

**Alliance of Service Providers**  
DRAFT Meeting Notes  
July 11, 2016

Location: Redwood Coast Regional Center, Eureka & Ukiah-Video Conference/Teleconference

Representative	Agency/Affiliation
Suzette Ott	Butler Valley
Annie Barnes	CA Mentor
Caitlin Scown	Changing Tides
Kerry Venegas	Changing Tides
Jolleen McLeod	Changing Tides
Jaison Chad	City Cab
Barbara Sprout	Creating Behavioral and Educational Momentum (CBEM)
Enrique Ulloa	CBEM
Kelly Weber	CBEM
Sara Pfeiffer	Enriching Lives
Ross Jantz	Humboldt Community Access and Resource (HCAR)
Ilene Dumont	People Services
Wes Moss	Premiere Health Services
Jeff Pockett	Reaching for Independence (RFI)
Sheila Keys	Redwood Coast Regional Center (RCRC)
Kim Nash	RCRC
Jerry Frietas	RCRC
Jessica Moulton	RCRC
Kim Orsi	RCRC
Dawn Morley	State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) North Coast
Pam Jensen	Ukiah Valley Association for Habilitation (UVAH)

**Agency Updates**

Creating Behavioral and Educational Momentum (CBEM) - Is a new service provider to our region which is getting up and running as well as hiring staff. The agency works with other regional centers in the state (Golden Gate, North Bay, Northern LA, San Gabriel/Pomona and Alta Regional Centers). CBEM will be providing critical intervention services, crisis intervention, offer a 24 Hour crisis support hotline, behavioral observation, support, stabilization and training to individuals and their circle of support which can include: family, friends, support staff, service coordinators.

CA Mentor - Provides housing options for clients through a personalized process in which individuals are matched with compatible families. They are always looking to expand this network of good matches for individuals served. The agency partners with local agencies on various activities and is working with the Mendocino Private Industry Council for a mid-August job fair planning.

State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) – North Coast – Is an independent state agency that empowers self-advocates and family advocates. Recent key areas of focus are: Self Determination, Home and Community Based Services rules and changes, and Competitive Integrated Employment.

Premier Health Services – Provides respite and Fiscal Management Services. They recently sponsored a Self-Determination Symposium in San Jose that was very successful and included state agency representatives and self-determination pilot program participants/advocates. They are currently working with service coordinators to provide backpacks to designated individuals and families in the four county area.

Enriching Lives- Serves Humboldt and Del Norte county as a Foster Family Agency and Adult Family Home Agency and works with Child Welfare Services for emergency placement of regional center clients.

City Cab- Provides transportation in Humboldt County and are trying to keep up with the recent expansion of regional center clients. To deal with the challenge of added passengers they are looking to divide up longer routes into shorter routes to reduce wear on vehicles. They are also purchasing more vehicles and hiring drivers as fast as possible.

Humboldt Community Access and Resource Center - Provides a variety of services including supported living, independent living, respite, supported employment and employment training. They have recently received their letters from Redwood Coast Regional Center notifying them of the administrative reimbursement rate increase.

Butler Valley - Operates long-term care homes that are licensed through the Department of Public Health, the facilities are funded by Medi-Cal Managed Care/Partnership Health Plan. They also operate the Carole Sund Center that is a small farming day program at the south end of Eureka. They are in the process of expanding services and are looking at putting in a certified commercial kitchen as the farmers like to cook what they produce making salsas, pesto and zucchini breads. Also, they are raising baby goats to make money, as well as selling eggs and produce. Pearson's donates starts and plants that need rehabilitation which are tended to on the farm and then can be sold at an upcoming plant sale. Recently they attended the Disability Expo in Eureka-Redwood Acres and announced they will be hosting an open house on 7/16. Kim noted that this is one of very few programs like this in the State and it is a unique option that we are fortunate to have in our area.

Changing Tides Family Services - Provides respite and have a supportive parenting program for individuals served by RCRC who are parents. There have been a number of changes as of late, 30 year Executive Director Carole Hill, retired in April, and long-time Deputy Director Donna Miller-Mishcon retired. Caitlin Scown was promoted to Deputy Director and Kerry Venegas was selected as the new Executive Director. Kerry shared her extensive work in tribal systems, most recently working with the Hoopa Tribe running their education and other programs. She is looking forward to learning about the system and getting to know everyone around the table. They are happy that we are getting additional money.

Reaching for Independence - Is an adult day program that is located in Humboldt and are expanding into Del Norte County pending Community Care Licensing approval which is about 6 months behind in licensing programs. They are currently doing community based programming and it has been successful. They have some clients, one employer, and a list of people that want services. Currently they are serving 47 clients in Supported Employment in Fortuna, have 3 full-time lawn crews and are looking to add a 4<sup>th</sup> crew for commercial contracts. They also provide cleaning services for homes and businesses.

