

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES - DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH**  
**Substance Abuse Prevention and Control**  
**Provider Advisory Committee**  
**Meeting Summary – December 12, 2023**

**Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) MEMBERS PRESENT (20):** Gary Tsai, M.D., (Chair), Kathy Watt (Co-Chair), Jose Aguilar, Celia Aragon, Julia Corea, Deena Duncan, Nina Glassman, Alice Gleghorn, Baldomero “Junie” Gonzalez, Maricela Gray, Joann Hemstreet, Jonathan Higgins, Hiroko Makiyama, Nely Meza-Andrade, Rocio Quezada, Jose Salazar, Liana Sanchez, Jim Symington, William Taetzsch, Aris Tubadeza

**Substance Abuse Prevention and Control REPRESENTATIVES (25):** Adam Loomis, Allison Kwan, Ana San, Antonne Moore, April Stump-Earwood, Armen Ter-Barsegyan, Belia Sardinha, Bernie Lau, Brian Hurley, Crystal Boateng, Daniel Deniz, David Hindman, Edika Valdez, Francisco Reyes, Glenda Pinney, Greg Schwarz, Ilish Perez, Julie Lo, Ka Chi Wong, Kimia Ramezani, Kyle Kennedy, Maria Elena Chavez, Michelle Gibson, Nancy Crosby, Nima Amini.

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (22):** Amy Mcilvaine (CIBHS), Ana Vicuna (Phoenix House), Brandon Fernandez (Cri-Help), Casey Corr (Rancho San Antonio), Christopher Botten (CIBHS), Claudia Murillo (House of Hope), Daniel Valenzuela (HOPICS), Darlene Walker (Lundquist), Heather Ritchie (SPIRITT), Jason Sargent (BHS), Jennifer Herreres (Phoenix House), Leslie Dishman (CIBHS), Lily Fowler, Liz McGhee (Fred Brown Recovery Services), Mark Malone (Fred Brown Recovery Services), Mark Paredes (Mercy Heath), Nidi Pena (LACADA), Pedram Moshfegh (Phoenix House), Pranab Banskota (CIBHS), Richard Cuevas (Chabad Rehab), Tina Hughes (DPSS), Unnamed Guest (1)

**ABSENT (3):** Christina Gonzales, Collete Harley, Edith Urner

**MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED:** PAC Meeting Agenda; PAC Meeting Minutes (October 10, 2023); Meeting Presentation Slides

Topic	Discussion/Finding	Recommendations, Action, Follow-up
<b>Welcome</b>	<p><b>Dr. Gary Tsai, MD, Bureau Director, Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health (DPH), Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (SAPC)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcomed PAC members</li> </ul>	
<b>Approval of Meeting Minutes</b>	<p><b>Armen Ter-Barsegyan, DPH, Systems of Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Armen Ter-Barsegyan (DPH) presented the October 10, 2023, 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 seconded by Jonathan Higgins (Imagen).</li> </ul>	Minutes approved and <a href="#">posted</a> with no changes.
<b>Business Technology Workgroup (BT)</b>	<p><b>Jim Symington, Compator and Aris Tubadeza, AADAP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jim Symington (Compator) summarized the November 9 meeting, during which Julie Monji demonstrated the features of the PNCX Patient Handbook.</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Indicator Workgroup</b>	<p><b>Jonathan Higgins, Beacon House and Christina González, Principles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jonathan Higgins (Beacon House) summarized their October 30<sup>th</sup> meeting on the data collected from a six-question survey distributed to the PAC. The findings indicated a notable inconsistency across various provider networks. Due to canceling the November meeting, the Key Indicators report will be delayed for</li> </ul>	

