

**Provider Vendor Advisory Committee  
Regional Center of the East Bay  
Meeting Minutes January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**Members Present:** Geneva Ziaoure, Manos; Sister Marygrace, East Bay Services; Craig Rose, VistAbility; Shannon Beatty; George Mark Children's Home; Will Sanford, SC&CS; 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; Carlos D. Cienfuegos, Sentry Living Solutions; Jennifer Carper, Arcadia Home Care & Staffing;

**Guests Present:** Janette Bauchou, AWD Program Noll Center; Dan Hogue, Las Trampas; Angelique Goldberg, Future Explored; Amy Schwartz, RCEB; Allen Davis, Enriching Lives; Ben Chen, Alameda County Developmental Disabilities Council; Terry Goodwin, Toolworks; Susan Richard; Karen Ligenfelter, Mt. Diablo Adult Education; Jackie Santos, Parkway Village Carehome Inc.; Alex Mountford, Manos; Maureen DeCoste, Ability Now Bay Area; Andrea Hancock, Dash Ahead Therapy; Breeanne Burris, 24 Hour Home Care; Kelly Derr, Pacific Homecare Services; Megan Hodapp, Circle of Choices; Purvi Knopf, RES Success; Murri Banis, VistAbility; Monica Cardoza, CIWP; Vivian Largusa, FCSN; Sheri Artis, Social Vocational Services; Jenn Delgado SocialInc; Joanne Rolle, The Arc of the East Bay; Lisa Gonzales, Deaf Plus Adult Community; Tony Duarte, Bethesda Lutheran Communities; Dane McCoy Jr., Viera; Lauren Philips, The Behavior Centers/Therapeutic Pathways; Vi Ibarra, Developmental Disabilities Council, Contra Costa County; Bill Pelter, Ability Now Bay Area; Megan Benando, Trilogy Adult Services; Megan Larsen, Communication Works; Juan Velasquez Jr., Pathway to Choices; Karen Toto, Alegria Community Living; Mya Hodges Watson, Hodges Family Home; Heather Manes, HATCH; Carol Ann McCrary; VistAbility; Shelley Crayton, Family Support Services; Rhonda McGlashan, Compass SLS & ILS; Bouakhay Phongboupha, Pathway To Choices; Michael Minton, RCEB; Yaminah Holmes, Clausen House; Kelly Nguyen, DHTI (Asian Resource Network); Sylvia Yeh, FCSN; Brent Nelson, RCEB; Juanita Hightower, Clausen House; B.J. Cottrell, Jaqui' Foundation; Veronica M. Santana, Clausen House; Herb Hastings, RCEB; Jaynette Underhill, Clausen House; Lori Surney, Friendly Junction; Cecilia Connolly, The Arc of the East Bay; Amber Avalos, NIAD Art Center; Susan Richards, Jaqui' Foundation; Liz Haake, PFI Residential Services; Saunte Tyes, Jaqui' Foundation; Carin Hewitt, alift llc; Jeremy Thomas; Christine Rottiger, VistAbility; Anna Willis, Emerging Horizons; Maricris Molina, Dali Care Home; Sheraden Nicholau, CA State Council on Developmental Disabilities; Esther Chow, Helping Hands East Bay; Emily Correia, Enjoy Life More; Antonio Navarro; Ronnie Ancheta, Open House Center; Marcie Hodge, St. John Boys Home; Tracee Marizette; Chris Candari, Thrive; Christina Trucks, Aim High; Reylie Tabion, Liahona Community Care; Stephanie Featherstone, Ca Mentor Network; Karla Vogt, Bethesda Lutheran Communities; Debbie Johnstone, Noll Center; Lesa Mellion, Broadmoor House

**Guests by phone:**

**Call to Order:**

Meeting called to order at 11:05 a.m. Introductions. Approval of December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 minutes. M/Shannon Beatty; S/ Ramsay Mashy. Unanimously approved.

**RCEB/State - Lisa Kleinbub**

- Lisa mentioned that while the budget has not yet been released, the governor has putting out advanced budget proposals which are mostly addressing pandemic issues.

