

**INLAND REGIONAL CENTER
VENDOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

VIA ZOOM

MINUTES

July 19, 2021

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Audrey Andrade, Member at Large: Felecia Arnold, Transportation: Jasmin Botello, SLS: Johana Caicedo, Infant/Children Programs: Marie Chatman, Vocational Programs: Michelle Clarke, Health Facilities: Lynn De Anda, Day Programs: Jenn Delgado, Respite Programs: Ruth Goodsell, Member at Large: Dr. Doug McKown, Specialist/Support Programs: Rachel Steward, Behavioral Mod: April Stewart, Member at Large.

Instructions for Zoom and for calling in were given. Everyone will be muted. If anyone has a question, they can unmute to ask or ask in the chat. Ms. Arnold will monitor the chat. If calling in, use *6 to unmute and mute and *9 to raise hand.

Ms. Stewart called the meeting to order at 9:06.

MINUTES: Motion made to approve minutes of June 21, 2021: M/S/C De Anda/Goodsell.

Vendor Category Report:

- 1) **Day Program:** Ms. De Anda reported Certification, Staffing, Question RE ½ day billing & ASD billing – need updates. 8/11/21 next meeting. Will continue monthly through pandemic.
- 2) **Health Facilities:** No Report
- 3) **Infant/Children’s Program:** Ms. Caicedo stated she was unable to participate in the regular meeting on June 28th, 2021. The group met & had PM’s present. Continued discussion RE DDS extensions of the virtual / tele-intervention services until Aug 17th. Discussed July as end of the fiscal year, any vendors with outstanding POS need to contact PMs as soon as possible. Continuing with monthly meetings. Next meetings 7/26/21.
- 4) **Residential Service L2-L3:** No Report
- 5) **Residential Service L4:** Announcement – Mumbi is not able to continue as representative for the category. Please reach out to Ruth Goodsell as membership committee chair if you are interested.
- 6) **Respite Program:** Ms. Delgado reported that the Respite vendor meeting was held via Zoom on 7/13/2021. 31 individuals from various vendors were in attendance. The group received a presentation from Vince Toms regarding DDS's updates to Regional Center on the upcoming shift to Electronic Visit Verification. This was a helpful presentation for vendors to begin making a plan of action for their agencies to comply with the requirements as of Jan 1st, 2022. Vendors are welcomed to provide feedback regarding EVV implementation to Jenn/Vince via email. It will be included in a compiled report for DDS. All feedback is due by Tuesday 7/20/2021.

- 7) **SLS:** Ms. Botello reported the providers met last week but she was not able to be present. Received a training from Vince RE EVV.
- 8) **Specialist/Support Programs:** No Report
- 9) **Transportation:** Ms. Arnold reported a meeting was held on 7/15/21. We all agreed to address some points with IRC: (1) mileage reimbursement – current protocols are not clear. (2) monthly maximum – currently interferes with vendors ability to provide current and future services. It negatively punishes transportation vendors who have grown their businesses since 2019/2020. Discourages future business expansion: (3) ASD vs Traditional services – this issue will go away once average rate is the exclusive rating system but for now it seems unfair for transporters to only have one option when they are providing both types of services: (4) lack of clear communication – it appears that IRC has taken a position closing down the channels of communication. This makes it difficult for vendors to fulfill expectations. This needs to improve.
- 10) **Vocational Program:** Ms. Chatman reported the providers met on 7/14/21 with 23 participants. Had some discussion on some vendors receiving traditional authorizations for services. Some Vendors have received both types of authorization. Discussed physical distancing as Cal OSHA has updated their requirements. All vendors are struggling to have staff right now. Discussed ideas for recruitment. We will continue our monthly meetings. Next meeting is 8/11/21 at 10:30.
- 11) **Behavioral Mod:** Ms. Rachel Stewart reported we met alongside Day Program on 7/14/2021. Several behavior programs have been able to open and have reported great results with a gradual opening including hybrid schedules and outdoor activities. Other programs shared information on barriers and individualized spaces to help with social distancing and dealing with any challenges. A discussion around masks occurred with talk about requirements and challenges. We encouraged holding IDT meetings if masks become an issue due to challenging behaviors and talk with the support team on what is best for that individual's services. We will meet next month on Aug 11 alongside Day Program. All Questions or concerns from this vendor group are encouraged to be sent to Rachel.
- 12) **Member At Large:** Nothing to report

Committee Reports

- 1) **Legislative Committee Report:** Budget has been approved. Some interesting things are being included that will affect our industry. Look for update links from the VAC reps.
- 2) **Membership Committee Report:** Ms. Goodsell reported the Membership Committee did receive a resignation for Lv 4 Residential category. This means that there are no representatives for Residential Services at any level. It is requested that any QA Liaisons on the call today reach out to vendors they work with to connect anyone that wishes to take these slots.

