

**VALLEY MOUNTAIN REGIONAL CENTER
MINUTES OF CONSUMER SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday, April 6, 2020**

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PRESENT: Douc Bonnet; Dena Pfeifer, Lori Smith her facilitator; Mohammad Rashid; Cindy Mix; Patricia Green; Carlos Hernandez, facilitator; Liz Herrera Knapp; Robert Fernandez; Christine Couch; Angelique Shear; Daime Hoornaert; Lisa Culley; Linda Collins; Emily Grunder; Tara Sisemore Hester; Dena Hernandez; Nicole Weiss; Brian Bennett; Tony Anderson; Margaret Heinz; Gabriella Castilla; Claire Lazaro; Crystal Enyeart

ABSENT: Robert Balderama; Wilma Murray

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Dena Pfeifer, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

1.0 PUBLIC COMMENT

Dena Hernandez SCDD North Valley Hills office shared the following:

- SCDD North Valley Hills would like to thank all the VMRC staff for all their effort during this time.
- A special thanks to Tony Anderson for his leadership and to Doug Bonnet for keeping everyone connected with the Zoom meetings
- The Self-advocacy Council 6 Leadership Team and the Coalition of Local Area Services Providers Leadership team have done a great job communicating and working together for all. It has been wonderful to collaborate with all of you!
- While this is a difficult time, it is great that we are all working together. SCDD North Valley Hills office is closed, however our staff are still working. Many resources in plain language can be found at www.scdd.ca.gov and please call us if we can be of any assistance! Thank you!

2.0 REVIEW OF MINUTES

M/S/C (Grunder/ Heinz): Approve the minutes of March 2, 2020 as written.

3.0 SAC6 UPDATE

Crystal Enyeart, SAC6 representative shared the following:

- Our first board meeting was scheduled for March 14. In order to keep everyone healthy and safe from the virus, we cancelled our meeting. Our next scheduled board meeting is June 13.
- We were excited to participate in the transition fairs and POS Disparity meetings, but those had to be cancelled too.
- Right now, we are encouraging self-advocates to be safe and stay healthy.

4.0 CLASP UPDATE

Daime Hoornaert shared the following update for CLASP:

- Our last meeting was held via Zoom. We switched up the agenda to discuss COVID-19 to get some feedback from vendors on how they have been affected. The residential services providers were having difficulties having people to come to work. If they had children's homes, some of the School districts Aids did not want to work because they felt they were being paid for not doing work. They were also having difficulties getting supplies. The leadership came together along with CLASP & VMRC and we decided to send out an announcement thru constant contact asking the community partners for donations of critical supplies such as toilet paper, paper towels, gloves, hand sanitizers, PPE's & disinfectant sprays. It was decided the donations would be dropped off at VMRC office in Stockton and Modesto offices and at the ARC of Amador. Once we have enough supplies, Doug was going to send out a notification that the supplies would be available to pick up.
- There was also a big discussion about billing for day programs & residential services providers. Lots of questions on how it was going to work with programs being closed and some residential services providers as some consumers were going home with families. How may days without the consumer in the home for their billing. It was decided that they would be paid for the entire month.
- We also had discussed how day programs could help residential service providers in a collaborative effort. They were suggesting the Day Programs could call care homes, send out resource information for activities and find out what care homes needed and possibly deliver to them.
- There was also talk about the fact that we are providing remote services and receiving the verbal ok from people, regarding the Lanterman act for remote services. The Department directive on requirements waived due to the COVID-19. Quite a few day programs were calling individuals about getting a verbal ok for remote services. Whereas VMRC will send out written confirmation to individuals when IPP meetings are going to happen.

5.0 **CONSUMER SERVICES PROJECTS/PRESENTATIONS**

There was no presentation.

6.0 **CLINICAL**

Tara Sisemore Hester provided an update on the intake statistics from February & March.

- For the last month, the intakes have gone down in Modesto and in Stockton due to COVID-19. We are monitoring this closely.
- Early Start Services, we have quite a few providers providing services remotely.
- Service Coordinators & Intake Coordinators are working remotely from home. Business as usual, just lower numbers.

