

**Alliance of Service Providers (ASP)**  
Meeting Notes for September 12th, 2018

Present: Mayra Ochoa Diversity Outreach Specialist (RCRC), Dr. Rick (RCRC), Sheila Keys, Jerry Freitas, Kim Nash, Ilene Dumont (People Services), Sarah Davis and Felicia (Supportability), Joanne Holiday (Community Catalyst California), Catherine Sundquist (CAE Transport), Enrique Uolla (CBEM), Sheli Wright, Denise Gorny (State Council North Coast Office), Kristy Tanguay, Xaviera Hall (Parents and Friends), Evalyn and Cathy (California Mentor), Sara Pfeiffer (Enriching Lives), Cynthia Swimm and Daniel Hubbard (ABC).

**Guest Speaker**

Mayra Ochoa the Diversity Outreach Specialist from RCRC spoke to the ASP meeting members about a new Provider Incentive Program that has been developed. Below is the information covered during Mayra's presentation and how to fill out an application. All present at the meeting were very appreciative of her presentation. Thank you, Mayra!

Provider Incentive Application (Hiring and Retaining Bilingual Staff for Respite, Supported Living, Independent Living and Behavior Support Providers)

DATE: August 1st, 2018

Redwood Coast Regional Center (RCRC) applied for and was granted ABX2—1 funds in FY 2017-2018 from the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to provide monetary incentives to service providers to hire and retain bi-lingual/bi-cultural staff to increase their capacity to serve individuals and families in their native language or with their same cultural background. Service providers may apply for monetary incentives for hiring and retaining staff who are bilingual in Spanish and/or bi-cultural (e.g. Native American employee serving a Native American family). Providers need to apply using the Redwood Coast Regional Center (RCRC) ABX2-I Equity Proposal Grant 2017/18 Provider Incentive Application Form which can be found on the RCRC website. This incentive program will be available through December 2019 or until the funds allocated by DDS for this purpose has been expended.

Incentive Amount: Each incentive payment to the provider (two per provider) is based on \$500 for each staff member who has been hired and retained for at least 90 days after August 1st, 2018. To be eligible, the staff member must work a minimum of 20 hours per week. See application for more details.

The funds can be used to help offset the costs of recruitment or in other ways based on the discretion of the service provider. Checks are made out to the service provider and the amount is reportable as income.

Staff Language/Culture Requirements: • Spanish • Native American

Eligible In-home Service Provider Services: • Agency Respite Workers (not parent choice) • Independent Living Services (ILS) • Supported Living Services (SLS) • Behavioral Support Application Instructions:

Service Provider Categories eligible for incentives: ▪Agency Respite workers (not parent choice workers) ▪Independent Living Services (ILS) ▪Supported Living Services (SLS) ▪Behavioral Support

A provider may submit the RCRC Service Provider Incentives Application for one or two staff at a time. However, a provider can only submit for a maximum number of two new staff members hired after August 1st, 2018.

Applicants are required to submit supporting documentation with the application form before the incentive is awarded. Documentation includes payroll ledger/ summary, evidence of bilingual capabilities, and the number of RCRC clients being served by this new employee.

1. A provider can claim the incentive for a maximum of two (2) employees. 2. A claim can be submitted after the 90-day working period is completed for each employee. 3. Complete and submit the RCRC Service Provider Incentive Application Form. 4. Attach most current payroll ledger/summary to substantiate employee position, hire date, proof of working an average of 20 hours per work week for 90 or more days. 5. Include evidence of the bi-lingual capabilities of the employee. 6. Submit the application and attachments to:

Mayra Ochoa Diversity Outreach Specialist 707- 462-3832 x 212 [mochoa@redwoodcoastrc.org](mailto:mochoa@redwoodcoastrc.org)

### **Comments to the Presentation**

Dr. Rick commented how they are looking into internship programs for College Students that are bicultural and bilingual. The interns would intern with a provider and learn about the diversity of people that are served by the providers and the RCRC system. Hopefully this would bring inspired applicants to the workforce.

