

**INLAND REGIONAL CENTER
VENDOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

VIA ZOOM

MINUTES

February 12, 2024

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Audrey Andrade, Member at Large: Felecia Arnold, Transportation: Johana Caicedo, Infant/Children's Programs: Marie Chatman, Vocational Programs: Lynn De Anda, Day Programs: Jenn Delgado, Respite Programs: Doug McKown, Specialist/Support Programs: Rachel Steward, Behavioral Mod Programs.

Ms. Arnold called the meeting to order at 9:03.

MINUTES: No minutes to approve at this time.

1. **Day Program:** Ms. De Anda reported they met last Friday for their Pre-Vac. A presentation was given by Alejandra Espinoza from Desert Health Care District and Foundation on Connect IE. It is a resource website where one can put in their need, and area code to get resources. PIP's were discussed with Beth Crane. Those attending an internship and day program cannot work more than 40 hours per week. It is also being asked not to have several PIPs at the same location. The providers have questions regarding DSP reimbursement for the training. Providers and families are still having difficulty getting ahold of the CSC. The PM tool on the IRC website isn't working. They are not being notified of CSC changes. Krystal Spear introduced herself as the new employment specialist for San Bernardino County. Amanda McGuire mentioned, for the DSP incentive reimbursement, if providers have filled out the form from DDS and the rate agreement, they can email dspincentive@inlandrc.org with questions. If rate-agreement not completed, can email Amanda.
2. **Health Facilities:** No Report
3. **Infant/Children's Program:** Ms. Caicedo reported on the Pre-Vac of January 22nd. They discussed Treva's retirement. Childrens Services unit is now under Felipe. Jonathan Eckrich is the Program Administrator for Riverside and Edyth Gallardo is the Program Administrator for San Bernardino. FRN is hosting a virtual sensory training on March 19th. Check IRC calendar for more information. The training on Home and Community safety went well and planning for the next training which will be on Engaging Native American families, is under way. It will be held on June 10th. The team updated the Transition Guidebook and sent it out. If anyone has feedback or needs one, let Johana know. They discussed the DDS memorandum that was sent out regarding record keeping and the make-up policy. Edyth Gallardo and the program managers were in attendance to answer questions. Next meeting will be on February 26th.
4. **Residential Service L2-L3:** No Report
5. **Residential Service L4:** No Report
6. **Respite Program:** Ms. Delgado reported the respite providers continue to update via email. Their concerns are minimum wage increase, sick leave increase and who to contact to get connected with community events. Next meeting will be February 27th at 11 am.

7. **SLS: No Report**
8. **Specialist/Support Programs:** Mr. McKown said he has nothing new to report. Providers have his email to ask questions or report issues.
9. **Transportation:** Ms. Arnold reported the transportation providers met January 31st. They are still talking about the rate study. Regional center is working with DDS on this issue. Costs for everything are going up. The providers would like more communication with regional center. Next meeting will be the end of February.
10. **Vocational Program:** Ms. Chatman reported on the Pre-Vac of the 7th. DOR and IRC were in attendance. DOR is encouraging in person engagement again as well as more person centered. DOR is looking for a state intern which would be an IRC consumer. Send referrals to Joyce. They discussed expanded services for transition from sub minimum wage. Krystal Spear introduced herself is the new employment specialist. Beth Crane talked about PIP's. If consumer is transitioning from DOR funding to IRC funding, provider should follow up with the CSC. There are still questions regarding DSP incentive payments. Next meeting date is TBD due to needing to have the Pre-Vac earlier in the month for questions. Who from IRC should attend the Pre-Vac? Usually, Beth Crane is on the call.
11. **Behavioral Mod:** Ms. Steward reported Behavior Management met alongside Day Program at the Pre-VAC. Same items of discussion as day program. Even though IRC addressed at the beginning there is no update at this time, we just want to stress the issue/concern of the rates. Vendors concerns about inflation and rising cost, especially in behavior programs, with no increase. If we could get some kind of update soon, we would appreciate it. Behavior Mgmt will continue to meet alongside Day program and a new date for Pre-VAC to come.
12. **Member At Large:** Audrey Andrade had no report.

Committee Reports

- 1) **Legislative Committee Report:** No Report
- 2) **Membership Committee Report:** No Report

Regional Center Update: Ms. McGuire gave the following report for Mr. Toms:

1. DDS is in the process of creating a new integrated and statewide Service Provider Directory (SPD). It will create a web accessible vendor portal for initial creation and record changes. It will be a one stop for assessments, uploads, and surveys. It will go into testing/pilot format soon. The benefits of this project will be a central and standard system that is used statewide.
2. As a result of the recent budget alignment, there was a proposal to delay the final phase of the provider rate increase, until July 1, 2025. These are the increases that were created because of the Burns Rate Study.
3. Inland Regional Center (IRC) will need a list of VAC Chairs and their service categories for the website, as per the VAC bylaws. Please send the list to Coby Carwile, so she can send it to our Webmaster.
4. April, Lavinia, and Vince met in January to discuss the Vendor Advisory Committee (VAC) structure. The VAC coincides with the IRC Executive Management Team meeting, so many times most of the IRC Administration is unable to be in attendance. Vince Toms, Community Services Director, will be the designee for the Executive Director, during those meetings where the Executive Director will not be

able to be in attendance. He will also continue to provide the IRC updates at the VAC meetings. During the pandemic, the VAC meetings many times became question and answer sessions with the many DDS directives and changes that were presented to all of us. Although it was not ideal, it was many times the best we could do to get immediate information out that was also correct. Now that things are becoming more manageable and normal, we need to get back to the pre-pandemic flow of the VAC. We are asking that the Pre-VAC meetings be moved to at least three weeks before the VAC. The IRC representatives at those meetings will bring the questions back to the IRC Administration, so we can have at least one working week (two if there is a Monday holiday) to secure answers to any questions. The answers will be returned to VAC President and VAC Service Chair to disseminate with the service group. We will not be answering specific vendor questions during the VAC. The change in dates will allow IRC time to secure answers, without being put on the immediate spot for items that many times should be asked of their liaisons or case management representatives, prior to the VAC. We intend to get back to the system we had in place and that worked well for all of us, prior to the challenges that 2020 brought us all.

5. DDS has sent the Regional Centers the finalized guidelines for providing the Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF) with the lag funding for the transition from Fee for Service to the Managed Care Model. Fiscal and case management staff have been communicating with the service providers on the guidance.
6. DDS is finalizing a plan to reimburse intake service providers for the Implicit Bias training that they are mandated to take. There are no further updates on this, at this writing.

Financial: No Report

Training Offering: None

Resources: None

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Public Input: None

Next meeting is scheduled for March 18, 2024, at 9 a.m. via Zoom.