

**INLAND REGIONAL CENTER
VENDOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

VIA ZOOM

MINUTES

January 11, 2021

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Audrey Andrade, Member at Large: Felecia Arnold, Transportation: Jasmin Botello, SLS: Johana Caicedo, Infant/Children's Programs: Marie Chatman, Vocational Programs: Lynn De Anda, Day Programs: Jenn Delgado, Member at Large: Timothy Heaslip, Health Facilities: Donita Remington, Specialist/Support Programs: April Stewart, Respite.

The following is a summary of the January 11, 2021 VAC meeting. Participants will be muted; April will co-host the meeting & will monitor the chat. Donita described the procedure for the VAC meeting, PreVAC meetings and distribution of information via email between meetings. VAC meetings will continue to be held monthly via zoom. Vendors were instructed to check the chat for information and links and to ensure that they are on the email list for their VAC Representative. April gave zoom instructions. April shared information about vaccine availability for DSPs and posted links to the chat. Vendors discussed vaccine hesitancy, supportive decision-making regarding vaccines and encouraging staff to be vaccinated when available and appropriate. 106 individuals participated in the zoom VAC meeting. The minutes from the prior meeting were approved. Jenn took minutes of today's meeting and will forward the information to Coby. Representatives were asked to send their summaries to Jenn. Donita thanked the vendors for their support of each other and the community during this very challenging time.

INTRODUCTIONS: Ms. Remington called the meeting to order at 9:07.

Minutes: MINUTES: Motion made to approve minutes of December 14, 2020: M/S/C Caicedo/De Anda.

Vendor Category Report:

- 1) **Day Program:** Ms. De Anda reported that IRC representative attended the PreVAC meeting. Vendors discussed paid internships. Vendors were instructed to send questions regarding ASD rates to asdquestions@inlandrc.org. Vendors were concerned that they were not being informed about positive COVID results. Vendors were told to communicate these concerns to the consumer's CSC. Vendors asked about CSCs who were asking for consumer signatures on IDTs or other reports. Vince asked Lynn to forward these details to him for follow-up. Vendors had questions about the drop-down menu on e-billing. It is time consuming and vendors are concerned that they will have difficulty meeting billing deadlines. Vendors asked if they are required to complete the mitigation plan and reporting if they are not currently providing face-to-face service.

- 2) **Health Facilities:** Mr. Heaslip emphasized that these are very difficult, challenging times. Staffing is difficult due to the increase in COVID-19 cases. Vendors asked about the role of IRC in obtaining vaccine consent for clients. The vaccine roll-out has been challenging. A new law requires notification of positive cases in writing. The next PreVAC meeting will be in February.
- 3) **Infant/Children's Program:** Ms. Caicedo reported that the PreVAC meeting was well attended. Vendors discussed ASD rates. Remote service delivery continues to be recommended as the safest method. Vendors are impacted by low referrals and families experiencing zoom fatigue. Training will be provided on teleintervention and collaborating with tribal communities. Early Start training will include a panel discussion of teleintervention and Johanna will share information regarding the training at the next VAC meeting.
- 4) **Residential Service L2-L3:** No Report
- 5) **Residential Service L4:** No Report
- 6) **Respite Program:** Ms. Stewart and Ms. Delgado said that the scheduled PreVAC meeting will focus on vaccine information and the minimum wage worksheet.
- 7) **SLS:** Ms. Botello reported the next PreVAC meeting will be at the end of January. Vendors have questions regarding vaccine availability and the minimum wage increase.
- 8) **Specialist/Support Programs:** Ms. Remington reported has continued to send out information via email as it becomes available to the vendor group and to the VAC representatives. A PreVAC meeting will be scheduled in February.
- 9) **Transportation:** Ms. Arnold reported the ASD rates for Transportation have been pushed back until March. The next PreVAC will be in February and vendors will continue to ask questions and receive information via email.
- 10) **Vocational Program:** Ms. Chatman reported that vendors have concerns and questions about PIP surveys, surveillance testing for staff, services being changed or terminated without going through the Person-Centered Process. Vendors asked when they would receive replies to their questions sent to asdquestions@inlandrc.org. Vince found out that there was a problem with the email address and IRC resolved the problem during the VAC meeting; the emails will be answered soon. Merissa let vendors know that they must submit their ASD certification before the ASD rates will be posted on the portal.
- 11) **Behavioral Mod:** No Report
- 12) **Member At Large:** Neither Ms. Delgado nor Ms. Andrade had anything to report as Members at Large.

