

**INLAND REGIONAL CENTER  
VENDOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**VIA ZOOM**

**MINUTES**

**November 15, 2021**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Audrey Andrade, Member at Large: Felecia Arnold, Transportation: Johana Caicedo, Infant/Children Programs: Marie Chatman, Vocational Programs: Kedra Creer, Residential Level 4: Lynn De Anda, Day Programs: Jenn Delgado, Respite Programs: Ruth Goodsell, Member at Large: Abdullah Koudsi, Residential Level 2 & 3: Doug McKown, Specialist/Support Programs: Rachel Steward, Behavioral Mod: April Stewart, Member at Large.

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

**MINUTES: Motion made to approve minutes of October 18, 2021: M/S/C Steward/Goodsell.**

**Vendor Category Report:**

- 1) **Day Program:** Ms. De Anda reported they had their Pre-Vac last Wednesday. Andrew Burdick and Beth Crane provided updates to the PIP program. They still have questions regarding authorizations for Traditional and ASD. Is there something else keeping the authorizations ASD? Question was sent to Monica in QA for clarification. Some providers are not being paid because of the issue with authorizations and they need assistance to rectify the matter. They discussed the staffing shortage as well as referral bonuses and hiring bonuses. They day program providers will be dark in December.
- 2) **Health Facilities:** No Report
- 3) **Infant/Children's Program:** Ms. Caicedo provided a report of the Pre-Vac of October 25<sup>th</sup>. Her group will continue to meet monthly. They had their parent training "It takes a Village" and had about 100 participants. The next one will take place in January and will discuss Down Syndrome. They discussed the vaccine mandate, and some wondered if this also affects administrative staff and would like clarification. They were told some families have issues with the specialists going home to home because of Covid and others don't want to use PPE in their home. Some families do not want Zoom. The program managers encouraged the providers to communicate with the ISC's. The providers are not able to guarantee all in person or all virtual due to possible exposure. They will be dark in December.
- 4) **Residential Service L2-L3:** Mr. Koudsi reported they have a meeting scheduled for November 29<sup>th</sup> which will focus on questions and concerns of the providers. They have discussed the rate adjustment webinar. They are working on strong communication with all. Mr. Koudsi wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.
- 5) **Residential Service L4:** Ms. Creer reported they did have their first meeting. She is still waiting on the provider email list.

- 6) **Respite Program:** Ms. Delgado reported she has no new updates. The group is moving along with vaccine mandates. Providers can reach out to her if they have questions or concerns.
- 7) **SLS:** No Report
- 8) **Specialist/Support Programs:** Mr. McKown reported his group did not meet. If anyone has questions or concerns, they can reach out to him via email. Mr. McKown wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.
- 9) **Transportation:** Ms. Arnold reported her group is working on vaccine issues. Their focus is IDT meetings. Their next meeting is November 19<sup>th</sup> and they will be dark in December. Ms. Arnold wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.
- 10) **Vocational Program:** Ms. Chatman thanked Clyde from OPARC for hosting the Pre-Vac. They have concerns with authorizations and providers not getting paid. The authorizations for Traditional services are not in place. One provider noted they asked the CSC to add the end date for ASD authorizations and the begin date to Traditional authorizations and this has been working for them. Ms. Chatman asked if there is an end date for ASD services. Mr. Toms answered that so far, DDS has not talked about an end date to ASD services, but it could change. The group discussed staffing shortages and recruitment strategies. They talked about vaccinations for consumers. They will not meet in December so next meeting is January 12<sup>th</sup>.
- 11) **Behavioral Mod:** Ms. Steward reported the B-mod providers met with the day program providers. Some of the B-mod providers reported that some consumers are leaving the programs because there are no in person services or in person services are too slow to start. They discussed staffing shortages, referral bonuses, sign on bonuses, having an extra raffle for those who refer potential employees and going to community college job fairs to help with recruitment. They are concerned the vaccine mandate may make the staffing issues worse. They will be dark in December.
- 12) **Member At Large:** Neither Ms. Andrade nor Ms. Goodsell had anything to report other than wishing everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

## Committee Reports

- 1) **Legislative Committee Report:** No Report
- 2) **Membership Committee Report:** Ms. Goodsell reported they have been looking over terms for current members; 4 members will require action on positions; 2 are ending their first terms; 1 will complete their 2<sup>nd</sup> term; 1 extended their 2<sup>nd</sup> term last year for 1 year.

**Regional Center Update:** Mr. Toms gave the following report: Inland is working on the issues with traditional/ASD authorizations/billing. Both authorizations were input thinking it would be a simple switch when providers went back to traditional. Some CSC's are confused in their role with the process and this was discussed with the program managers. The whole process starts with the IDT meeting. Make sure everyone involved is at the meeting. This is where traditional or ASD will be decided. If there is still an issue, send consumer name, UCI#, CSC name and the date services went back to traditional, to QA liaison. Can also send to Andrew Burdick, Beth Crane and Vince if needed. Vince cautioned everyone going back to traditional to be careful. There may be another variant to watch. Europe is surging again and in the past, the US has been following Europe by 6 to 8 weeks. Consumers can get a Covid boost. Please let the CSC know if the consumer gets a booster.

