

Self-Determination Local Advisory Committee Meeting

Thursday, October 26, 2023 - 4:00pm-5:30pm

MINUTES

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

[Zoom Link for September Meeting](#)

SDLAC Members:

Jennifer Walsh (Chair/Self-Advocate) - present
Sascha Bittner (Self-Advocate) – present
Elizabeth Grigsby (GGRC Consumer Rights Advocate/Self-Advocate)
Charlie Fagan (OCRA-Attorney/Clients' Rights Advocate)
Connie Johnson (Parent Advocate) – present
Alyson Sinclair (Parent Advocate) – present
Christine Kantor (Parent Advocate) - present
Gaby Choy (Parent Advocate)
David Nguyen (Parent Advocate) - present
Ken Parekh (Parent Advocate) – present

SCDD Advisor:

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

GGRC Advisors:

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

Guests:

Brenda Bachechi
Sophia Agafonow, DDS

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

II. Funding to Support Implementation of the Self-Determination Program for Fiscal Year 2021-22 - (Walsh)

- a. GGRC's SDLAC spending plan (D. Nguyen)
No changes from last month

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.

IV. SCDD Update (Nicholau)

V. GGRC SDP Team Update (Reynard)

- a. Participant data points: number of persons currently enrolled, number of participants in the process, how long participants have been enrolled GGRC Updates (Zigman)
- b. GGRC's SDP Orientation post-participation "packet" of information
- c. Update on putting together the GGRC Social Worker SDP resources file

Things are moving along quickly. October report shows 94 individuals with open POS, 23 participants from GGRC's October orientation. Juliet is back!! 😊 SDP team is working on transitioning specialized SDP caseload, with January target date with the SW and manager to transition that caseload. SDP reports are being generated for the next bimonthly survey. Looking forward to continued growth.

Lisa: there are two PCS and Daphne Ferro (Accounting), funded for a three-year period. ARCA will take the data from all of the regional centers and present to DDS to request permanent funding for the positions. Doing work directly with one of the struggling FMSs, Lisa has reached out to Katie Hornberger from SDP Ombudsperson's office and requesting a meeting with that FMS.

Question for Sophia: is it possible for someone from SDP team attend these meetings?

Sophia: usually it's Office of Community Operations to attend these meetings, but will pass along the request to DDS SDP team.

Jennifer: where is the request for the manual?

Meghan: it's a work in progress. Possibly after the data collection and FMS project for the one time payments, it's taking up a lot of time and super priorities. With Juliet's return maybe it can be addressed soon.

Connie: how does the data collection project intersect with the data collection subcommittee?

Lisa: Because of the turnaround time, there's urgency to submit the data. Happy to share with the committee.

Connie: Sascha, Alyson, Sheraden, Connie on the data committee and to have a meeting to see what the committee can do to support the effort.

Lisa will send the aggregate data that GGRC sends to ARCA and Jennifer can disseminate to the committee.

The data to ARCA tomorrow is for funding justification for PCS positions.

VI. GGRC Updates (Zigman)

PCS funded positions are the only monies we receive for SDP. We look forward to having these positions be made permanent. PCSs cannot carry cases, but they're incredibly valuable in other functions. Really happy to have Meghan and Juliet being there to responsive to people. Next state budget cycle begins around January 10 and see if PCSs make it into regional center base funding. Hiring continues to be intense, which happens twice a year. Many positions are directed by the state and their functions are dictated by DDS. New challenge is training new people/staff in their roles and responsibilities. Lisa and her team have a bootcamp for new social workers and get a grounding when they start. One thing to hear, another to apply, theory to practice and to grow expertise as a social worker. Trying to reduce caseloads from 90-100 to 66-ish. Six Early Start positions to try to get closer to the required ES ratio. Hired a second recruiter/talent acquisition staff to help identify quality staff. As of March, ratios were closer to 80s. Hoping the FMS situation improves with rates. DDS has request for proposal to review standards for FMSs, have more clarity in what we ask of FMSs.

Ken: SARC is setting up an SDP unit.

Eric: First specialized caseload in San Mateo will be coming together in January. The challenge before was having a place for transitioning the existing cases didn't have a place to be assigned.

Meghan: Total of three positions slotted between the three offices. Staff has been asking for as well. It'll be easier to explain something to three social workers instead of more.

Alyson: How are you identifying who in each office is going to have that specialized caseload? Is the intent that that particular person be assisting the client with going through the entire SDP process so that whoever was their social worker would be transitioning out and the new SW take over?

Lisa: In terms of identification, Lisa has been working with the managers of the three counties to keep their eyes open for people who seem to enjoy SDP and doing well/comfortable with the program. One social worker in San Mateo County was presented with the opportunity, caseload of 35 in SDP. She's going from 85 to 35. She'll transition 50 people to other social workers, she currently has 2 SDP cases. Some people who are starting and in transition in SDP and also take on other SDP cases from other social workers. There's already a dedicated SDP team in place comprised of Kori, Meghan, Daphne, Janika, new social worker, Kehinde Adeshina. thanks, Meghan 😊 Monolingual Spanish/Chinese social workers will need to remain with their current social worker and those cases will not transition, that will remain the case unless we can't recruit new social workers who speak those languages. Working between now and January to transition/transfer her existing cases, meet with Meghan and SDP team to help her get a feel for things.