	<p>another month. Additionally, he pointed out that the introduction of new incentives and CalAIM documentation requirements is motivating more providers to increase data collection efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kathy Watt encouraged the workgroup to provide reports in collaboration with PCNX.</li> <li>• Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 18, 2023 from 3pm-5pm</li> </ul>	
<b>Building Communities of Belonging (formerly CLAS)</b>	<p><b>Maricela Gray, House of Hope and Kathy Watt (Van Ness)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maricela Gray (House of Hope) introduce herself as the new co-chair for Building Communities of Belonging (formerly “CLAS”) workgroup. The group plans to partner with SAPC to identify gaps and recommend guidelines for culturally and linguistically appropriate services in the provider network.</li> <li>• The workgroup will meet the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesdays of each month from 9am – 10am.</li> <li>• The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> from 9am-10am.</li> </ul>	
<b>Certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists</b>	<p><b>Allison Kwan, DPH, Systems of Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allison Kwan (DPH) recapped the November 16 meeting to discuss opportunities and challenges to implementing the Certified Medi-Cal Peer Specialist Program. She summarized some of the challenges from the meeting, including: (1) Process of becoming a Peer (e.g. test anxiety); (2) Too many requirements to become a Peer; (3) Budget limitations due to low reimbursement rates; (4) Hiring restrictions due to limited scope of Peers; (5) Agencies unsure about Peer capabilities and scope.</li> <li>• Three upcoming training sessions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Thursday, December 14, 2023 @ 9am-11:30am: <a href="#">Deciphering the Codes: Connecting Clinical Services and Medi-Cal Service Codes</a></li> <li>2. Tuesday, January 9, 2024 @9am-11:15am: <a href="#">Enriching Substance Use Treatment with Certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Services</a></li> <li>3. Wednesday, February 14, 2024 @ 1pm-2pm: <a href="#">Peer Info Session</a></li> </ol> </li> <li>• For Technical Assistance, e-mail <a href="mailto:SAPC.CST@ph.lacounty.gov">SAPC.CST@ph.lacounty.gov</a></li> </ul>	
<b>Certifying Board Counselors</b>	<p><b>Nely Meza-Andrade (Casa Treatment Center)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nely Meza-Andrade (Casa Treatment Center) broached that due to delays on the accredited organizations end, this leads to lapse in recertifying SUD counselors and asked the PAC members if others are having issues too.</li> <li>• Will Taetzsch (Didi Hirsch) added that their agency encourages staff to follow up daily on the certification process, but their staff struggle with navigating the process and customer service is difficult to access.</li> <li>• Alice Gleghorn (Phoenix Houses) added that sometimes their employees will follow all of the recertification steps correctly on time, yet certification still lapses.</li> <li>• Deena Duncan (Volunteers of America) reported that, if providers write a letter that the employees job relies on their certification, CADTP will issue the certificate within a day.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JoAnn Hemstreet spoke about their supervisors taking an active role to ensure certification of staff. She also encourages staff to transfer to CADTP, since they're less expensive than CCAPP and have better customer service, and they offer expedited processing fee if in a rush.</li> <li>• Claudia Murillo (House of Hope) noted that the chat function with CCAPP has been successful in getting a better response.</li> <li>• Jose Salazar (Tarzana) spoke about advocating to change the regulation to allow credentialing organization to issue a <i>provisional</i> approval of application pending review.</li> <li>• Brandon Fernandez (Cri-Help) discussed being part of CCAPP's Board of Directors and encouraged PAC members to be vocal about these issues. He also discussed that CCAPP has a function that allows organizations to have supervisory control, so if there is a staff member submitting for recertification, supervisors can track progress and manage timeliness of submissions.</li> <li>• Dr. Tsai reported they will raise the issue with the three certifying organizations, who SAPC meets on a quarterly basis.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>SUD PSAs</b></p>	<p><b>James Symington (Compatior)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• James Symington (Compatior) discussed that SUD PSAs don't clearly list criteria for having SUD and encouraged messaging to be more direct and shocking.</li> <li>• Antonne Moore asked the PAC to think about what content would be helpful for a PSA campaign to encourage treatment. She encourages PAC to watch the SAPC's <a href="#">SUD PSA</a> and comment if there are pieces that should be more open or content that needs to be included. They can submit comments to Antonne Moore at <a href="mailto:anmoore@ph.lacounty.gov">anmoore@ph.lacounty.gov</a>.</li> <li>• Dr. Tsai discussed characteristics of an ideal R-95 PSA aimed at reaching individuals who may not recognize they have an SUD. He shared <a href="#">this PSA</a> as a good example.