Regional Center Update: Mr. Toms reported (1) EVV - thank you to all for allowing me to participate in the pre-VACs. Will send info to have DDS trainings offered to the vendor groups. Be prepared that this will move quickly in the next 6 months.

(2) Budget: it's quite an increase. Have not seen anything this substantial since 2016. There will be funding in place for bilingual services, overall quality of services, Uniform Holiday schedule is repealed, Burns Rate will be implemented among other things. April 2022 - first 25% will be implemented (increase will show) for 2 years. In year 3 & 4 there will be additional 25% increases. Year 5 will have the remaining % of increase. Rate reform has always been a source of ire for our community at IRC. The median rate model continuance - DDS has not stated any definite for or against answer here. Eliminating the median rate will allow us to provide better rates. ASD

rates will be allowable until at least the end of the calendar year. Good news - we have another 6mths to provide these services.

(3) Every year unless exempted by IRC/DDS - vendor has to do fiscal audits. Vendors in the qualifying \$ bracket need to have a 3rd party audit of the financials. If you make over 2M per year, need to do an independent audit. DDS sent a list of about 20 vendors that are due & out of compliance. These vendors will receive a letter with a "drop dead" date to submit the review/audit. If it is not submitted, then IRC will be forced to terminate the vendorization. If you are on the list, please be sure to present your audit. We don't want to lose vendors.

(4) Social Rec: we are trying to work within the median rate structure. EX: hourly rate for social rec is \$14.15/hr. we know this will not work. Trying to work within the daily rate mode. When it comes back, it will not look like it did 10+ years ago. It will be a daily program rather than an hourly program. This is in effort to get a workable rate. RFP will be put on the website. Not limiting it. Program Design template will be provided. IRC wants to make this a better program more based in social skill training & not just Respite in the community. Would like for consumers to start building soft skills & independent living skills. Emphasis on social media safety for the consumer. Will be targeted toward pre-teens & teens to learn to manage money & live events.

(5) HCBS - DDS consultation company continues virtual visits. 8-10 visits per week. Initially it was community care facilities, now it is shifting to center based programs. Vince believes 100% of these programs will eventually see a visit.

(6) Day programs are re-opening. There is wide variance here in the method. Thank you, vendors for submitting your checklists. We were flexible & allowed most to pass. Some will still be alternative. Once they are traditional, we need communication with everyone. Consumers are happy to go back. If you see QA staff in the facility, don't stress. They are being asked to go into the facilities and report on what is working and not working in the different facilities. If we see ideas that are very successful, we will share it with the vendor community.

Be prepared that DDS may come to audit the ASD provisions. Understanding that vendors have lost staff.

Financial: No Report

Training Offering: Ms. Stewart shared that the Disability Thrive Initiative is a great resource for us to utilize in these times. Vendors are encouraged to reach out if in need of the information.

Resources: None

Old Business: None

New Business: Ms. Stewart - NOTE: that this zoom is set up as a re-occurring meeting. The zoom link effective August 2021 the link will be updated. All VAC reps that have accepted the calendar reminder will receive a new link. Please contact April directly if you do not receive it.

Public Input: Q: Is it correct that programs should have both ASD & traditional auth in the same month. Will this allow for transition to the opposite service mid-month?

A: will be setting both types of auth at the front end. When switching to FT traditional, do it at the start of the month, not in the middle. It's an "either or" system. Only bill one type of service per month. If this has to happen, conduct an IDT meeting.

Q: Transportation: RE the IDT meetings - some have been difficult as far as not getting an IDT from the CSC. Sometimes when following up with the consumer vendor finds that IDT was already held without any inclusion of the transportation vendor. Also, some Day programs are giving consumer option to arrive whenever they will want to through the day. This will make it difficult to route for transp.

A: this is why we want the transporters at the IDT meetings. He has requested many times. Good news is that Directors of Case management are on the call. (Felipe Garcia and Don Meza)

Q: RE DDS expected audits for ASD service - as a vendor we have on many occasions been available & had time scheduled, but the consumer did not respond to the call/meeting. Had a 24/7 module available to the clients. How would this be received by DDS - that we were avail but cannot determine with accuracy how often the consumer actually utilized the platform.

A: parameters & likelihood of audit is very unknown right now & not guaranteed. If you can show a good faith effort, then this is all you can do. Just keep in mind that the ASD rates were given to keep staff and that it is reported that vendors do not have the same levels of staff as they did going into the pandemic. Be sure to prepare with your fiscal team for any needed adjustments.

Next meeting is scheduled for August 16, 2021, at 9:00 am via Zoom.