- Lisa said that most everything going on with regional centers and at the state level is related to Covid-19, and also figuring out many of the processes around alternative services delivery.
- Lisa mentioned that it felt like we started off the new year with hope; that we would see the end of the pandemic, and looking forward to be able to be with one another again. Lisa added that she still maintains this hope. Lisa added that we have seen a lot of division within the country, and that there will be a lot of work to do as we bring ourselves back together as a country that is able to address the needs of all the citizens in a compassionate and equitable way.
- Lisa said we have to be optimistic now that we have leadership change, and in less than two weeks, the Senate, the House, and the presidency will all be from the Democratic party; and for the state, this could mean more dollars coming to address Covid emergency and relieve some of the strain on the state and the economy.
- Lisa mentioned the dichotomy between
- Lisa said that she was optimistic about vaccinations, and that as we see more people get vaccinated, we will be able to get back to what we want, which is to be together and engage with one another.
- Lisa stated that measures are in place for people in congregate settings and are over 60 have a route to get vaccinated. She added that IHSS workers are being considered health care workers for priority vaccinations, so can start signing up now.
- Lisa mentioned that there are efforts to get people vaccinated who are high risk, including people who live in supported living situations who have a lot of daily contact with a variety of staff.
- Lisa added that if a person is an IHSS worker or a respite worker, the governor has made provisions identifying them as health care workers, so they can sign up to receive the vaccination now in tier 1A.
- Lisa mentioned that there has been a surge of Covid cases in California over the past month and a half. At a state level, people will be able to go to a surge site set up at Porterville Developmental Center, as well as Fairview Developmental Center, and also a site in northern California is being sought
- Lisa added that work is being done on a state level to develop strike teams with the state strike team corps, as well as a staffing registry asking providers who have staff who would be interested in signing up to work where there are crises. Lisa added that these would be temporary, short term positions.
- The following questions and comments were made:
  - Dan Houge asked if providers need to get consent from residents to get vaccinated. Lisa responded by saying that her understanding was if someone had a licensed residential care home, CVS or Walgreens would be contacting you. Lisa also said that they provided a list of all their residential service providers through a federal CVS/Walgreens partnership program.
  - Several people asked how they would go about setting up staff as essential workers to get vaccinated. Lisa said that IHSS and respite workers go to Contra Costa Health website to sign up. For staff working in residential care facilities will be notified when the home is contacted by CVS or Walgreens. Lisa said that she was unsure how things are working in Alameda county, so is working to get more clarity.
  - Wendell James asked if a consulting agency had been hired. Lisa stated that she has not finalized things, but is in the process of doing it, and an announcement will be made when it has been completed.
  - There was a question asking if supported employment workers and job coaches would qualify to sign up for the vaccine now. Lisa mentioned that it's hard to say, but to look level of support someone is providing and also what industry they are supporting people in.

- There was a question about mandating staff to get vaccinated in the chat, but that employers would need to consult with a lawyer on what they can and cannot mandate.
- Lauren Phillips asked if behavior intervention service providers can register for the vaccine. Lisa replied that when looking at the letter from DDS, behavioral direct support staff fell in the category to get vaccinated.
- Maria Ramirez mentioned that she would like to be in the racial equity committee and also how staff are being made aware of the systemic bias. Lisa responded that work has been done to address it, and that there is a work group on systemic racism, which is taking an internal look at basis within the regional center. Lisa invited Maria to participate with the Diversity and Equity Committee and share her concerns and experiences at that meeting.
- Mya Hodges asked what to do if staff or clients don't want to get vaccinated. Lisa said that there is no way to force clients to get vaccinated, but that employers should consult with their attorneys regarding mandated vaccinations.
- Patricia Albano put in the chat about the sign on requesting that the California Dept. of Public Health prioritize people with IDD to get vaccinated, which would be taking place in one week. Geneva put the link in the chat for people to sign up.

## Reports

### RCEB Update – Steve Robinson

- Steve announced that he wanted to start by having Lynn Nguyen to review e-billing for alternative services, and also have Brent Nelson, the IS manager talk about the service provider portal.
- Lynn announced that DDS has prepared a video and detailed instructions on how to complete e-billing for alternative services, and that she should would be showing the video. She added that DDS will be providing links the video and instructions after January 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Lynn mentioned that alternative delivery services will begin January 1<sup>st</sup> and e-billing for alternative services will need to be done when providers submit January billing in February.
- Lynn mentioned that most everyone who certified that they are providing alternative services had already received their monthly rate for alternative services. Lynn explained how the monthly rates are applied to the rate table. She explained that the 5 character code on the rate table would begin with the capital "A" and the "@" symbol signifying the autho is for alternative service and has the monthly rate for the consumer.
- Lynn explained that since clients can switch between traditional and alternative services during the month, RCEB and other regional centers, when providers submit billing for January they will see both authos for traditional and alternative services in the invoice. She added, that as the provider goes through each autho, on days when alternative services were provided, a zero would need to be entered in the traditional autho, and a 1 would need to be entered in the alternative autho. She added that this would trigger a drop down menu, where the provider would then need to select what type of alternative service had been provided for that day.
- Lynn stressed that it was important that providers ensured that they only billed for traditional or alternative service each day.
- Lynn also explained that as part of the e-billing process, DDS has put a disclaimer that providers who billed for alternative services would need to certify that they had provided services that are in

