

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES - DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH**  
**Substance Abuse Prevention and Control**  
**Provider Advisory Committee**

**Meeting Summary – November 8, 2022**

**Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) MEMBERS PRESENT ON MICROSOFT TEAMS:** Dr. Gary Tsai (Chair), Kathy Watt (Co-Chair), Jose Aguilar, Deena Duncan, Brandon Fernandez, Nina Glassman, Christina Gonzales, Baldomero (Junie) Gonzalez, Colette Harley, JoAnn Hemstreet, Jonathan Higgins, Hiroko Makiyama, Efrain Marquez (Proxy for Denise Shook), Nely Meza, Claudia Murillo, Nora O’Connor, Rocio Quezada, Liana Sanchez, Jim Symington, William Taetzsch, Aris Tubadeza, Edith Urner, Wendie Warwick

**Substance Abuse Prevention and Control REPRESENTATIVES:** Nima Amini, Mandi Bane, Emily Caesar, Alyssa Cohen, Nancy Crosby, Daniel Deniz, Michelle Gibson, Marquisha Henderson, David Hindman, Brian Hurley, Celeste Hutchason, Kyle Kennedy, Samson Kung, Allison Kwan, Yanira A. Lima, Julie Lo, Adam Loomis, Marika Medrano, Antonne Moore, Glenda Pinney, Siddarth Puri, Kimia Ramezani, Belia Sardinha, Ami Shah, Megala Sivashanmugam, Rosemary Taing, Anulkah Thomas, Erika Valdez, Roselyn Valdez, Zena Yusuf

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** Pranab Banskota (CIBHS), Christopher Botten (CIBHS), Charlotte Bullen (CIBHS), Leslie Dishman (CIBHS), Amy Mcilvaine (CIBHS), Bill Tarkanian (L.A. CADA), Salina Vigil (CIBHS)

**MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED:** PAC Meeting Agenda; PAC Meeting Minutes (September 13, 2022); Reaching the 95% Workgroup Report

Topic	Discussion/Finding	Recommendations, Action, Follow-up
<b>Welcome</b>	<p><b>Gary Tsai, M.D., Director, Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health (DPH), Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (SAPC)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anulkah Thomas (DPH-SAPC) confirmed quorum established.</li> </ul>	
<b>Approval of Meeting Minutes</b>	<p><b>Emily Caesar, Systems of Care, DPH-SAPC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emily Caesar (DPH-SAPC) presented 9/13/22 meeting minutes.</li> <li>Motion to approve by Claudia Murillo (House of Hope) with a second motion by Deena Duncan (VOA). PAC members indicated approval in the chat: Jim Symington, Deena Duncan, Aris Tubadeza, Rocio Quezada, William Taetzsch, Kathy Watt, Jose Aguilar, Nina Glassman, JoAnn Hemstreet, Christina Gonzales, Colette Harley (James), Nely Meza. No members expressed objections.</li> <li>The finalized minutes will be posted on the PAC website.</li> </ul>	Minutes approved and <a href="#">posted</a> with no changes.
<b>Proposed CY 2023 PAC Meeting Dates</b>	<p><b>Anulkah Thomas, Systems of Care, DPH-SAPC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anulkah Thomas (DPH-SAPC) presented proposed PAC meeting dates for the 2023 calendar year. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tuesday, February 14, 2 – 4 pm</li> <li>Tuesday, April 11, 2 – 4 pm</li> <li>Tuesday, June 13, 2 – 4 pm</li> <li>Tuesday, August 8, 2 – 4 pm</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuesday, October 10, 2 – 4 pm</li> <li>• Tuesday, December 12, 2 – 4 pm</li> <li>• Anulkah stated PAC meetings will be held bi-monthly, but the first meeting of the year would be in February instead of January, as was originally proposed at 9/13/22 meeting. This means meetings will take place in the months between each All-Treatment Provider meeting instead of in the same month.</li> <li>• Yanira Lima (DPH-SAPC) added that these dates were presented at that morning’s All-Treatment Provider meeting and will be posted on the PAC website once approved.</li> <li>• Motion to approve by Christina Gonzales (Impact) with a second motion by Deena Duncan (VOA). PAC members indicated approval in the chat: Jim Symington, Aris Tubadeza, Jose Aguilar, Brandon Fernandez-Comer, JoAnn Hemstreet, Kathy Watt, Deena Duncan, William Taetzsch, Nina Glassman, Hiroko Makiyama, Rocio Quezada. No members expressed objections.</li> <li>• Anulkah will send Outlook appointments for the approved dates and cancel the holds for the dates proposed at the September PAC meeting.</li> </ul>	<p>Schedule approved with no changes. SAPC sent out Outlook appointments for 2023 meetings.</p>
<p><b>PAC Awards Workgroup Update</b></p>	<p><b>Claudia Murillo, Workgroup Member, House of Hope</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Claudia Murillo stated that she, Kathy Watt (Van Ness Recovery House), Liana Sanchez (L.A. CADA), and Jonathan Higgins (Beacon House) have met twice to plan an award program celebrating providers. The workgroup proposed two general award categories, each with two areas for recognition. The agency-level awards will be for Collaborative Spirit and Community Impact. The individual awards will be for Change Agent and Leadership.</li> <li>• The workgroup proposes that agencies can nominate other organizations, but not their own. However, nominees for the individual awards can be submitted by colleagues within their own agency.</li> <li>• The workgroup plans to finalize the details by the end of the year, make applications available in January, and distribute the awards in the spring.</li> <li>• Edith Urner (Exodus Recovery) stated she loves the idea and asked about the nomination process. Claudia responded there will be a standard application distributed via email.</li> <li>• Brandon Fernandez-Comer (Cri-Help) also expressed enthusiasm about the awards and the categories.</li> <li>• Junie Gonzalez (Fred Brown Recovery Services) asked how award recipients would be chosen, pointing out most providers are only familiar with staff at their own agencies. Dr. Tsai stated that SAPC staff can assist the workgroup to create guidelines that address these sorts of details.</li> <li>• Claudia stated that the workgroup intends to use the PAC new member application process as a model and would include SAPC staff in the decision-making.</li> <li>• Kathy added that if the committee needs more information they will reach out to the nominator. She also acknowledged that there may be growing pains since this is the first year. She noted that this first year of awards would take into consideration accomplishments dating back to the start of the pandemic.</li> <li>• Claudia added that the workgroup plans to launch the process at the All-Treatment Provider meeting so that awareness and participation is not just confined to the PAC.</li> <li>• Dr. Tsai indicated approval in concept and affirmed that SAPC staff would provide support to operationalize.</li> </ul>	<p>PAC Awards Workgroup will operationalize award process with support from SAPC</p>

