

Developmental Disabilities Council of Contra Costa County
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
January 22, 2025

Board and Liaison Members Present: Alicia Jackson; Caroline Ortiz; Christine Rottger; Christy Lam-Julian; Estela Nunez; Katherine Kreft; Laura Corbett; Pam Perls; Ramsay Mashy; Ria Mercado; Seth Hendricks; Troy Russell; Will Sanford

Staff: Vi Ibarra

Board and Liaison Members Excused: Karen Lingenfelter, Nickole Bouslog

Guests: Lisa Kleinbub, Regional Center of the East Bay; Dan Hogue, Las Trampas; Vanessa Cendejas, City of Walnut Creek (Social Services division); Aimee Vitug-Hom, VistAbility; Donna Feingold, HireAble and Finding Golden Solutions; Marianne Iversen, Down Syndrome Connection of the Bay Area; Jennifer Quallick, Supervisor Candace Andersen's team; Rosa Valledor – Parent; Elvia Osorio-Rodriguez, RCEB; Louise McClellan, Open House Center; Mateo Ibarra, Nora Lewis, Kevin Costte, Kevin Mayo, Nicole Strobel, Jeremy Dunbar, Tyler Bohon- All Specialty Health Ambassadors; Lisa Ribitch, Full Circle of Choices; Jason Parks, Las Trampas; Erik Estrada, MDUSD; Daniel Volta, Matthew Ferrer, Daniel Flournoy, Craig Rose, Julie Molinari- all with VistAbility; Leslie Visbal

Welcome, Establish Quorum, and Introductions:

Will welcomed everyone to the meeting at 10:01 a.m. Today's meeting was hybrid, with Council members and guests attending either in-person at Las Trampas in Lafayette or on Zoom. Annette and Abigail, the Spanish interpreters, gave instructions on how to choose between Spanish and English interpretation. Guests were invited to introduce themselves and Zoom guests were asked to enter their names and affiliations in Chat for attendance purposes.

Vi took a roll call of board members and established a quorum.

The meeting minutes for November 20, 2024 were approved unanimously (M/Troy, S/Ramsay). There were no changes to the agenda.

UPDATES:

RCEB – Lisa Kleinbub

Lisa announced that Becky Nanyonjo, the new Executive Director, plans to attend next month's DDC meeting. RCEB is happy to have her onboard. She reported on a few updates:

- The Regional Centers are rolling out the new standardized IPP ~ they are waiting on the final signature page for the new form. Vi requested a presentation, and Ronke Sodipo is coordinating a presentation for the March 26th meeting.
- The Legislature is requiring a standardized respite process. A new tool should be available next year, along with a new system for establishing service providers. Concerns remain due to the uniqueness of each Regional Center.
- DDS is also standardizing how new applicants are assessed for intake eligibility within legal timeframes.
- The state and DDS are focused on supporting those impacted by the recent wildfires in Southern California. The Governor has committed additional funds for wildfire relief, and this could impact other projects. Sadly at least one person with cerebral palsy passed away. He lived in his family home. This highlights the importance of emergency preparedness. Families did not have a lot of warning.
- Finally, changes in the federal administration are raising concerns about people without documentation of residency and the potential impact on federal funding for services. This is being monitored closely.

Questions/Comments:

- There was a comment made about the rate reform and new service codes. People with an IPP early in the year may have to sign an updated IPP with the new service codes. Lisa hopes that DDS will clarify the issues by the time of the March meeting.

SCDD Bay Area Office – Gabriela Solval

Vi reported on Gabriela's behalf in her absence.