Ukiah Valley Association for Habilitation (UVAH) - Provides employment, training and day services. The agency was able to put a budget together that was not in the negative column and are thankful for the new rate increases. They recently had a staff appreciation dinner at Todd Grove Park. A long-time program manager moved out of the area so we promoted someone to take that position, and another staff person changed fields which contributed to staff turnover. They are still trying to fill the Bridge Services vacancy. Recently they had Board elections and are still looking for another board member. Staff attended Emergency Services Training and according to best practices recommendations, 3 gallons of water per person per day is now recommended. The agency is working on a cultural competency and diversity plan and getting more information about the people served which they have added to the client statistical sheets. They have learned that, for many clients, living in a State Hospital is the culture that applies to them. The local Self-Determination Advisory Committee is meeting and the good news is that we are getting closer to getting the CMS waiver approved, the optimistic projection is somewhere around November. The group is looking for a member to represent Del Norte County and if anyone knows of a client who would be interested please let them know. The committee meets one time per month, members can attend in person or by phone/video. It is fun committee and they would have a great time! Also, if they desire, the person can have a facilitator. At the last Regional Center Board Meeting, the board discussed desired qualities in an Executive Director. At the next board meeting, they will be working more on the job description and getting the process narrowed down.

People Services - is mainly in Lake County and provides limited service in the Ukiah area. Programs include: transportation, respite, supported living, two licensed day programs including a no barriers, no walls program which spends about 60% time in the community, supported employment (5 crews), individual job coaching, social sexual educational opportunities and court competency trainings. They are also engaged in Konocti Adventures which is an independent activity (not agency funded) that plans fun getaways- they are going to a Giants ball game this summer! They ended this year in the largest debt ever due to no income to cover the wage increase for almost seven months. Although the money is coming, vendors are struggling. Marty Diesman who has worked with the agency for almost 30 years has retired. They had a great Zombie Themed retirement party. Amanda Stone in Clearlake was promoted to fill Marty's position. The annual Chicken Que fundraiser went well earning \$17,000.00 and the country pie raffle made \$877.00 which is good because the agency no longer receives the funds (\$10,000.00) that they had previously received through the Priest Family Trust. They are trying to stay solvent and will review letters about changes, draw up budget, and hopefully get information about tracking requirements.

### **RCRC Report**

Kim Nash thanked everyone for all the updates. Biggest news is AB X2-1 was passed and we have received increases from the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Initially it was a 7% increase for the providers but now may be more because the system has lost service providers so it is now more like 14% (Supported living services for example.) There will be increases for: licensed day services, residential services, transportation, family home agencies, day services, residential cost services, financial management services are all getting increases. DDS has given the directive that rate funding is meant for direct support wages (based on 15/85 split). Next fall they will come back to service providers to request tracking of how you applied money. Current law says that you must provide requested

information/tracking or they will take the money away. You will have to be able to provide this information but at this time we do not have the specified formula from DDS or Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) but given past experience, anticipate using similar types of methodology. There are examples and those are subject to change. In the past forms were so onerous so ARCA has advocated for more simplified tracking/spreadsheets. For those involved in the June survey process - thank you! It is the major reason why we got the rate increases and is a good tool to look at in terms of tracking. Kim outlined past adjustments and provided guiding points to look at as admin/direct service percentage breakdown. Contracted rate increases are going into the regional center fiscal system now. We are getting ready to send out addendums with rate increases.

There was also a change in audit reviews and its requirements. Limits were \$250,000, and \$500,000 as of July 1 the requirement was amended. Revenues of \$500,000 to \$2.5 million can do financial review. If you have more than \$2.5 million of regional center earnings you will be required to do the independent audit. Another caveat is if you have provided financial reviews or audits previously, you may contact your regional center resource manager for a waiver in providing audit which will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis but can save agencies \$10,000 for the year. Regional Centers want to see a benefit for service providers.

Contract addendums have been amended to include the language changes effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. As of this morning per Patrick Okey, for the July 19, 2016 Purchase of Service check run, retro payment for minimum wage will be mailed. Rate letters will go out if you do not have a contract and, if you have a contract, you will get an addendum. This year's budget bill was to get us back to 2002 rates and is one of the areas of concern that came out of the, "On the Brink of Collapse" system advocacy. DDS and legislators are already looking at the reality of what the new minimum wage will mean.

For the first time in many years the budget will include RCRC has received a budget for startup funding for Community Placement Plan services for people who are leaving developmental centers. Requests for Proposals (RFP's) will be posted on the regional center website. The RFP's will cover two key areas: (1) \$100,000 for Residential Care Facility for the Elderly in Lake or Mendocino and (2) \$100,000 for a Residential Home in Humboldt or Del Norte with a forensic focus. More Information will be further coming.

Regarding health and safety, local police and sheriff offices are offering to provide active shooter trainings to communities. This is a scary subject but is a good opportunity to provide staff training. We also appreciate everyone's efforts to be prepared for emergencies and for summer health and safety while in the community: sunscreen, water etc. Kim also reminded everyone that SCDD provides In Case of Emergency Cards for the community which are a great tool for individuals to have.