Meghan: the individuals who would be transitioning to Kehinde, the existing social workers who want to retain the SDP cases will remain a priority. The cases don't have to be hard lined but based on the individual's needs and closely looking at balancing the need with cases.

Brenda: had the pleasure of working with Kehinde and very pleased. What is the biggest challenges for social workers with implementing SDP? How can we support social workers on SDP?

Lisa: When the orientation was rolling out, how long would things take? Lots of questions at the onset. People who have been in SDP for three years can do well. New social workers struggle with the lengthy, complicated process. Spending plans are a challenge. Each FMS has a different format and requirements.

Janika: I started in case management, so wanted to understand where social workers are coming from. I'm trying to understand what my role is and having SDP on top of it when they're also learning with us. Some social workers take the information and thrive, others are challenged. Kori and I are trying to support as much as we can along the way. The IPP is happening at annual reviews and because SDP dates are different, so they appear to be slipping through. There's a lot of pressure from the clients and families, can be easily overwhelming.

Meghan: Another challenge for social workers is the accounting software doesn't exactly match with e-billing portal that FMSs use. Documentation always falls back on social work and SDP team to make the pieces fit and work together. It's different, usually social workers aren't involved in the fiscal portion of things. GGRC is still working out the internal processes on this. Accounting is sending information back to social workers and it's becoming difficult on how to figure that out. Social workers have been amazing to respond as well as they have and everyone's putting in a lot of work into this to make it work.

Juliet: it's a new way to receive services and the traditional way of doing things. Once social workers feel supported, there's relief knowing they have help. Ultimately, we want social workers to feel empowered and able but there's a lot in the transition right now.

Connie: if there's a new social worker and their client asks about SDP, does the supervisor know SDP team is there as a resource?

Meghan: Depending on where in the agency they are, sometimes it's at the discretion of the supervisor or manager to think it falls under traditional things they can handle.

Christine: One of the things I've noticed is, it's all new, things are being worked out. If you end up being a regional center client, you fall into the unique space of not having one size fits all. Even more tailored to meet the needs of the individuals, the challenge is to bookend some timelines.

VII. Disability Rights California Update (OCRA) – Charlie Fagan

No updates this month

VIII. SDLAC Workgroups (Walsh/Nicholau)

Ken: Had an initial committee focused on best practices and getting some better training for social workers and others. I've compiled a lot of SDP information.

There's a conference this past weekend on autism and a whole thread on SDP. Had an opportunity to connect with SDP resources at SARC, RCEB and NLACRC. Good news is there's a lot of information out there, bad news is it's all over the place and not coordinated in any way. One of the first things we're looking at is there any way to identify the sources. I've taken a first pass at organizing the information. Lots to build on, what's the need? Do we want to focus on best practices for people coming into SDP or are we looking at training materials for social workers.

Jennifer: is it possible to get an update on the orientation slideshow?

Anh will send out the most updated copy to the committee.

Meghan: definitely looking to update the orientation with images/pictures. Some regional centers direct people to the SCDD orientation without their own regional center orientation. It's nice to have consistent messaging. As SDP team department grows, it would be nice to direct people to the SCDD state orientation. Still internal discussion as a team.

Ken: is there consistency regionally?

Lisa: ARCA has a statewide meeting for all SDP teams, sometimes upwards of 60 people on the call.

Meghan: There's a smaller regional center group, NBRC and RCEB and DDS has sort of group the three of us together. Quarterly meet with all regional centers. Not about internal processes or forms being used, all RCs they operate independently.

Lisa: One of the things DDS is looking at is for example, using the same budget calculation form, spending plan format that every FMS uses. Looking for that uniformity, those are the best practices because it's a statewide system, whatever can be made uniform, can be uniform. Makes transfers and moving a lot easier. Also, IF/PCP resources. There are groups that have started organically and opportunities for networking and people getting together, but anything sponsored formally.

Christine: Christine, Alyson and Jennifer met a couple of days ago. There is an effort to collaborate of creating a joint website and RCEB and SARC. Started out well and did an RFP, and worked with TMM and put together a foundational website with the three different agencies. Discussed in this last meeting it stalled out a little bit, some of the issues had to do with financing and moving forward. Pieces that are still out there David Grady has overseen the project and circling back to GGRC. The website is currently down and they want it back up. One of the members of the committee would handle the administrative part so they can at least put up the work that was already done.

Eric will follow up with Lop on the website status.

Anh will send out tickler/reminder about participation in SDLAC workgroups.

IX. Adjourn: Next Meeting: **Thursday, November 16th – 4:00PM – 5:30PM**

Committee will be dark in December.