Committee Reports

- 1) **Legislative Committee Report:** No Report
- 2) **Membership Committee Report:** Ms. Goodsell gave the membership report. The membership committee met and made the following recommendations for the Executive Committee beginning March 1, 2021: April Stewart – Chair; Felecia Arnold – Co-Chair; Jenn Delgado – Secretary. Jenn will also take over as the representative for Respite and April will transition to member-at-large. These recommendations were approved unanimously. The membership committee also recommended that Doug McKown be approved

as the representative for the Specialist/Support vendor group as of 3/1/2021. This was also approved unanimously. These recommendations and Doug's application were sent to the VAC representatives prior to the meeting. There are 2 current openings: Residential Services Level 2-3 & Behavior Mod Programs.

Motion made for April Stewart to become Chair, Felicia Arnold Co-Chair, Jenn Delgado Secretary as of 03/01/2021 M/S/C: De Anda/Heaslip.

Motion made for Doug McKown to become Specialist/Support representative as of 03/01/2021: M/S/C Stewart/Arnold.

Regional Center Update: Mr. Toms reported as of December 22, 2020, the number of clients reported as Covid-19 positive for Inland Regional Center (IRC) was 701 and just 9 days later it had jumped to 844. The state average per regional center for positive cases, per 10,000 clients, on the 22nd was at a median of 150 cases, with IRC at 135 cases per 10,000 clients. Again, 9 days later the state average was at 223 per 10,000 clients, with IRC at 220 cases. According to the numbers not only did cases jump exponentially, but as a RC, we are just about at the state median, after being consistently lower for the previous months in this pandemic. The recent spike in cases is largely due to the staffing at the residential facilities.

The vendors that have certified their Alternative Service Delivery (ASD) requests with IRC have had their rates posted on the IRC Website, in the Service Provider page. IRC is currently doing an internal review of those rates.

The ASD rates for Supported Employment Group and transportation have been prolonged to March 1, 2021. For billing instruction and further information on this topic, please read the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) update dated January 4, 2021. You can find it on the DDS and IRC website.

In a letter dated January 4, 2021, DDS provided a link to a SurveyMonkey, for providers delivering ASD for the month of December 2020. It is due to DDS by January 15, 2021.

Starting January 1, 2021, rate increases will be applied to Independent Living Programs (520) and Infant Development Programs (805) at 8.2% and Early Start Specialized Therapeutic Services (116) at 5.0%, until December 31, 2021. Other service codes that have new rates on January 1, 2021 are the 505, 510, 515, 525, 465 and 864. Further detail is in the DDS letter dated December 21, 2020. On the DDS and IRC websites.

Minimum Wage was increased on January 1, 2021, to \$14.00 an hour for employers with 26 or more employees and to \$13.00 an hour for employers with 25 or fewer employees. The worksheets and a link to the DDS website for guidance has been put on the Service Provider page of the IRC website, for the vendors for the providers with rates set through negotiation by the IRC. Details of what is to be submitted, to include the latest Cost Statement is on the same link, with a submission date of no later than March 1, 2021.

The San Bernardino and Riverside Departments of Health have links on their websites discussing all things related to the vaccine and the phases and tiers. Most providers and residents of long-term care facilities to include intermediate care facilities and other licensed adult residential facilities in Phase 1, Tier 1. For vendored providers of direct community health services, such as supported living services, family home agencies, congregate living health facilities, home health care, respite workers, applied behavioral analysis, independent living skills providers and early start services.

For clients living in vendored and licensed residential care facilities consent for treatment should be given by the client if they can make their medical care decisions. Clients that may not have the ability to consent, the individual(s) who make the medical decisions can provide the consent. If the client is conserved by the Department of Developmental Services, please inform the Service Coordinator, so they can access consent from the IRC Executive Director.

Financial: Ms. Steuwer asked that vendors who want the worksheet that was used by Burns and Associates to calculate their ASD rates send an email to asdquestions@inlandrc.org and put attention audit team in the subject line. Vendors need to include their vendor number and service code in the email. Vendors reported that other Regional Centers have released ASD rates to vendors who have not completed their certification. IRC's policy is to release only after the certification. Once vendors are certified, they will receive ASD invoices, instead of traditional invoices. This is a dilemma for vendors who are not currently providing ASD but are considering doing so in the future. They do not have access to their Burns rate and will not be able to contest it before the deadline. Vendors should ignore the ASD drop down menu in e-billing if they are not providing ASD service. If they are providing ASD, they must complete the drop-down menu. There is a way to select all and deselect any absent dates. Written directions will be sent to vendors soon. Vendors must provide service and clients must receive the service for it to be billable. Currently, there isn't a set amount of service that must be provided to quality for the monthly ASD rate. Vendors are encouraged to provide the most amount of quality service they can. If DDS mandates a threshold of service, vendors hope that they receive the information in a timely manner and that any changes are not made retroactively. Dalila stressed that documentation is important and urged vendors to keep records.

Training Offering: None

Resources: None

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Public Input: None

Next meeting is scheduled for February 8, 2021 at 9:00 am via Zoom.