7.0 **RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

Brian Bennett provided the following update:

- Resource Development is really working hard with DDS to identify SURGE programs. Trying to expedite vendorization of Residential Homes in anticipation of needed these vacant beds to serve anyone who may become displaced because of COVID-19. We have vendored 4 NEW Adult Residential Surge Homes as of Friday (total of 18 private bedrooms) and are in the process of vendorizing 9 more homes (an additional 31 private bedrooms) DDS is giving us guidance, that if anyone goes into an emergency room or hospital from a care home. Because of COVID-19 it makes it difficult for that person to go back to their home. So many times DDS is asking us to place them somewhere they can have a private room and be isolated for 14 day. There is possibly an issue with them going back to the home they came from. This is causing us to re think how we are doing thing. We have a lot of needs we are finding out.
- We are continuing to work with all providers to be able to meet these expectations.

Robert Fernandez provided the following update:

- We still have scheduled April 21st the HCBS Vendor training at 10:00 a.m. We will offer this as a Zoom for the providers. We have had trainings each month since February.

8.0 **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

8.1 **Alerts**: Patricia Green went over the QA report for February 16 thru March 15th. There were 21 new alerts for this period. Most of the issues were around delivery of care, record keeping & violation of rights. We are still working with a limited database. However, we are working with a consultant to create a much more comprehensive database. Of the 21 open, we closed 2.

- QA has shifted its focus for the last couple of weeks, away from compliance and more towards education and checking in on our providers. Our CLS's are doing a lot of contract with our providers regarding the isolation policies. We received our first 4 COVID SIR's and we are working on following up with those providers.

Nicole Weiss shared that all care homes are being called twice a week, being asked 10 questions. Some of our agency support staff are completing this. They are reporting any issues to Kioti Fleming, our support staff for QA, who will pass the info onto the CSL for follow-up and assistance.

9.0 **CASE MANAGEMENT**

Cindy Mix went over the monthly statistics for case management. She also provided the following information:

- Case Management has been very busy since we last met. We received numerous directives from DDS over the last few weeks:
 - **March 12, 2020:** Guidance for Consumers in a Day Program at High Risk for Serious Illness to Stay Home—SCs reviewed their caseloads and identified those 65+ and those with chronic conditions. The list surpassed 2,500 consumers and all of those were called to ensure they stayed home from program.
 - March 12, 2020: Guidance for Waiving Requirements for In-Person Eligibility, Services, or Individual Program Plan Meetings and Authority to Regional Centers for Health & Safety Waiver Exemptions—we devised a plan to hold remote meetings and complete our work electronically with the necessary documentation. A letter to families was developed to document their agreement to hold meetings by phone, FaceTime, Skype or Zoom.
 - March 12, 2020: Guidance for Regional Centers to Pay Vendors for Absences as a Result of COVID-19—During State of Emergency we were advised that RC were to fund non-residential vendors. RC EDs were given the authority to grant residential rate adjustments.
 - March 18, 2020: Guidance for Regional Center Monitoring Staff and Activities—We were informed of the need for supplemental reporting to DDS of all COVID-19 related costs, POS and Ops. Case Mgt Program Managers were asked to complete an Excel spreadsheet of all additional services provided due to COVID-19. At this point, schools were starting to close and additional services were needed in the family homes. Case mgt staff started contacting those consumers affected by not having services during the day, such as school or program. And, inquiring if additional services were needed during this time.
 - March 18, 2020: Guidance for Flexibility in Provision of Services and Supports for Consumers and Providers—Services could be provided remotely or in alternative locations. Need for public meetings waived w/exception of board meetings. POS Disparity meetings waived, new deadline 8/31. Consumer rights complaints timeline changed from 20 days to 40 days. Audits and program monitoring was postponed. HCBS Self-Assessment extend to 6/30. DSP trainings on hold until 6/30/20. FCPP and ACPF requirements waived.
 - March 20, 2020: Guidance for Fingerprint Clearance and Exemption Transfers—In-home respite workers were waived getting the 1st Aid and CPR prior to providing the service for those with no health concerns. Staff could not move their worksite from one facility to another.
 - March 20, 2020: Guidance for Regional Center Requests for Placement into Licensed Residential Settings—RC could no longer place consumers without DDS approval. Approval granted only when absolutely necessary.