### Burns VAC Notes 11-21

1. DDS letter dated 10-19-21 – AB 136 deleted WIC, Section 4691.12 (c)(1) which allowed for the end/sunset of the rates that were increased in December of 2019 with SB 81, which allowed for an 8.2% rate increase for a vast majority of the service codes and the rates increased in December of 2020. The later was specific to the services codes 116 with a 5.0% increase and the 520 and 805 codes that received an 8.2% increase. All rates will remain in effect with the deletion of the specified WIC Section and will not be sunset at the end of the calendar year.
2. Effective with AB 136, the Regional Centers now have the authority to purchase the following services: Social Recreation, Camping Services with associated travel expenses, Educational Services (ages 3-17 specified) and Nonmedical Therapies. IRC is in the process of creating and submitting to DDS the Purchase of Service (POS) Policies and a Community Outreach Plan. IRC is actively reviewing/writing the POS policies and creating the Outreach Plan that will be broad in scope and used to educate and inform clients and families of the newly authorized services.
3. AB 136 allowed for multiple new positions within the Regional Centers to include an Emergency Coordinator, a Cultural Specialist specific to the Deaf Community, Self Determination Program Specialists, Rate Reform Specialists, a Health and Safety Waiver Specialist for Non-English-Speaking Clients and Enhanced Service Coordinator positions for clients with low to no POS. IRC is in various stages with each position ranging from creating Job Descriptions to actively interviewing and making hiring decisions. For more, please go to the IRC website. Not all positions are currently posted but will be in the coming months.
4. There has been a large amount of movement with the Electronic Visit Verification (EVV). I have been updating on this during the Supervisor's Meetings. Due to the large amount of movement, it is best that I give you the most recent update, via email. Sandata Technologies was the contractor that was awarded the project of creating and rolling out the solution for the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). They are certified by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and are currently operating similar solutions in 20 states. The solution will meet the CMS standards and approved methods of having verified in-home visits, using the six data elements that must be captured for each time a service is provided, at the start and end.

The mandate for the implementation of the EVV is in Section 12006 of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures Act. This is a federal mandate that DDS, the Regional Centers and the vendors must follow. The solution that Sandata Technologies will create will be called CalEVV. Vendors can use the CalEVV system/solution or one of their own, as long as it meets the CMS requirements and is compatible with CalEVV. The solution will be made available to the vendors of the following services: respite, homemaker, personal assistance and supported living service (Service Codes - 062, 465, 858, 860, 862, 864 and 896).

The main method of data entry will either be a landline or the vendor's facilitator's phone. There will be an application that can be loaded onto both IOS and Android technologies. It can be accessed via WIFI or cell phone data. The solution will work in connect or disconnect mode, so it can be used in those rural environments. It is HIPPA compliant and the GPS location is captured at both check in and check out. Once the vendor's facilitator arrives at the client's home, they call a toll-free number and enter a five-digit ID number. They identify if it is check in or check out and a code indicating the service type and the six data elements.

It is highly recommended that the vendors use the CalEVR solution. It is free of charge to use the Sandata Technologies solution, but vendors must purchase and/or fund their own devices and data plans. Those using their own solution must ensure that their system sends the data to the California Phase 2 Aggregator and upcoming trainings will have more information on the interface requirements and how to upload the data elements. There may be additional charges to vendors using their own solutions, to upload the data to the Aggregator. Again, there will be trainings upcoming for vendors who use their own solutions.

Upcoming, there will be three system demonstrations to include a walk-through of the CalEVR, overview of the mobile application and a question and answer portion. Vendors can register on the IRC website for those dates: November 10<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. The email with the registration link will also be sent by the Vendor Advisory Committee's representative and the Quality Assurance Liaison. DDS is working on creating live on-line support for service providers to coincide with the start date of January 1, 2022.

5. Burns Rate Reform will go into effect starting 4-1-21, when the rates will increase by 25%. They will increase an additional 50% on 7-1-23 and then the final 15% for a total of 90% of the rate (sans the 8.2% as noted in Section #1 of the notes) will go into effect on 7-1-2025. The final 10% will be based on the vendor needing to meet the targets of the forthcoming quality incentive program. Details on the incentive program are being discussed.

There will be a portion of the rate reform that will aim to simplify and standardize services to include the consolidation of service codes. How this will look and end up is still in discussion. The final rate model is still being updated with the increased minimum wage and associated costs that have risen since the creation of the original rates a few years ago.

There is more detail to come regarding the day service code 055, but initial claims are that the services under the code will be re-vended under more appropriate and existing day service codes. Day services will also have to transition from daily rates to hourly rates. Much of the changes will be incremental over the next few years.

Ms. Steuwer reminder the providers the last day Inland can accept billing for the 07-01-2019 to 06-30-2020 fiscal year is 03-10-2022. After that, IRC will not have funding authority. She reminded providers if there is a problem with billing to call the CSC.

Ms. Alloway told the providers the Vendorization unit will be sending emails to providers needing to update their insurances. Please send the requested information via email.

**Financial:** No Report

**Training Offering:** None

**Resources:** None

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** None

**Public Input:** None

The VAC will be dark in December. Next meeting is scheduled for January 10, 2022, at 9:00 am via Zoom.