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>SB 43 and Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) Facilities within the Specialty SUD System</b></p>	<p><b>Dr. Gary Tsai, MD, Bureau Director, Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health (DPH), Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (SAPC)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr Tsai discussed SB43, which redefines grave disability to include severe SUD, so professionals who are designated to place individuals on 5150 holds, such as law enforcement, would be able to do so based on expanded grave disability definition for both medical care and personal safety. He asked if any agencies within PAC are interested in becoming an LPS facility.</li> <li>• JoAnn Hemstreet (Homeless Health Care) spoke about their agency trying to become an LPS facility years ago but they were not eligible. Their goal was to lessen reliance on another crisis intervention team (e.g. DMH) to visit agency to evaluate individuals, which can take hours when requested.</li> <li>• Brandon Fernandez (Cri-Help) discussed that he believes that most PAC members would not be interested in providing these services and that their internal staff are against involuntary SUD treatment.</li> <li>• Dr. Tsai found these points valid and had expressed similar concerns before SB43 was signed.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>PAC 2023 Reflections</b></p>	<p><b>Dr. Gary Tsai, MD, Bureau Director, Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health (DPH), Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (SAPC)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Tsai thanked the PAC members for their contributions. Recently, SAPC shared <a href="#">SAHMSA advisory</a> that was drafted about low barrier SUD care. Looking ahead, the State plans to transition to a value-based reimbursement model. The primary objective is to strategize the use of data during the fee-for-service period. This approach will facilitate a smoother transition for organizations as they start adopting various models of value-based reimbursement, thereby easing the shift towards these new reimbursement frameworks.</li> <li>• 2022 data has been released, and compared to 2021, there were over 3,200 overdose deaths per year and fentanyl surpassed methamphetamine for contribution to those deaths.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Follow-Up to R95 A&amp;D PAC Feedback</b></p>	<p><b>Michelle Gibson, Deputy Director, DPH</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michelle Gibson (DPH) discussed that there is an updated R95 Admission Policy that includes edits in track changes and comments to feedback discussed in the November 14 meeting. A final version is <a href="#">posted</a> and a clean version will be released tomorrow. People can also visit provide more feedback by attending meetings listed on the <a href="#">SAPC R95 Workgroup and Deliverables calendar</a>. Any adjustments to due dates will show up on the link.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>PAC Awards - 2024</b></p>	<p><b>Armen Ter-Barsegyan, DPH, Systems of Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Armen Ter-Barsegyan discussed that the PAC awards are a provider-driven process to acknowledge agencies and individuals across the SUD provider network. A workgroup will be created to plan for 2024 PAC awards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ PAC members who volunteered include Claudia Murillo (House of Hope), Kathy Watt (Van Ness), Liana Sanchez (LACADA), Maricela Gray (House of Hope), Jonathan Higgins (Beacon House), Nely Meza-Andrade (Casa Treatment Centers)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Kathy Watt encouraged PAC members to join a workgroup as part of the commitment taken as PAC members.</li> </ul>	<p>E-mail Armen Ter-Barsegyan <a href="mailto:ater-barsegyan2@ph.lacounty.gov">ater-barsegyan2@ph.lacounty.gov</a> to join 2024 PAC Awards workgroup</p>
<p><b>Meeting Wrap Up</b></p>	<p><b>Armen Ter-Barsegyan, DPH, Systems of Care</b></p> <p>Armen Ter-Barsegyan (DPH) provided a summary of decisions and next steps discussed during the meeting:</p> <p><b>Decisions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The PAC approved the meeting minutes for October 10, 2023.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next Steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2024 PAC Awards Members will include Claudia, Kathy, Liana, Maricela, and Jonathan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Additional PAC members are encouraged to join the PAC Awards workgroup. Meeting invite will be sent to all PAC members when a date is finalized.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Next PAC meeting is <b>Tuesday, February 13, 2024</b> from <b>2pm – 4pm</b> (hybrid). In-person attendance is encouraged.</li> </ul>	

<b>Public Comment</b>	<p><b>Dr. Gary Tsai, MD, Bureau Director, Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health (DPH), Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (SAPC)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celia Aragon (Behavioral Health Services) asked when the Business Technology group would be able to get a report from HIDEX so provider network might be more informed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dr. Tsai encouraged Jim &amp; Aris to e-mail Toa Bui (DPH) and CC Dr. Tsai and provide context for receiving HIDEX updates for the PAC.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>Next Meeting</b>	Next meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2024, at 2 PM – 4pm. This will be a hybrid (in-person/virtual meeting).	

*Approved: Yanira A. Lima*