<p><b>Business Technology Workgroup Update</b></p>	<p><b>Jim Symington, Workgroup Co-Lead, Compator; Aris Tubadeza, Workgroup Co-Lead, AADAP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jim Symington (Compator) shared that the workgroup has met twice since the last PAC meeting and is working to identify focus areas. The workgroup conducted a survey to gather information on areas of interest. The top three focus areas were claims, processes/workflows, and peer expertise exchange.</li> <li>• Jim stated the co-leads are now thinking about surveying the full network for a better picture of top concerns and learn more about what providers expect from business technology and how it could be improved.</li> <li>• Jim also shared that the workgroup considers the State’s requirement for all providers to have a patient portal to be an important topic to explore. Aris Tubadeza (AADAP) added that agencies should start to think about how they will meet this requirement.</li> <li>• Jim shared that the workgroup is instituting a spreadsheet to track next steps for topics discussed.</li> <li>• Jim advised that the next workgroup meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 17, 2022, at 3 p.m.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Reaching the 95% Workgroup Update</b></p>	<p><b>Deena Duncan, Workgroup Co-Lead, Volunteers of America; Bill Tarkanian, Workgroup Co-Lead, L.A. CADA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deena Duncan (VOA) delivered a presentation reviewing the workgroup’s process and recommendations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 15 PAC members representing a variety of modalities participated in the workgroup.</li> <li>○ The workgroup came up with a list of strategies and recommendations that was narrowed into two categories: Understanding the 95% and Services for the 95%. Recommendations include an emphasis on overdose prevention, evidence-based practices, harm reduction, and recovery support. The workgroup believes using an HIV/AIDS outreach model will be instrumental in reaching this group. Specifically, the workgroup recommends: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Require provider staff receive trainings in these areas;</li> <li>▪ SAPC to survey the provider workforce on perceptions of MAT and use this information to identify education and training needs;</li> <li>▪ Support widespread community education, like the new promotional videos shared during the <a href="#">Strategic Network Development branch's presentation</a> at <a href="#">11/8 All-Treatment Provider meeting</a>;</li> <li>▪ Increase collaboration among providers;</li> <li>▪ Address stigma around SUD;</li> <li>▪ Offer services within the context of addressing other health issues in order to promote health living, safe usage, and building rapport;</li> <li>▪ Improve front office etiquette to make initiating services a warmer experience; and</li> <li>▪ Meet clients “where they are” by not making full abstinence a condition for receiving services.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Bill Tarkanian (L.A. CADA) thanked Deena for creating the slides and sharing the workgroup recommendations. He added that it took the workgroup time to coalesce around a direction for the work, but once they did the group put in incredible effort. He acknowledged their work only scratched the surface and expressed a need to dig further into this issue.</li> <li>• Bill also confirmed with Anulkah that the report would be posted and shared with the PAC.</li> <li>• Dr. Tsai thanked Deena for the presentation. He stated that given the expansive nature of the recommendations it is necessary to drill down to specific areas of focus.</li> </ul>	<p>SAPC distributed Reaching the 95% workgroup report to PAC</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ As a next step, SAPC wants the network to find ways to optimize engagement and outreach and learn from agencies that successfully employ admission policies that do not require abstinence. Dr. Tsai acknowledged outreach and engagement are broad buckets and said that SAPC will circle back with a more organized response.</li> <li>○ Dr. Tsai acknowledged this work will be done in the context of a system undergoing state-mandated changes and that SAPC and the network should focus efforts where changes can be implemented.</li> <li>● Christina Gonzales (Impact) stated that treatment agencies will need resources to do engagement and outreach since it is out of their contracted scope.</li> <li>● Dr. Tsai said the network could also leverage the 30- and 60-day policy that allows for DMC reimbursable services before an assessment or diagnosis as an opportunity for engagement.</li> <li>● JoAnn Hemstreet (Homeless Health Care of Los Angeles) encouraged CENS and syringe exchange contractors to participate in the next steps because they already touch the population of interest. She recommended SAPC could also recruit participants from these fields.</li> <li>● Kathy Watt (Van Ness) added that providers should take an open-minded approach to the concept of lowered barriers and noted that the true statistic is now closer to 97%.</li> </ul> <p>NOTE: The <a href="#">presentation slides</a> and the <a href="#">workgroup report</a> are both available on the <a href="#">PAC website</a>.</p>	<p>SAPC provided response to recommendations and will work with network to implement high priority items</p>