- Upcoming statewide trainings for January into February, in English and Spanish: IEP Strategies Part 1 and Part 2, Inclusive Education: Advocating for the Least Restrictive Environment. Here is the link to all [Upcoming statewide trainings](#).
- A reminder, to check out the State Council's Year-round [Sponsorship Opportunity](#): we support events that promote self-advocacy, leadership and education for the I/DD community. Submit a request at least 90 days before your event. There is a \$2500 limit per sponsorship.
- [Share your story](#) for a chance to be featured in SCDD's Storytellers Blog. And now you can [sign up](#) to get the latest posts straight to your email inbox.
- Bay Area People First will have PART 2 of their planning meeting with a presentation on 'Transforming Individual Advocacy to Systems Advocacy'. All are welcome to [join this meeting](#) Friday, January 31st, 2-3:30 PM.

Council Chairperson – Will Sanford

Will presented a 2025 Proposed Meeting Schedule. The proposed change is to have the summer planning meeting in June instead of August, do not meet in July and August, and then pick back up in September. A motion was made to move the planning meeting to June 25th and accept the proposed schedule (M/Caroline, S/Seth). It passed unanimously.

Executive Assistant to the Council – Vi Ibarra

A big thanks to Ramsay and Christy for today's refreshments. Board members are invited to sign up to bring refreshments to future meetings.

The annual awards event returned to in-person in 2024, and in 2025, it will be held in Alameda County. Volunteers are needed for planning, which will be coordinated by the two DDC councils. Meetings will take place on the 3rd Wednesday of each month leading up to the event. Volunteers include Troy, Ramsay, Christie, Estela, and Ria. If anyone else is interested in helping please contact Vi.

Membership – Troy Russell

Troy announced a new board member application. Jason Parks has been an advocate for people with IDD for the past 11 years, starting in direct service. He is eager to contribute to the board and has the capacity to take on responsibilities. He may not attend the next meeting as he plans to climb Kilimanjaro! A vote was taken, and Jason's nomination was approved unanimously. Welcome, Jason!

There are still 5 open seats. As a reminder, the bylaws require a specific mix of professionals and direct stakeholders, which are people with disabilities or their family members.

Community Liaison Reports:

Emergency Planning and Engagement – Aimee Vitug-Hom:

As talked about earlier, emergencies can happen at any time. Some emergency planning resources shared by DDS: [Listos California](#) and [CalHHS Emergency Guide](#). And go to [CA.gov/LAfires/](#) for helpful resources on preparing for emergencies, and also for ways to help those affected by the LA fires.

HireAble/Local Partnership Agreement – Donna Feingold:

HireAble is offering a free training today at 3 PM on how working and wages can affect SSI and SSDI benefits. Here is [the link to register for it](#). The training has received a good response but won't be offered as often as before.

There was not an LPA update.

Transition Task Force:

Vi talked about the transition task force being a group of professionals focused on professional development. They've had recent conversations around an alternative diploma pathway for people with significant disabilities.

Save the date for the joint transition-to-adult conference on Saturday, March 15th. This conference has been held at the College of Alameda in the past. The conference will rotate locations across the counties, with this year's event at DVC. Vendor registration for the fair will begin soon.

Workgroup Updates:

Transportation – Alicia Jackson:

Vi, and Alicia met with Debbie Toth via Zoom on January 9th to discuss several topics including the importance of attending Paratransit Coordinating Council (PCC) meetings to work on solutions. Also shared were updates on SHA travel training and resource lists including a list of allies. The workgroup meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month from 9-10 AM.

Vi shared a survey from the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), which is developing a new transportation plan. The survey has 10-12 questions, with the last one focused on transit for all. Completing the survey enters you into a drawing for a \$500 gift card. Here is the [Survey link](#).

Questions/Comments:

A question was asked about how survey responses will be used to report outcomes and inform decision-making. Vi can invite CCTA to present this information to the Council if that is requested by the Board.

Health Equity – Ria Mercado:

Ria gave a presentation on how the health equity survey has influenced the work group's actions. The presentation slides covered 6 key areas:

1. Timeline: The group is currently in the phase of identifying key collaborators from areas like aging, public health, and children's services.
2. Identification of Needs and Resources
3. Meeting Summaries
4. Identified Resources: See the links in Ria's presentation slides for resources like the Advisory Council on Aging and Mobility Matters. They also met with Jeff Nagafuji from RCEB to discuss Coordinated Family Services, where a case manager has been assigned to help interested individuals.
5. Ongoing Outreach: The workgroup contacted Cecile Puretez, Assistant Director of Disability Access and Inclusion at UCSF, and is working to schedule a training session for people with IDD.
6. Continuing Conversation: The long-term goal is to keep focusing on priorities.