Shocking information - in the past 2 years our regional center has seen an average 15% increase in clients served (20% in Humboldt and Del Norte and 10% in Lake and Mendocino). Those numbers reflect the challenges to meet referrals and the need to get staffing levels up to meet minimum requirements. The change is primarily linked to changes in the DSM-5 relating to Autism Spectrum Disorder. We are seeing an increased eligibility in the number of children and an influx of adults.

Psychiatric services in the state of California are in a dearth and, in our area, we have even fewer providers. This is one group the Schedule of Maximum Allowance (SMA) Medi-Cal rate reimbursement

that did not receive a rate increase and are currently receiving significantly low rates e.g. \$90.00/hr. We are feeling the effects of the Affordable Care Act and slots are full. In our four county area, services are provided through Beacon which is a subsidiary of Partnership Health Plan. If you provide residential support anything that you can do to prepare that client to get ready for the visit will be helpful for example, running labs, bringing medications, working on what works for that individual etc. If you are going to county mental health services you are typically allowed 15 minutes and have vendored consults but many do not provide medication prescriptions. We have many new primary care physicians as well as a lot of advocacy. Further discussion is needed with the primary care physicians and the consulting psychiatrist services.

We have received a statewide report which shows that abuse rates are alarmingly high and physical health is poor among all people in the four county area. This information concerns regional center because many clients are potential victims of abuse by non paid staff. With that said if you are seeing abuse or have concerns, please report and talk to individuals about cycles of abuse where appropriate, and provide them with resources to get help with advocacy.

CMS-Center for Medicaid Services update: California is in the process of applying for a specific waiver that the Department is in the process of preparing to submit for approval. There will be guidance about implementation and some regional centers have begun that work already. Locally we would first like to have a greater possibly of definition as to what that guidance means before we get too involved. DDS has a link on their website for the HCBS Final Rule: <http://www.dds.ca.gov/Waiver/Home.cfm>. We do not want people to be blindsided by these changes so we will be having discussions with certain classifications of providers to go over what these regulations mean and what we are going to do to come into compliance to meet the new rules. We want more clarity first.

Lastly, as mentioned earlier, the Regional Center Board of Directors is developing the job description for the Executive Director vacancy as Clay Jones is retiring on December 31, 2016. We will be looking at active recruitment in the next couple of months. The Board will have their Annual Meeting this Friday and Saturday. The regular board meeting that is open to the public begins at 7:00p.m. and will be held at the Ukiah Regional Center office.

Kim also provided additional information about the trend of losing providers related to finances, low service provider rates reimbursement. When a service provider goes out of business related to finances, Regional Centers report this information to ARCA.

### **October 2017 reporting requirements**

There was discussion among members about ideas and strategies and it was good to hear about what other areas are looking at. Although prior formulas give an idea of what the requirements may look like, the bottom line is, at this point, we do not know specifics yet and will have to wait for the exact format. When information is available, Kim will send it out and we will discuss at future meetings.

### **Trailer bill language changes for:**

- Placement bonus for Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) clarified- Covers all providers, \$1,000 after 30 days, \$1,250 after 6 mos., and \$1,500 after 1 yr. This is not just supported employment providers but also includes individual placement providers (service code 055). If you

are helping people to get jobs and keep jobs for at least 30 days you are eligible for these payments (Not just Department of Rehabilitation providers). The ARCA Employment committee was instrumental in adding this and there will be clarifying regulation coming out to make sure we have an equitable way of getting out the bonus. The incentive is based on 30 hours of work per week (considered full-time) but, in certain cases the required number of hours can be fewer as related to the person's individual (physical) needs which would require justification and would be reviewed by Regional Center and the Department of Developmental Services. Written regulations will be coming out.

- Internship placements - There is no incentive payment. Programs, for example, Project Search in LA, works with a large hospital as a potential employer supporting people in internships. In this case, if the individual is hired at the end of the internship, they (Project Search) would not be eligible for an incentive payment. In our area we do not typically have internships.

### **Website Language**

The group previously discussed having information about Alliance of Service Providers on the Redwood Coast Regional Center website. The group reviewed and discussed two samples of proposed language. The members present selected the shorter version for the website and going forward will be posting the meeting schedule, agendas and minutes as well. The Regional Center Board will vote on their meeting schedule this Friday after which, Pam will work with Donna Landry to schedule the video conference meeting rooms for the ASP meetings. Kim will assist to get the information posted on the website.

### **CDSA lawsuit re: 5.82% overtime for SLS and respite**

The government did not issue the increase payment when the law became effective. The lawsuit is for providers to be paid back for the interim period (October-December) they were not paid. This is still pending in the court system.

### **Open Discussion**

The local Self Determination Advisory Committee is meeting on July 29, 2016 so if people who may be interested in joining the committee want to call in and listen to get an idea of the group before applying to be on the Committee, the agenda and call in number will be posted on the Regional Center website. The State Council Quality Assurance Program will be working on the next phase of the National Core Indicators Project so clients/families will be getting surveys in the mail we really appreciate everyone's help to encourage people to fill out the surveys.

**Next Meeting-To be determined after the Regional Center Board meeting.**

**Meeting adjourned at 11:40.**