compliance with the most protective state and local Covid-19 safety guidelines. She added that after choosing accept, the provider would proceed to the invoice to submit billing.

- Lynn showed the DDS video demonstrating the process of ebilling for alternative services.
- Will Sanford asked if DDS has acknowledged that data entry process will increase the time to complete billing between 5 and 10 times as long. He asked if RCEB would shift to make invoices accessible as soon as possible due to the increase in time it will take to complete. He was hopeful that RCEB was pushing this fact to DDS that they are asking for a considerable amount of work to get this data.
- Lynn mentioned that the CFO group has raised this concern to DDS, and realize that it is additional work to go through the billing, so will try to upload the invoices and authos as soon as possible, and try to meet the deadline of January 25<sup>th</sup> when they generate all the invoices allowing providers to start entering data early.
- Lisa mentioned that she is unaware if any provider organizations have raised this issue, but that it would be a good avenue to express the concerns, and that RCEB will continue to raise the issue through their advocacy.
- Mike Pereira asked if the alternative services notation per participant on a daily basis is replacing the survey Monkey, which Lynn confirmed is correct.
- Mike Pereira asked about codes that had not been included on Enclosure B of the previous DDS directive and eligibility to be considered, and Steve Robinson responded that he only received a few requests to appeal the rate, but had not yet been given an answer from DDS when they will make a determination regarding contention or if a service will be approved as alternative.
- Sylvia Yeh mentioned that transportation did not yet receive a monthly rate, and asked the for January and February, should she still use the traditional billing. Steve mentioned that he would review transportation billing later.
- Brent Nelson shared information on the Service Provider Portal, and explained that it provides access to authorizations online through a website. He mentioned that RCEB is adding new providers to the portal, going by service codes being provided to the IS team. Brent stated that day programs have been provided accounts, and the next group includes 195 vendors for services 062, 520, 862, and 896. As of today, Brent said that approximately 53 should be completed.
- Brent announced that they will be providing a FAQ and will be checking email daily to respond to questions.
- Brent stated that FHA will eventually be added to the portal.
- A question was asked in the chat what to do if an account had been locked or help was needed to log back in. Brent shared his email address to report problems and have the password reset, [spp@rceb.org](mailto:spp@rceb.org). He added that the person sending the email needs to be the super user or vendor administrator.
- Karen Ligenfelter mentioned that she has been working with Lynn for several months regarding the super user, but it can't be connected, so wanted to know what she should do. Lynn said she would need to send a new form to designate and authorize a new super user.
- Steve Robinson explained that DDS sent out a directive regarding alternative services rates for transportation and group supported employment will start in March, and use the same methodology for January and February, as outline in the August 31<sup>st</sup> directive.
- Steve announced that ILS, service code 520 and infant development programs, service code 805 will receive an 8.2% increase effective 1/1/21, adding that a letter would come from DDS, and RCEB is awaiting these letters, and would enter the change into the system.
- Steve mentioned there is also a rate increase for service code 116, specialized therapeutic services for individuals ages 0-3. It's a negotiated rate, so RCEB will be sending out rate letters to providers.

- Steve mentioned that information on minimum wage increases was also in the directive from DDS, specifically raising from \$13 per hour to \$14 per hour for employers with 26 or more employees, and from \$12 to \$13 per hour for employers with 25 or fewer employees. Steve added for those with temporary payment rates, they would need to complete the worksheet and send that back to DDS, or if they had a negotiated rate to please work with the assigned resource developer at RCEB.
- Steve gave an update on surge capacity; mentioned that residential care facilities and ILS agencies are running short on staff due to staff or individuals testing positive for Covid-19. DDS is having a discussion about a surge site in northern California, in addition to Porterville and Fairview.
- Steve added that RCEB has been working with DDS for an Employer of Record agency to recruit local staff in each regional center's catchment area who would be utilized to cover in homes facing staff shortages. Steve mentioned that there are still many details that need to be worked out.
- Mike Minton gave thanks to everyone who's been reporting Covid positive information.
- Dan Hogue ask question on minimum wage regarding SLS workers, and Steve responded that an email will be going out to SLS providers today with information.