Also, Ria encouraged to register for the County's Community Warning System to get emergency alerts by cell phone.

Lastly, the Open House Center still offers free flu vaccinations in a sensory-friendly setting. Vi, Ramsay, and Christie visited the new Open House site in Concord. It's state-of-the-art, future-focused, and client-centered. Vi encourages everyone to visit if possible!

Questions/Comments:

- A comment was made to clarify the distinction between Medi-Cal and Medicare.
- A question was asked about creating a training module to help collaborators understand what a developmental disability looks like, as doctors often don't fully grasp it. For example, Will mentioned the anthrax vaccination clinic at GMC Concord, where doctors asked questions that were unclear to the patients.
- A comment was made about Kaiser having a pediatric developmental disabilities committee. The question was raised on how to increase access to sensory-friendly settings there.
- A suggestion was made to also reach out to Children's Hospital.

~~~~~ A brief break was taken at 11:06 a.m. ~~~~~

**\*\*\*\*\* Presentation \*\*\*\*\***

**Governor's Proposed State Budget, with Focus on Impact to the  
Developmental Disabilities Service System  
By Will Sanford, EBLC Co-Chair**

Will presented a [slide deck](#) highlighting the federal government's role, the impact of the LA fires, and possible pauses on certain programs. Two major unknowns right now are the federal government's actions and the LA fires, which weren't factored into the Governor's budget.

Some notes from the presentation:

- DDS projects an estimated 500,000 people with IDD will be served in California. As long as a person has IDD, they will continue to receive services, regardless of background. The federal government recently clarified there is no in-between for these services.
- California is expected to end the year with around \$22.5B in reserves. Personal income tax makes up nearly 60% of the state's revenue, which can be volatile. Health and human services, including DDS, account for 37% of the state budget. The rate reform provides an additional \$3.2B in service funding ~ a really big win!
- The DDS budget document is 290 pages long. Will highlighted:
  - Provider Quality Incentive Payments (QIP) are not completely worked out at this point. It does propose implementation of a couple of things including DSP workforce training and wage differentials for staff who are multilingual including ASL
  - ASD makes up about 51% of the overall caseload, with 72% of those individuals aged 21 and older

- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has a new access rule that starts now and will be implemented through 2032
- The first draft of the Master Plan is expected in March 2025 but is not included in the budget
- Community Care Facilities are the largest recipients of increased funding
- Social Recreation and Camping have been moved to a different budget category, which could make tracking difficult
- The May budget revision will be crucial ~ along with decisions from the legislature and governor ~ but the federal government remains the biggest worry at the moment. A major concern is if the feds shift to block grants and the possibility of a capitated rate. The question is which year would be used to set that initial rate. If it's based on 2020, it would be a huge issue. Advocates, especially those in Republican-held areas, need to communicate the devastating impact block grants would have on our communities.

Questions and Comments:

A question was asked about the impact to Medi-Cal? Will pointed out the governor's proposal maintains its commitment to the program.

Public Comment and Announcements:

Elvia Osorio-Rodriguez clarified that Collaborative Family Support Services is a new program for children and families up to age 22. As compared to Coordinated Family Services is for adults over 22. Reach out to your case manager if interested.

Kyra Dixon from Walnut Creek shared a link to the March 29th [resource fair application](#). For more information, contact her at [dixon@walnut-creek.org](mailto:dixon@walnut-creek.org).

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 11:59 a.m.

|                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------|
| The next meeting will be held on February 26, 2025 |
|----------------------------------------------------|

Respectfully submitted by,  
*Aimee Vitug-Hom*  
VistAbility