

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES - DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
Substance Abuse Prevention and Control
Provider Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary – April 9, 2024

Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) MEMBERS PRESENT (20): Gary Tsai, M.D., (Co-Chair), Kathy Watt (Co-Chair), Jose Aguilar, Julia Corea, Deena Duncan, Alice Gleghorn, Baldomero “Junie” Gonzalez, Sophie Ramillon, Maricela Gray, Collete Harley, Joann Hemstreet, Jonathan Higgins, Hiroko Makiyama, Nely Meza-Andrade, Rocio Quezada, Jose Salazar, Liana Sanchez, Jim Symington, William Taetzsch, and Edith Urner

Substance Abuse Prevention and Control REPRESENTATIVES (28): Allison Kwan, Alyssa Cohen, Ana San, Antonne Moore, April Stump-Earwood, Armen Ter-Barsegyan, Bernie Lau, Brian Hurley, Daniel Deniz, Daniel Suzhay, David Hindman, Francisco Reyes, Gary Tsai, Glenda Pinney, Greg Schwarz, Ilish Perez, Julie Lo, Kimia Ramezani, Maria Elena Chavez, Mark Pfof, Megala Sivashanmugam, Michelle Gibson, Nancy Crosby, Nima Amini, Tina Kim, Yanira Lima, Yvette Humphrey-Jones, Zena Yusuf

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (26): Amy Mcilvaine (CIBHS), Ana Vicuna (Phoenix House), Catherine Seneris (DHS), Christopher Botten(CIBHS), Claudia Murillo (House of Hope), Dan Hoong (HealthRIGHT360), Darlene Walker (Lundquist), Eva Hernandez (LA CADA), Gabriel Hill (IPS), Halina Fardin (Unknown), Jacqueline Cortez (Protoypes), John Gray (LA CADA), Juan Navarro (LA CADA), Karen Marder (NCADD-SFV), Ken Seman LCSW (Cambodian USA), Leslie Dishman (CIBHS), Lisa Moreno (Prototypes), Lynetta Hale (Social Model Recovery Systems), Mark Malone (Fred Brown), Michael Jung (Institute for Public Strategies), Pedram Moshfegh (Phoenix House), Pranab Banskota (CIBHS), Richard Cuevas (Chabad), Vanessa Ramirez (Prototypes), Vincent Contreras (LA CADA)

Unnamed guests on teleconference (1)

ABSENT (3): Celia Aragon, Nina Glassman, Aris Tubadeza

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED: PAC Meeting Agenda; PAC Meeting Minutes (February 13, 2024); Meeting Presentation Slides

| Topic | Discussion/Finding | Recommendations, Action, Follow-up |
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| Welcome | <p>Dr. Gary Tsai, MD, Bureau Director, Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health (DPH), Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (SAPC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcomed PAC members | |
| Approval of Meeting Minutes | <p>Armen Ter-Barsegyan, DPH, Systems of Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Armen Ter-Barsegyan (DPH) presented the February 13, 2024, meeting minutes. A motion to approve the meeting minutes with no changes was advanced by Liana Sanchez (Los Angeles Centers for Alcohol and Drug Abuse) and second by Jim Symington (Compatior). | |
| Business Technology Workgroup (BT) | <p>Jim Symington, Compatior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jim Symington (Compatior) announced that the workgroup’s next meeting will be on April 11, 2024, during which the Sage team will be discussing new Sage features and listening to feedback. | |
| Key Indicator Workgroup | <p>Jonathan Higgins, Beacon House</p> | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jonathan Higgins (Beacon House) stated that the workgroup’s next meeting is scheduled for April 22, 2024. He also mentioned that a meeting with SAPC leadership was held to review the direction of the workgroup and to determine whether this group will continue or if a related new workgroup may be established. | |
| Building Communities of Belonging (formerly CLAS) | <p>Baldomero Gonzalez, Cri-Help, Inc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baldomero Gonzalez (Cri-Help) stated that since the last PAC meeting, the workgroup has convened twice. The most recent meeting, held on April 3, 2024, focused on presenting language services criteria related to the monthly Network Adequacy Certification Application requirements, including the language assistance add-on. | |
| Certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists | <p>Zena Yusuf, DPH, Systems of Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zena Yusuf (SAPC) presented information about the Peer Exam Preparation workshop that was completed with the Department of Mental Health. A staff member from CalMHSA and two Certified Peer panelists attended the workshop and answered questions about logistics and training. The Clinical Standards and Training Team plans to offer Peer training once each quarter. She added that the first Peer application cycle ended in March 2024 with 38 applications received, which are currently being reviewed. Decisions will be released in May 2024. She also informed attendees that 30 Certified Peers were onboarded into Sage as of April 1, from agencies including Tarzana Treatment Centers, LACADA, AADAP, Grandview, and Motivational Recovery Services. | |
| PAC Membership | <p>Armen Ter-Barsegyan, DPH, Systems of Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Armen Ter-Barsegyan (DPH) reminded everyone that PAC membership applications are opening soon and invited staff members within SAPC’s provider network to apply. He also stated that approval from the agency’s executive director is required to proceed with the application. Additionally, the general guidelines for PAC member terms were addressed. | |
| PCNX Draft Notes | <p>Liana Sanchez (LA CADA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liana Sanchez (LA CADA) inquired about the capability in PCNX to revert finalized notes to draft status for modification. David Hindman (DPH) of the Sage Management Unit explained that technical assistance efforts are underway to address this issue and that ongoing improvements are being made to system functionalities. These improvements will allow providers to correct their notes without needing a helpdesk ticket. This new functionality, currently under development, is a high priority and aims to make the system more user-friendly and efficient. | |
| FY 24-25 Rates | <p>Dr. Gary Tsai (DPH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Gary Tsai (DPH) discussed SAPC’s plan for a rate increase of 3.08% for 2024-25 fiscal year, aligned with the state-level market. While SAPC is still confirming whether this rate applies uniformly across all services, such as residential, the general expectation is that there will be a uniform increase. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daniel Deniz (DPH) elaborated that once these rate adjustments are confirmed, SAPC will update | |