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

- Sister Marygrace mentioned that there was no board meeting in December.
- Sister Marygrace mentioned that ARCA has created an academy that meets every second Saturday and is intended to provide board training for regional center board members.

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

- Sheraden gave a few highlights on updates from the governor's budget that had just been released.
- Sheraden posted a link in the chat with updated plans and policies
- Sheraden mentioned that updated vaccine information in plain language on the front page of their website.
- Sheraden shared a link for an article on a social story as it relates to plain language.
- Sheraden asked that people kept her office notified of any PPE needs.
- Sheraden provided a list of upcoming meetings.
  - The Legislative and Public Policy Committee meeting will be on 1/14.
  - The Statewide Self Advocacy Committee meeting will be on 1/25.
  - The next full Council meeting will be on 1/26.
  - The next Employment First Committee meeting will be on 2/4.
  - The next SCDD Regional Advisory Committee meeting will be on 2/24.
- Sheraden gave thanks to those who shared and signed on to their letter draft composed for the members of the California Covid-19 Drafting Guidelines Group.

#### **DD Councils -**

- Alameda County – Ben Chen
  - Ben mentioned that vaccines started going out to acute care hospitals mid-December, and in late December, out to intermediate care facilities; and should be going out to IHSS workers and the larger category of home health worker.
  - Ben shared a link for a Covid-19 vaccine survey for Alameda County health care providers, where providers could get staff signed up to get on the call list to be vaccinated.

- Ben mentioned that there is a community advisory group within Alameda County which provides input into the logistics and distribution process for Covid-19 vaccinations, and recommends people to check it out. Ben added that the next meeting is January 12<sup>th</sup>, from 5 to 6:30PM.
- Ben mentioned that the Alameda County vendor fair is March 18<sup>th</sup>, from 6:30PM-8:30PM. The registration will be coming in late January.
- Ben announced that the next DD Council Meeting will be on 1/13 from 9:30AM-12PM.
- Contra Costa County – Vi Ibarra.
  - Vi mentioned that currently Contra Costa County is in phase 1A of the vaccine distribution. She added that the county has formed an Ethical and Equity Vaccine Allocation Committee which has a framework of multiple distribution ideas.
    - Mass vaccination clinics
    - A mobile strike team to deploy to location centers.
    - Providing allocations directly to providers who have facilities with staff trained to give injections.
    - Looking at specialized teams to vaccinate individuals with behavioral or sensory issues.
  - Vi provided a link to sign up to have staff vaccinated.
  - Vi announced the next DD Council meeting will be on 1/27, where the newly hired chief equity officer will be presenting some of his efforts on health equity.

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

- Michael mentioned that on a federal level, there is now a 50/50 split in the Senate, with Vice-President Kamala Harris having the tie-breaking vote.
- At the state level, Michael mentioned a position of advocacy that the community is taking, which is the elimination of the suspension language of the 8.2% increase, which has been pushed back to December of 2022.
- Mike mentioned that the virtual Legislative Breakfast would be taking place on 1/29.
  - Invitations would be going out today, and registration is required.
  - There will be a brief presentation followed by breakout groups.
  - The following asks are being prepared:
    - Do no harm
    - Housing
    - Digital divide
    - Workforce wages

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

- Mike Pereira mentioned that there has been discussion of Covid-19 and alternative services. Additionally, Mike mentioned that they were trying to get a better handle on how to get people vaccinated.
- Mike mentioned that the transportation group will be starting back up next Friday at 9AM.
- Mike reminded everyone that there is an additional trouble shooting and support group every Wednesday at 2PM.

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

- Leslie mentioned Geneva and Will had concluded their second terms, so thanked them for their six years of service
- Leslie announced that there is a tentative roster, but that there are openings for additional board members; notably, a co-chair to service with Sistermary Grace. Leslie also asked for interest in the secretary role.
- Leslie mentioned that there had been discussions to add members from transportation and employment services, and also looking for work services and day programs in Alameda county.

#### **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 2:14 PM

Respectfully submitted for review by Craig Rose, Secretary