Ilene stated she has met with TANF in Lake County. She has discussed with them the possibility of her agency hiring their community members. The only challenges foreseen would be passing the fingerprinting and drug testing. She stated she will be setting up a job fair in the near future.

### **Agency Updates**

#### **Focus on the Mendocino Complex Fires**

**People Services** – Ilene Dumont – Please see separate document attached to this email.

**North Coast Supportability** – Sarah Davis

Summary of Events during the recent fires (Mendocino Complex/River Fire)

On July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018 we first heard of the fire(s) pushing towards Lake County causing evacuations in our area starting with the Lakeport and surroundings areas. 13 clients were without service Monday July 30<sup>th</sup> due to the evacuations, poor air quality or because family felt it was unsafe to be out in the community. The same circumstances continued July 31<sup>st</sup>, 13 clients without service. On July 30<sup>th</sup> we were without 13 staff due to the areas that had been evacuated. The next day, July 31<sup>st</sup>, the number of

staff unable to report to work still had increased to 16. By Wednesday August 1<sup>st</sup> the evacuated areas had increased, and the air quality continued to worsen. The county was now extremely unsafe during this time, more than half of the residents had been evacuated from their homes. Traffic was at a standstill when attempting to travel, shelters were full, and people were trying to keep their loved ones safe. We cancelled our weekly staff meetings and continued to provide altered services to those we could still travel to, these areas included Clearlake Oaks thru Lower Lake. Due to evacuations we were staffed with only 14 employees which allowed for us to serve 15 clients. The rest of the week we continued to have notice of further evacuations which lead to having more staff calling in stating they would be leaving the county to keep their families safe. By August 3<sup>rd</sup> fires were not under control and we, at NCS, chose to close our doors. That afternoon we started notifying client families, other providers, agencies etc. of the decision made to stop providing day program services until the fires came to a control and conditions improved. Over 70% of my staff were affected and many of our clients and employees had left the area (county). Several parents did not want services due to the unsafe conditions the county was in. We did not have Day-Program service August 6<sup>th</sup> to August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018. By the end of this week authorities started lifting evacuation and repopulation began slowly. We resumed services the week of August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018. We served people close to home for safety reasons until conditions started to improve. I cannot say enough about the level of communication between all agencies during this emergency. This communication enabled us with helping keep our clients safe and allowed us to provide some necessary meaningful supports. My staff sacrificed time with their families to make things as safe and as normal and as possible for the clients being served. The Regional Center showed great concern for us all, and offered support to help clients, families, and our agency as a whole. We had daily phone contact with the Ukiah office, RCRC, to make sure all evacuees were safe. Supported living agencies also deserve a huge pat on the back for keeping our clients safe and providing extra supports. We remained in contact with all other supporting agencies until we could safely resume services, (August 13<sup>th</sup>).

**Association of Behavior Consultants, Inc.** – Cynthia Swimm and Daniel Hubbard

We were not affected as significantly by the fires as other providers.

Capacity to Deliver Services: Yes, we, although short staffed were able to provide services to all our clients, except the three that were displaced due to the mandatory evacuations.

Impact on Clients: We had three clients displaced. One to Napa, one to Santa Rosa, and one to Clearlake. The impact on the rest of the clients we serve was minimal due to the incredible staff supporting them by providing them with activities at the Senior Center in Clearlake and at the client's homes. We also provided masks for all staff and clients to help with the smoke as it was at dangerous levels.

Impact on Employees: One of our employees was evacuated for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time from his home in Spring Valley. This was very hard on him, but he continued to work. Four others also received a mandatory evacuation notice from Clearlake Oaks where they live. We received a mandatory evacuation from our ABC Office in Clearlake Oaks, but I was able to go back in to the area to retrieve all our client and staff files.

Impact on Budget: Our budget was not affected.

Loses because of the fire: None.