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| | <p>the rates matrix accordingly and start configuration by the end of April 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Baldomero Gonzalez (Cri-Help) expressed concern about the substantial effort required in the process of Capacity Building, highlighting the frequency of meetings and the challenging workloads of managing multiple categories. ○ Dr. Gary Tsai (DPH) indicated an understanding of the need for adjustments and simplicity and emphasized ongoing internal discussions aimed at simplifying processes while maintaining the effectiveness of their payment reform strategy. ○ JoAnn Hemstreet, (HHCLA) highlighted a concern regarding the inequitable allocation of Capacity funds between treatment providers and harm reduction syringe service programs. ○ Dr. Gary Tsai (DPH) acknowledged the payment reforms and the possibility of creating incentive structures for harm reduction agencies. He indicated a willingness to consider adjustments to better support harm reduction efforts in terms of administrative burdens. | |
| <p>Data Collection in Enhancing Agency Operations</p> | <p>Dr. Gary Tsai (DPH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dr. Gary Tsai (DPH) discussed the importance of agencies to collect and analyze data regarding their revenue, costs, and service delivery expenses to navigate organizational changes effectively. He asked other providers about their experiences and challenges in collecting such data. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jonathan Higgins (Beacon House) shared that his agency uses accounting software to generate detailed reports on revenue, expenses, and operational margins, but noted lacking comprehensive methods in collecting other types of data, like staff productivity and client satisfaction. ○ Dr. Gary Tsai (DPH) acknowledged the importance of productivity data to understand whether financial rates set by the state can adequately support agencies. He stressed the need to not only collect data but also use data strategically to guide agencies toward improvement toward their operational and financial health. | |
| <p>Addiction Medication Services within SAPC Network</p> | <p>Dr. Brian Hurley (DPH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dr. Brian Hurley (DPH) presented information about 1E Workforce Development Capacity Building Initiative that offers startup funding to be combined with agency funds to support the integration of prescribing clinicians into agencies. Information on this issue is updated on the Workforce Development website. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The program requires agencies to submit an implementation plan and invoice for approval, but the plan doesn't need to be fully executed before funding is provided. ○ The implementation plan must guarantee that medications approved by the FDA for treating alcohol, opioid, and tobacco use disorders are accessible through prescribing clinicians. ○ At least 20% of service hours should be provided in person to adequately address patient needs. | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prescribing clinicians must have expertise in addiction treatment and coordinate care effectively, including referring patients to methadone treatment if they are not authorized to prescribe methadone themselves. | |
| Timeline for Incentive and Capacity Building Benchmarks | <p>Michelle Gibson (DPH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Michelle Gibson (DPH) outlined efforts to build incentives for the next fiscal year and beyond. She highlighted the need for continuous agency and stakeholder engagement and the intention to progressively shift from Capacity Building to an incentive-based approach as part of a broader move towards value-based care. ● Michelle mentioned that mandatory components are not expected for the next year, but long-term plans are aimed at integrating these strategies into regular operations. ● Dr. Tsai (DPH) added that collecting data at the end of the fiscal year doesn't allow timely analysis for planning the next year's rates, proposing a shift to set benchmarks by the end of the third quarter. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Karen Marder (NCADD-SFV) inquired how release of information entries will be tracked to show the required percentage of patient documentations. ○ Greg Schwarz (DPH) responded that they are exploring options within Sage to manage this data more effectively. | |
| R95 Implementation Quotes | <p>Dr. Gary Tsai (DPH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dr. Gary Tsai (DPH) encouraged providers to share their experience of implementing the R95 Initiative as these could be beneficial for a presentation scheduled for a statewide conference. Narratives can be submitted to Mayra Colunga - MColungaAguilera@ph.lacounty.gov. | |
| Meeting Wrap Up | <p>Armen Ter-Barsegyan, DPH, Systems of Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Armen Ter-Barsegyan (DPH) provided a highlights of discussion during the meeting: <p>Decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The PAC approved the meeting minutes for February 13, 2024. <p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The PAC can submit narratives about their R95 Initiative experience to Mayra Colunga at MColungaAguilera@ph.lacounty.gov. | |
| Public Comment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● None provided | |
| Next Meeting | Next meeting is scheduled for June 11, 2024, at 2 PM – 4pm. This will be a hybrid meeting. | |

Reviewed and Approved by – Y.Lima