- March 23, 2020: Guidance for Visits to Licensed Residential Facilities—Visits limited to medical personnel or govt. agencies.
 - March 23, 2020: Guidance for Immediate Risk Management Strategies for ARFPSHN and ICF/DD-CN
 - March 25, 2020: Guidance for Reporting Incidents Related to COVID-19—Direct contact with someone testing positive , exhibiting symptoms, recommended for testing, tested positive, exhibited symptoms and quarantined.
 - March 25, 2020: Guidance for Eligibility, In-Home Respite Workers and Family Fees—Presumptive eligibility went into place. FCPP and AFPP requirements waived.
 - March 25, 2020: Guidance for Admissions and Discharges from State-Operated Facilities—Denied admissions to and delayed discharge from Porterville, Canyon Springs or STAR homes.
 - March 30, 2020: Joint Guidance on Non-Discrimination in Medical Treatment for COVID-19
 - March 30, 2020: Guidance for Additional Participant-Directed Services—More flexibility given to receive and provide services. More authority over how and by whom services are provided. Categories are: respite, daycare, transportation, nursing, day services, Personal Assistance, ILS, and SE. All go through an FMS vendor, so no separate vendorization needed.
 - April 2, 2020: Extension of Waivers, Modifications and Directives due to COVID-19
- Service Coordinators have been contacting their assigned consumers in phases: first—vulnerable consumers, then those affected by program and school closures and needing additional services, and now all others on the caseload. We continue to make adjustments to IPPs. And, along with that letters to families, addendums, exceptions, and Title 19 must all be completed.
- Since the State of Emergency began, we had 189 POSs approved for 3 and above, 527 requests being processed, and 410 additional POSs generated last week for a total of 1,126 POS's thus far.
- Respite— $165+239=404$
 - PATCH— $336+134=470$
 - SLS— $11+14=25$
 - Personal Assistance— $5+18=23$
 - Daycare— $7+1=8$
 - Homemaker— $1+1=2$

- Nursing Respite—1+1=2
 - RAPID Crisis—1
 - BIS--1
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- SLS policy and hours has been adjusted temporarily related to COVID-19. Increased from 39 hours per month to 177. 138 hours per month for loss of day services.
 - We developed a list of all care homes, ICFs, and FHAs. A group of staff are calling the homes twice weekly asking COVID-19 related questions. Supply lists are being developed and deliveries to occur as supplies are available.

Christine Couch provided the following information regarding the Fair Hearing update as of March 18, 2020:

- We have 3 open Lanterman eligibility cases. Two are for adults and one is for a child. Two are pending an informal meeting and the third is ready for state level hearing. **4/6/2020 update:** There was one informal today and it will go to state hearing, so we will have 2 state level hearings coming up. Currently OAH is not doing meetings or over the phone and they keep getting postponed. Currently we are scheduling for June.
- We have 2 open service cases. One we have submitted a motion to dismiss as the service being appealed came after the consumer was found not eligible for regional center services. The other is for funding SPED attorney fees. **4/6/2020 Update:** There is a 3rd case that has been added. This is for Medicaid Waiver institutional deeming for a 3 year old, so that is getting ready to go to informal.

10.0 TRANSPORTATION

Wilma Murray was not available; however, Cindy Strawderman read her update:

- All contract services are stopped and the public systems are running on their holiday schedules or modified schedules – making it hard for consumers who work but we’re finding ways to adopt work schedules or different routes or public services.
- The City of Turlock is offering free Dial A Ride rides for seniors for early morning shopping – the flyer is attached.
- Calaveras Transit is running service as a demand only. People can call to make a reservation for pick-up and drop-off. Phone number is 209-754-4450.
- Stanislaus Regional Transit is offering free rides as of April 1st on most of their regular bus lines! Shuttles and ADA are not included in that.
- San Joaquin Regional Transit is not enforcing fare collection on their regular bus lines but they are running on weekend schedules. VanGo and Dial A Ride are excluded from the fare waiver.

Mohammad Rashid provided an update that Modesto Area Express is also not charging any of their passengers.

11.0 NEXT MEETING

Monday, May 4, 2020, 4:00 p.m., via Zoom.

<https://zoom.us>

Meeting ID: 995 4397 6344

Password: 692528

Call in number: 669 900 6833

The meeting was adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

Recorder: Cindy Strawderman