One of my staff Jessie Richardson was to be a contestant at the Day on the Green Cook Off in Lakeport. Since Lakeport was evacuated the event was cancelled. I spoke with my husband and he, Jessie and I decided to have Jessie and his partner Tim Biasoti go ahead and have a cookout at the Austin Park for

the families that were displaced by the fires and living in tents and their cars at the park. Jessie talked to Carole at CSS about what we were doing, and she wanted to also participate. So, Jessie went shopping and bought 40 tri-tips and all the needed items to have smoked tri-tip and sides. My husband and Carole at CSS donated the money for the food. Jessie (who works for both ABC and CSS) cooked the food and other ABC/CSS staff volunteered to help to serve the people at Austin Park in Clearlake. It was a very humbling experience. One staff member Kathryn Pray who works for both ABC and CSS sent me a text stating “I am so glad they are all safe. I am praying this week people will be able to return home. Yesterday was such an eye opener at the park. We stayed late to make sure everyone that wanted food was able to get it and as the night came in it was intense to see people and their kids climbing into tents to sleep. Dogs cramped in kennels, there was a cat that kept screaming. It was definitely an eye opener. I was glad to be able to be there and help and just witness the good deed that was done by Jessie and his friends. And it was awesome for you and the others to sponsor it all... your heart is great! So many people were very thankful and appreciative. I was saying yesterday that it’s been so long since I’ve helped serve the community and man does it really humble you.”

**California Mentor** – Evalyn stated of their 22 clients 11 were evacuated. They kept in continual communication during the period of the fires. She stated 3 of their office staff were out which was half of their entire office staff. No homes were affected. They also used Facebook to keep in communication. They plan on continuing to practice disaster trainings. They plan to meet with the fire department to discuss disaster plans.

Evalyn also stated they are teaming with SCDD and implementing a CPR/First Aide and Bloodborne Pathogens Training for Families and Self-Advocates. The date is November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018 from 9:30am to 2pm. To register call Cathy Lawrence at 707-263-5875.

**Enriching Lives**- Sara stated they would like to provide future help by providing RCRC clients that have been displaced with any rooms they have available in their homes. This will provide RCRC with another resource.

**State Council North Coast Office** – Denise stated they were not directly affected by the fire. She also stated SCDD and California Mentor are holding a CPR/First Aide and Bloodborne Pathogens Training for Families and Self-Advocates. The date is November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018 from 9:30am to 2pm. To register call Cathy Lawrence at 707-263-5875.

SCDD will also be holding a “North Coast Open House”. It will be held on October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018 from 1pm to 4pm at 505 South State Street, Ukiah. This is a time to come and discover what SCDD does and how you can get involved. Learn about Self-Advocacy and Your Rights. Free in Case of an Emergency Card applications can be turned in. Also, there will be healthy snacks and a variety of activities. For more information call: 707-463-4700 or email: northcoast@scdd.ca.gov.

**CAE Transport** – Catherine stated the Mendocino fires had no direct effect on them. They do practice Tsunami emergency plans, regularly. Catherine also stated all their staff have completed their CPR trainings. Kim remarked to Catherine that yes, the weather effects the coast and can be a real threat such as a Tsunami.

**Community Catalyst California** – Joanne stated there was a lot of smoke from the fires that affected her staff and clients. They had several staff and IHSS staff that were evacuated. They also received a call for a wheelchair van as did Ilene.

Joanne will be implementing a presentation at their upcoming Board of Directors meeting. Their clients have decided to utilize the Skunk Train to represent how they plan to reach independence. The different stops the train makes along the way would represent the different milestones they may face as they move towards independence. Everyone thought this was a great idea!

**CBEM**- Enrique from the Eureka office stated they provided a supportive hotline during the fires to Barbara in the South Region.

**Parents and Friends**- Kristy and Xaviera stated they were able to support the victims of the fires by providing clean clothes and other items that the displaced fire victims needed. They also stated that they are completing their case of emergency cards for the clients they support.