<p><b>SAPC Response to Funding Utilization Report</b></p>	<p><b>Gary Tsai, M.D., Director, DPH-SAPC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dr. Tsai displayed the <a href="#">SAPC response</a>, which was shared with the workgroup and will be distributed to the PAC.</li> <li>● Kathy Watt (Van Ness) suggested the workgroup re-convene to form responses to return to SAPC. Claudia Murillo (House of Hope) agreed that this is a good next step and that it was helpful to hear SAPC’s response so they can understand how to frame future reports.</li> <li>● Christina Gonzales (Impact) stated that half of the Workgroup is no longer part of the PAC. While they can still attend because the meetings are open, many may not have the time because they have committed to other projects. Christina recommended that SAPC keep this in mind when responding to future workgroup recommendations. Dr. Tsai agreed this is important to consider. Kathy added that it is important for PAC members to mentor colleagues for future PAC participation so initiatives can continue across terms.</li> </ul>	<p>SAPC distributed response document to PAC and <a href="#">posted</a> on PAC webpage.</p> <p>FUW met to review SAPCs feedback and provided a response.</p>
<p><b>New Monthly Practitioner Updates Procedure</b></p>	<p><b>Ami Shah, Strategic and Network Development, DPH-SAPC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ami Shah presented an overview of the proposed process for monthly practitioner reporting (see PAC presentation <a href="#">slides 30-42</a>) and requested feedback.</li> <li>● Brandon Fernandez-Comer (Cri-Help) said he understands this is a state requirement but noted it presents an additional administrative burden on top of the already time-consuming annual update. Ami explained that there are less steps for this monthly update process.</li> <li>● Junie Gonzalez (Fred Brown) encouraged peers to be mindful that although an increased administrative burden comes with changes, each year SAPC takes in feedback and uses it to improve processes.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colette Harley (SHIELDS for Families) expressed enthusiasm that her agency can now use one process to satisfy both DMH and SAPC requirements since DMH already requires these updates. The monthly frequency also means that there will be less updates to make for the annual update.</li> <li>• Dr. Tsai stated that this requirement is part of the State’s effort to better align requirements across the mental health and SUD systems.</li> <li>• Christina Gonzales (Impact) referenced a question posed at the All-Treatment Provider meeting about agency capacity to manage increased quality assurance activities due to new requirements such as this; the response given at the meeting was that this work falls under the indirect cost line item. Christina asked if DMH also had a 10% indirect cost rate. Daniel Deniz (DPH-SAPC) said he would find out and report back.</li> </ul>	<p>SAPC-Finance staff to find out DMH indirect cost rate and share information with PAC</p>
<p><b>Discussion Items</b></p>	<p><b>Anulkah Thomas, Systems of Care, DPH-SAPC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anulkah (DPH-SAPC) explained that DPH-SAPC offers a list of discussion topics in two categories. <i>Priority Focuses</i>, items recently suggested by PAC members; <i>Parking Lot</i>, more general topics of interest and evolving issues.</li> <li>• Anulkah invited William Taetzsch (Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services) to introduce the discussion topic he submitted. Will explained it is sometimes difficult to find open RBH beds for clients and opened discussion regarding potential causes. He also asked if SAPC has done anything to increase the number of beds available.</li> <li>• Yanira Lima (DPH-SAPC) explained that SAPC has expanded RBH capacity by 200 beds over the last year and a half, making for a current total of about 1200 beds. However, she noted that SAPC data shows underutilization of available beds within the network.