

# Self-Determination Local Advisory Committee Meeting

## Thursday, July 27, 2023 - 4:00pm-5:30pm

### MINUTES

*\*Meeting is open to the public – all are welcome to attend\**

[Zoom Link for July Meeting](#)

#### **SDLAC Members:**

Jennifer Walsh (Chair/Self-Advocate) - present  
Sascha Bittner (Self-Advocate) - present  
Elizabeth Grigsby (GGRC Consumer Rights Advocate/Self-Advocate)  
Courtney Mangus (OCRA-Attorney/Clients' Rights Advocate) - present  
Connie Johnson (Parent Advocate) – present  
Alyson Sinclair (Parent Advocate) – present  
Christine Kantor (Parent Advocate) - absent  
Gaby Choy (Parent Advocate) - absent  
David Nguyen (Parent Advocate) – present by phone

#### **SCDD Advisor:**

Sheraden Nicholau (SCDD-Regional Manager, Bay Area Office) – present

#### **GGRC Advisors:**

Eric Zigman (Executive Director) – present  
Juliet Sousa (SDP Supervising Social Worker) – extended leave  
Meghan Reynard (Acting SDP Supervisor) – present  
Kori Mason (Participant Choice Specialist) - absent  
Anh Nguyen (Recording Secretary) - present  
Janika Jamarillo (Participant Choice Specialist) – present  
Lisa Rosene – present

#### **Guests:**

Ken Parekh, parent 12-year old son  
David Ellis, Cambrian FMS  
Sophia Agafonow, DDS  
Ivana – person served by GGRC

- I. Welcome/Call to order (Walsh)
  - a. Roll call (Nguyen)
  - b. Approval of Agenda (Walsh) - M/S, Bittner, Johnson

- c. Approval of Minutes (Walsh/All) – M/S, Bittner, Mangus
- II. Funding to Support Implementation of the Self-Determination Program for Fiscal Year 2021-22 - (Walsh)
  - a. GGRC's SDLAC spending plan (Nguyen)

David will send a spreadsheet with updated figures after meeting with Lop Hou, GGRC's CFO. There are funds remaining from FY 2021/22.

- III. Participant/Family/Public Feedback on SDP (All)

- a. Comments are limited to FOUR minutes per speaker on items not on the agenda, 20 minutes total.
- b. We welcome critiques and feedback but ask speakers refrain from personal attacks on individuals or the committee.
- c. The committee will not be responding to comments but may address them further down in the agenda or in future agenda items.

Connie Johnson: their family is on their third social worker, trying to get her daughter engaged in SDP has been a challenge. She needs a team of people who will be involved who know what's going on; if she's not here to be her daughter's advocate what will happen if her mom and sister aren't here to support her. There's not been progress made on SDP, largely based on circumstances, but if there's a way to have some social workers who know what's going on with the program, that would be helpful.

Alyson Sinclair: Empathize and understand as a parent. Having consistency in social workers who are able to know about SDP and greater insight into each person served/Connie's daughter. Important to create the team of people, SDP can help build that team, but the onus is on parents/family to build that team.

Connie: Not having the staffing piece in place makes things more challenging. COVID has been hard on many and hard on her daughter. What happens when parents are no longer here, what happens to their adult children.

EZ: GGRC is hiring about ten people a month to about 2.5 resignations a month. Hiring stability is becoming more of a reality.

Ken Parekh: Has similar concerns. PCP process used a lot, with new caregivers and new social workers to bring people working with his son up to speed. Even with new people coming in, he's doing a lot of work with educating on SDP. Same with the FMS, finally got some good coordination with Mains'l. People get frustrated by the waiting for SDP (FMSs, etc.) Can we get well-trained staff and information for ease of use with SDP.

EZ: GGRC is painfully aware of FMS issues and insufficient funding for FMSs. Funding has improved but takes awhile for companies to respond and we believe it will get better. GGRC has

about 75 people in SDP, serving 10,000 people overall. Introduction to DD services can be daunting, but we're working on improving the training and information sharing.

Jennifer: Can PCS be a bridge to the social workers?

Meghan: The SDP team has training for social workers, there's a lot of new staff, they all received a high-level overview on SDP. It's definitely in place to help bridge the gap between social workers.

Lisa: There's only two PCS right now with Meghan as the supervisor with Lisa doing work as well. There's a lot of demand with not a lot of people to meet the high level of demand.

EZ: The PCSs do connect with families. Right now it's a volume problem, complexity of issues in each case. Working to bring more resources to the program and aware there are people waiting to get in.

Jennifer: Can the committee help advocate?

EZ: Might be something the statewide meeting of the chairs to talk to DDS about. Need to give RCs more resources for SDP.

Ken: Loves the flexibility, can get so much more for his son. Other parents are excited, but then they hit the wall and it's a lot more complicated. Whatever we can do to simplify things, if we can get consistency and best practices with FMSs and RCs, would be good.

Lisa: FMS organizations need more support, they're asked to do a lot of fiscal management. If we can advocate to the state to have more funding so they can help families with this. It's hard to expect everyday families to become accountants. If the committee can chat about that at the state level, that will be helpful.

#### IV. SCDD Update (Nicholau)

SD Ombudsperson's Office is available for feedback from the general public and leadership in SDP committees. The office has been responsive to feedback.