### **RCRC Report**

#### **Kim Nash**

Kim Nash stated that there is a code provided for Health and Safety during such disasters and thus RCRC will be able to pay providers staff for working over and double time. Kim stated to everyone to send her the names of the employees that worked over and double/triple time during the period of the fires. Kim continued stating I am grateful as a community we have such a close connection to each other. It is humbling to see everyone step up and beyond to help other agencies, neighbors, and their communities. It is augh inspiring. I wish our state could see. They need to hear everyone's stories. She stated it was extraordinary how everyone helped, the clients were not asking for PRN's because they were receiving the physical and emotional support they needed from their staff support systems. The providers all had a specific contact person at RCRC and then RCRC was able to use Everbridge throughout the time of the fires to keep track of everyone and insure their safety. RCRC formalized an internal plan and implemented it. They found their plan to be successful and plan on expanding it. Due to many of the staff at the Lakeport RCRC location being affected by the evacuation the location was temporarily closed even though closed, there HR person still implemented her job on her laptop making sure payroll would go out on time. Kim spoke with the DDS daily. DDS okayed SIR's to be turned in late. An assistant at the Humboldt RCRC location contacted all clients even if they barely utilized services to make sure everyone was accounted for and safe. Kim stated they set up a plan in case the entire community of Lake was evacuated which at the time of the fires presented as probable.

Kim stated that at the next Board of Directors Public Meeting they will be asking for feedback regarding Foster Family extensions. The extensions would allow children to stay in their long-term foster home where they live even though they are older. This would be looking at cost prohibition. There are currently 2 children that have lived in the same home for many years that would benefit by staying in their current foster homes.

Kim stated that RCRC rallied up regarding turning the Surveys in! She stated that due to the fires the Surveys were accepted with late dates. All the Surveys made a significant impact. She stated 52% of providers responded. The DDS wanted 40% to respond, so we succeeded. There will be a new survey related to Specialized Therapeutic Services. The survey will include codes not included in the previous survey. We need providers to fill out the surveys to help justify the need for the rate increases. If there is not a box to check on the survey, please leave a comment in the remarks section.

### **Dr. Rick**

Dr. Rick stated that everyone teamed together during the fires. He reflected to when he went out to a home after the Pawnee fire and the 15year old son was home. The teenager showed him where the fire had burned right to his bedroom window. Dr. Rick later found out this family was once again evacuated during the Mendocino Complex fire.

Dr. Rick stated this is the first time we utilized the Everbridge system. A system to keep everyone connected. He stated Sheila worked intimately with the Everbridge system providing translations and communication in Spanish. She was a very strong support during the fires.

As the fire kept moving they referred to Everbridge to see who was being affected. Even if it was only 1 person they were all accounted for within 24 hours. They reached out to 380 people with 85 responses within 5 minutes. Dr. Rick stated we need people to know that Everbridge exists. They need to understand about the Everbridge system, so they can respond.

He continued by stating the response to the fires were a team effort all the way around. The thought of having to evacuate Clearlake was of great concern as all shelters were full. We are looking into planning a shelter site in Dixon to be add to our preparedness in the future. Dr. Rick and Dr. Smalley went to the shelter sites and met with the clients RCRC provides services to that were displaced. Lake County Behavioral Health was also at the shelters checking on community members.

Dr. Rick continued by stating I am very concerned with the discrimination that our clients received from some of the shelters. We need more readiness training as we are on our own here. There needs to be more planning ahead instead of trying to problem solve in the moment of the fires.

Dr. Rick, several times during the meeting, stated he will be planning a recognition of the providers and the many people that went above and beyond!

### **Sheila Keys**

Sheila shared a story of a teenager who, also a consumer of RCRC, reached out to Everbridge by pressing the “Help Me” button. The teenager and her family were trying to find somewhere to stay but they would only accept her but not the animals which meant her, and her family would have to stay at separate shelters. RCRC was able to reach out to her and find her and her family a hotel that would accept animals, so they could all stay together.

### **Open Discussion**

The future ASP meeting dates up for vote were decided on. The decision was March 13, and July 10, 2019.

Next meeting – Wednesday-October 31, 2018, 9-11.