that PVAC has evolved over time. While it was originally more focused on personal conversations and connections, it is now more about meeting reports and updates. She shared that she feels there is less time for personal connections but expresses interest in any opportunities to interact more with other members.
- Geneva acknowledged Donna's concern and agreed that in-person meetings often make it easier to have conversations. She suggested that PVAC could lean on active members to help recruit new members to join and collaborate.
- Dan reiterated that PVAC has subcommittees meeting every Wednesday for troubleshooting, as well as regular meetings every Friday. The Equity Subcommittee also holds meetings.
- Donna proposed organizing more vendor fairs, which she mentioned in the chat.
- Geneva agreed that this would be a good idea and suggested starting small by connecting with case managers. Michael will bring this suggestion to Steve.
- Dr. Tracey emphasized the importance of having agreements on how the group works, which could help with understanding within the group.
- Theresa suggested that any new programs implemented for PVAC should be made available in multiple languages including ASL to ensure inclusiveness.

RCEB Board Reports, Dr. Becky:

Dan was unable to attend the most recent RCEB board meeting and will provide his report next month in May. Dr. Becky provided several RCEB Board updates:

- The Mason Tillman report remains a topic of concern within the community. As a result, the report will not be made public until the board finalizes the date for its release. This is the next step in the process.
- There are currently a couple of vacancies on the RCEB Board.
- The CAC Advisory Committee meeting was canceled due to a not meeting quorum.
- Lynn Nguyem presented the caseload ratio within RCEB, highlighting that RCEB has the highest caseload ratio in the state. Dr. Becky emphasized that improving this ratio will be a goal moving forward.
- D & E Subcommittee: Dr. Becky proposed discussing the structure and direction of this subcommittee in the future.
- A discussion was held regarding the referral process during the committee meeting.

State Council Regional Advisory Committee, Presented by Geneva on behalf of Sheridan.

Sheridan was at the capital the day of the meeting and could not attend the meeting, but she shared a couple of updates through Geneva, including links and flyers, which were also shared in the chat:

- "Tell Your Medicaid Story": This initiative is available in both English and Spanish. Sheridan encourages sharing these stories. The QR code leads to prompts, after which individuals can access a formatted letter to send to policymakers.
 - The State Council continues to offer "Tell Your Medicaid Story" Training to community members. To organize training, a group of 50+ is needed. Anyone interested in setting this up can reach out to Sheridan.
- The next State Council Regional Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for April 30th from 5:30 to 8:00 PM. The link for the meeting was shared during the session.

Alameda County Developmental Disability Council Report, Shioban

- A new coordinator has been hired, and her name is Sabrina.
- Annual Awards Event:
 - The event will take place on June 5th at the Shannon Community Center in Dublin.
 - Two sponsorship options are available: \$500 and \$1,000.
 - Tickets and sponsorships can be made through Eventbrite.
 - Award nominations are open until May 5th for the following categories:
 - Service
 - Advocacy
 - Leadership
 - Volunteerism
 - Innovation
 - Lifetime Achievement

Nominees should be individuals who have made a significant impact on those with IDD in Alameda or Contra Costa County. Multiple entries are encouraged.

- Alameda County Behavior Services ACT is still accepting responses for community input via their survey.
- Disability Voices Unity and CCLN will host the Disability Week of Action from April 21st to April 25th.
 - The closest rally will be in Modesto on April 23rd. A council member is considering organizing a bus for those interested in attending. For more details, please contact her.

Contra Costa County Developmental Disability Council Report, Vi Ibarra:

Vi began by sharing community resources happening nearby, which were also shared in the chat:

- April 24th: TOPS Creativity Expo in Concord.
 - First Five Resource Fairs:
 - West Contra Costa: April 26th
 - East Contra Costa: May 3rd
 - April 26th: Contra Costa Fair's Special Kid's Day at the Contra Costa Fairgrounds. The event is free, but registration is required.
 - April 26th: West Contra Costa Transition and Special Education Fair.
- The next DD Council meeting will be held on April 23rd, 2025, and the presentation will provide an update from the Specialty Health Ambassador Team, focusing on increasing access for residents in underserved communities.

Comments:

- Donna wanted to highlight the success of the East Bay Transition Fair held on Saturday, March 15th, hosted by Vi and Ben.
 - The event saw over 300 attendees and 70 vendors.

EBLC Update, Mike Perriera:

EBLC recently held their meeting to review new legislation, including AB1172. EBLC meets on the first Wednesday of each month from 10 AM to 12 PM.

- Mid-March: The House passed an initial budget resolution to begin the process of assessing priorities and how best to allocate the budget.
 - The three areas highlighted by the administration:
 - Preserving the Trump tax cut
 - Border security
 - Defense
- The Senate also passed its own resolution, which differed from the House version. The Senate's version was sent back to the House, and they agreed that \$1.5 trillion needs to be found for policy priorities.
- This resolution was passed in early April, and now a bill must be created to determine where the \$1.5 trillion in spending cuts will be made to support the identified priorities.
- Mike believes it's likely that there will be reductions in services or funding. He shared resources in the chat to provide more details.
- Mike encourages everyone to continue reaching out to their congressional offices.
 - Our system receives only 40 cents for every dollar spent on these services, so everyone will be affected. Mike expressed concern over the massive impact on individuals who rely on Medicaid, which will affect people's lives, regardless of political affiliation.

Events:

- April 12th: Santa Barbara Disability Rights Rally.

Questions & Responses:

- Dr. Becky: Can you tell us more about the House passing another hurdle? Can you provide more information about that?
 - Mike: In early April, the Senate passed the budget blueprint, and the House agreed to take the next step, sending it to the working committees. These committees will work to draft a bill that details where the cuts will be made. While it was initially expected that this step would be delayed due to significant discrepancies between the House and Senate budgets, two of the five hurdles have now been passed.
- Dr. Becky: Do you anticipate a backlash? Are there mechanisms in place to prevent this, or will the cuts happen regardless?
 - Mike: One thing that could stop it is the parliamentarian, who serves as the fact-checker during the legislative process. These concerns are typically addressed during the drafting phase. Ultimately, the only way to prevent these cuts is for individuals to engage with their communities and local offices to voice their concerns and opinions. The federal government will have to agree to raise the debt ceiling to pass this.

Service Provider Equity Subcommittee, Dan:

- The subcommittee met on March 28th, with extensive discussions regarding the Mason Tillman report.
- The committee concluded that they should show grace to the regional center as they transition to new leadership.

Day Programs Subcommittee, Mike:

- Mike thanked Donna for raising the idea of community engagement for provider earlier and reiterated his interest in finding ways to make this happen.

- The committee meets on Wednesdays for troubleshooting and every Friday for regular meetings.
- The primary goal of this committee is to ensure everyone is informed about ongoing developments, focus on reviewing new DDS directives, and address concerns from the community.

Comments:

- Donna:
 - Hirable aims to create more employment opportunities for the IDD community.
 - A significant barrier is the lack of providers or resources.
 - One of the biggest challenges faced is CARP (National Accreditation), which is a lengthy and difficult process that can take anywhere from 1 to 3 years.
 - CDSA (California Disability Service Agency) successfully passed legislation that eliminates the CARP requirement.

Regarding Membership, Geneva:

- Geneva mentioned the need for a Membership Chair and noted that there are still openings in Transportation, Children and Infant Services categories, and Support Services.

Public Comments:

- No public comments were received at this time.
- Dan expressed his appreciation for the community and the valuable information shared during the meeting.

Respectfully submitted for review by Diana Gonzalez, Secretary.