<https://www.dds.ca.gov/initiatives/sdp/office-of-the-self-determination-ombudsperson/>

SCDD continues to host online orientations in several different languages, about 8-9 a month. People appreciate being able to go back and take orientation more than once as refreshers on information.

Public platform hosted on the SCDD website for SDP promising practices and best practices. Any member of the local advisory committees can submit these.

Over six months interviewed: 244 persons served, 314 family members involved in SDP, 20 IFs, 14 community members/other respondents. Only focused on people served by SDP.

Areas of strength across the state from SDP and pain points specifically within the program and populations within the program. Looking at equity as we grow SDP that it's equitable/flexible program that we know it can be.

Sheraden will share the report as soon as it becomes available.

V. GGRC SDP Team Update (Reynard)

Introducing Janika Jaramillo! Our new GGRC Participant Choice Specialist, two years here at GGRC. Ongoing social worker in San Francisco Office and transitioned into SDP in mid-May.

New enrollments:

June – 2 individuals, age 7 and age 21. One renewal.

July – ages 20 and 23

77 persons served total in SDP

Past few months there have been lots of systemic changes. FMS rate changes, changes for PCP and transitional hours for IFs, specific FMS change their employment burden rates, revisiting things with families.

Trying to figure out to do spending plans and budgets with families. Apart from just volume of families interested, there's just a lot of changes overall.

Depending on the changes, some can cause delays for families moving forward in SDP. Example, the 60-day extension: if there isn't a new budget/spending plan in place, they're eligible for a 60-day extension. Doesn't come with detailed instructions and from fiscal, there might be accounting issues, FMS might have their own way of doing things, in the process it's not stuck anywhere, but if there are disagreements between RC/accounting/FMS that impacts the person served if people can't get paid. Social workers did a great job entering new POSs and canceling old ones, accounting moved those new authorizations through.

EZ: About 28% from SF, 29% from Marin, 41% from SM (concentration in Southern SM, Atherton and Menlo Park)

Of the 77, only 3 started in 2020. In 2021, 15 people started, 2022, 41 people started. There's a steep increase in people starting. 2023, 17 people started.

- a. Participant data points: number of persons currently enrolled, number of participants in the process, how long participants have been enrolled GGRC Updates (Zigman)

VI. GGRC Updates (Zigman)

70 to 77, 10% increase month over month from June.

The regional center system wasn't cut very much, not a lot of investments. They were unsuccessful in updating the funding formula the state uses to fund regional centers (Core Staffing Formula) hasn't been updated since the 90s. GGRC has about

150 social workers before adding expansion positions last year, about 30. The 30 are budgeted at a reasonable rate for SF Bay Area, the other 150 are lagging behind at about 50% the actual cost of hiring a social worker. Caseloads are starting to come down. Numbers as of last March went down from 95 to 85, still a long way to go with the goal of 1:62. Next measure of DDS will be October, GGRC expects it to dip into the 70s.

#### VII. Disability Rights California Update (OCRA)

SDP still not a large part of cases in OCRA. Increase in recent SDP service requests are mostly clients with issues with getting an FMS or getting spending plans and/or budgets approved. Relatively new issues and a small population size, so can be challenging with OCRA to provide support to clients. Not a lot of advocates are dealing with issues with FMSs and not deep level of expertise. Do FMSs need to be vendorized at each regional center? A recent DDS directive review shows that they only need to be vendorized at one RC.

Meghan: Home vendorization needs to happen at one center, but for services there needs to be a courtesy vendorization. They don't have to be directly vendorized with each center, they still need to on-board at each center. The DDS list also has regional centers that have courtesy vendorization for each center. We have 7 FMSs, working on 8 FMSs. They send their paperwork over to GGRC and all of that needs to be redone due to their primary signatory passed away, needs matching signatures.

#### VIII. SDLAC Strategic Planning Subcommittee (Walsh/Nicholau)

Jennifer has connected with Sheraden and Eric about meeting and working on subcommittees on next steps for breaking up some of the sections to address.

Sheraden shared other SDLACs have each committee members serving in working groups so everyone has a little bit of work on the strategic plan.

Jennifer would like to see this SDLAC draft best practices and promising practices for the statewide committee. Sheraden can facilitate that and the working group can share the draft at the future SDLAC meetings. Sascha would like to volunteer to serve on the working group. Courtney would like to join the Best Practices/Promising Practices workgroup.

#### IX. Outreach to the community – Communication/Correspondence (All)

#### X. Bay Area website update (Sinclair/Kantor)

- XI. Discussion on changes in SDLAC meeting day/time and new DDS meeting directives – (Walsh)

Proposed 1.5 hour blocks for future meetings:

- a. Tuesdays, 4PM – 5:30PM
- b. Wednesdays, 9AM – 11AM
- c. Wednesdays, 4PM – 6PM
- d. Thursdays, 5PM – 7PM

Bagley-Keene laws were suspended to allow for remote meetings. Emergency exemption expired June 30, 2023. DDS provided a directive allowing SDLACs to meet virtually until October and will reaching out to all SDLACs statewide. Sheraden and Eric shared the DDS directive and SB 544 information.

Fourth Thursday of every month, 4:00 pm – 5:30 pm.

GGRC and SCDD have been interviewing interested parties for committee membership. Jennifer is interested in expanding the roster.

- XII. Adjourn: Next Meeting: **Thursday, August 24, 4:00 pm – 5:30 pm**