</li> <li>• Edith Urner (Exodus Recovery) shared that her facility is launching a RBH program and asked about the authorization process. Dr. Brian Hurley (DPH-SAPC) explained that after the RBH provider submits an authorization, the SAPC Care Manager checks for a corresponding outpatient authorization in the system, noting that this authorization does not have to be from the RBH provider. If there is not yet an authorization in the system, then the RBH providers should provide care coordination services.</li> <li>• Brandon Fernandez-Comer (Cri-Help) stated it is helpful to have a strong relationship and rapport with RBH providers. He added that the UM team requires a letter from the outpatient provider certifying the client is scheduled for admission on a specific date and time. Dr. Hurley confirmed this is sufficient evidence that a patient is entering a residential program.</li> <li>• Christina Gonzales (Impact) added it is also important to know the RBH staff member that processes the RBH authorizations and to monitor the date of discharge for billing purposes.</li> <li>• Liana Sanchez (L.A. CADA) stated it is important to maintain open lines of communication if the new RBH client is still receiving outpatient services from the referring provider to track hours of service completed.</li> <li>• Junie Gonzalez (Fred Brown) said these transitions work best when the referring provider coordinates about a week in advance.</li> <li>• Nora O'Connor (JWCH Institute) shared that JWCH Institute has 22 RBH beds for women at two locations in South Los Angeles. Colleagues can contact RBH Coordinator Natividad Diaz at 323-519-0631 to establish rapport. Nora is available for support in navigating the authorization process and can be reached at <a href="mailto:noconnor@jwch.org">noconnor@jwch.org</a>.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>SAPC Announcements</b></p>	<p><b>Anulkah Thomas, Systems of Care, DPH-SAPC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anulkah Thomas invited SAPC Branch Chiefs to provide updates on action items from 9/13/22 PAC meeting.</li> <li>• On behalf of Marika Medrano (DPH-SAPC), Anulkah advised that in response to a request at the last meeting, the Contracts team would make All Treatment Provider meeting materials available ahead of the meeting time.</li> <li>• Dr. David Hindman (DPH-SAPC) shared that revision dates had been added to the CST trainings posted on the SAPC website.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Brainstorm Topics for Elevation at Future Meetings</b></p>	<p><b>Emily Caesar, Systems of Care, DPH-SAPC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emily Caesar (DPH-SAPC) asked participants if they had recommendations for future agenda or discussion items. No recommendations were offered.</li> <li>• Emily encouraged PAC members to provide suggestions to Anulkah (<a href="mailto:athomas2@ph.lacounty.gov">athomas2@ph.lacounty.gov</a>) and/or Kathy (<a href="mailto:wattvnrh@aol.com">wattvnrh@aol.com</a>).</li> <li>• Kathy Watt (Van Ness) requested that the information Dr. Tina Kim (DPH-SAPC) shared at the most recent Reaching the 95% Workgroup meeting be distributed to the entire PAC. Anulkah agreed to include that information in the meeting follow-up package.</li> </ul>	<p>SAPC distributed Dr. Kim’s “95%” presentation information</p>
<p><b>Meeting Wrap Up</b></p>	<p><b>Anulkah Thomas, Systems of Care, DPH-SAPC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 9/13/22 PAC meeting minutes approved.</li> <li>○ 2023 meeting schedule approved.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• PAC Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ PAC Awards Workgroup will work on operationalization of the award process with support from SAPC.</li> <li>○ Funding Utilization Workgroup will review SAPCs feedback and prepare a response.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• DPH-SAPC Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Send Outlook appointments for 2023 PAC meetings (even-numbered months) and cancel the holds sent in September (for odd-numbered months).</li> <li>○ Include the FUW recommendations feedback document and the Reaching the 95% Workgroup report with the PAC meeting follow-up email.</li> <li>○ Distribute Dr. Kim’s 11/3/22 presentation to the Reaching the 95% Workgroup to the full PAC.</li> <li>○ Provide response to Reaching the 95% Workgroup report recommendations and plan next steps.</li> <li>○ Report back with information on DMH’s indirect cost rate.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>Public Comment</b></p>	<p><b>Gary Tsai, Systems of Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No comments made by members of the public.</li> <li>• Kathy Watt (Van Ness) closed the final meeting of the year by thanking the PAC for their hard work.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Next Meeting</b></p>	<p>Next meeting is scheduled for February 14, 2023, at 2 pm.</p>	

*Reviewed and Approved by: Y.Lima (DPH-SAPC)  
Date: 1/26/2023*