

HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER
Self Determination Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 5th, 2021

Opening:

The regular meeting of HRC Self Determination Advisory Committee was called to order at 6:05 PM on Wednesday May 5th, 2021 via Zoom. Quorum was established.

Committee Member Present

Linda Chan-Rapp, Parent
Deaka McClain, Client
David Oster, Client
Sunghee Park, Parent (BBT)
Miriam Kang, Parent
Patricia Jordan, Client

Committee Members Absent

Johnanthony Alaimo, Office of Client Rights Advocacy Representative
Julianna Martinez, Parent
Rosalinda Garcia, Parent

HRC Staff Present

LaWanna Blair – Director of Early Childhood Services
Antoinette Perez - Director of Children’s Services
Katy Granados – Client Services Manager
Donna Magana- Client Services Manager
Ashley Brown- Intake Manager
Jessica Guzman- Client Services Manager
Bjoern Petersen- Client Services Manager
Liz Cohen-Zeboulon – Client Services Manager
Josephina Cunningham – Client Services Manager
Patrick Ruppe- Executive Director

SCDD Staff

Brianna Reynoso, Absent

Abbreviations

HRC: Harbor Regional Center	IF: Independent Facilitator
PCP: Person-Centered Plan	ICC: Integrative Community Collaborative
SCDD: State Council on Developmental Disabilities	
SDP: Self-Determination Program	LMS: Learning Management System
ITP: Individualized Transition Plan	DVU: Disability Voices United
BBT: Being Built Together	FMS: Financial Management Service

Visitors

Paul Quiroz	Lucy Paz (Interpreter)	Jamie Van Dusen
Jacqueline J.	Liz Maria O.	Diane Bernstein
Tamra Pauly	Lourdes Gomez	Vianey Gomez
Elizabeth Gomez (ICC)	Fernando Gomez (ICC)	Jordan Feinstock
Shelia Jordan Jones (IF)	Hilda Jimenez	Brenda Smith (IF)
Vivian Salas	Christine Ashley	Elsa Feeny

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Joungim Kim	Jennifer Wilker	Susan Huniu
Laura Ellenberg	Sam Eskandari	Reiko S.
Tina N.	Jeanne Wu	John Ortiz Ortega
Maria Alvarado (IF)	Alma Morales (Aveanna)	Karen Cull
Patricia Rodriguez		
Taleen Khatchadourian (Guidelight Group)		Damaris Ruiz (GT Independence)

Welcome

Introductions of committee members and guests – Via Chat on Zoom

Approval of Minutes

Quorum was established; 6 committee members present during the zoom meeting. Minutes posted and available for viewing on HRC website. Patricia Jordan made the first motion for approval of minutes, second motion was given by Miriam Kang. Deaka and David also voted on the minutes. Minutes were approved. Linda Chan-Rapp had a comment regarding the misspelling of Patrick Ruppe's (HRC Executive Director) name. Antoinette clarified that this amendment was already completed and the updated version is on the website. Minutes approved.

Presentation: Shelia Jordan Jones – Independent Facilitator

Shelia provided an overview of her background and experience as an Independent Facilitator. She received training from State Council. Shelia is also a certified person-centered trainer. Shelia is a retired special educator and she was in this field for 38 years. Shelia also has experience working as a transition administrator. Shelia shared that she has a son with unique needs. Shelia is trained in a variety of methods in relation to person-centered planning.

Shelia shared that she has completed approximately a dozen person-centered plans over the last four and a half years. She believes that PCPs can be used to support all individuals as she completed one for her elderly aunt as well as for a teenager who was afraid of entering high school. Shelia strongly believes in allowing the client to dictate their life plans through having discovery conversations about where the individual's needs fall now as well as in the future. Shelia shared that the individuals that are supportive of the client should work collectively with the individual during person-centered planning. The PCP should clearly address the individual's goals and objectives. Shelia is a strong believer of the positive connection needed between a client and their chosen Independent Facilitator.

Shelia feels that individuals should be open to the challenges brought on by Self Determination Program and approach those challenges collectively as a team.

There were some questions from the group. One question was if Shelia works with all regional centers or if she only works with individuals in the South Bay area. Shelia shared that thus far she has worked with South Central LA Regional Center, Harbor Regional Center, and North LA Regional Center. She then reiterated the topic of the IF being a good match for the client instead of focusing on the location. Linda asked if Shelia primarily works with young adults or older. Shelia shared that the youngest person she has worked with was in second grade. Linda asked how people can contact her, Shelia stated that her contact information is on the state council list. Shelia stated that she would put her contact information in the chat.

Presentation: Taleen Khatchadourian (Guidelight Group – IF)

Linda introduced Taleen from Guidelight Group. Taleen took time to explain her background and experience as an IF with Guidelight. Taleen is an Armenian-speaking IF. Within Guidelight, there are four other IFs and they specifically work with teenagers and adults doing transition services, IF services, and other private work (employment, coaching, etc.). Guidelight will work with the individual on whatever the need is and she explained the importance of positive connection between the client and the IF.

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Taleen has a 17 year-old son with Autism at Lanterman Regional Center. She stated that he has been a regional center client since the age of two and ever since, she has continued with her training in this field and does not intend to stop. Taleen works with Service Coordinators, peer-support at Lanterman, and she is the President of the Armenian Outreach Project.

Guidelight covers about 10 different Regional Centers and she personally works with six different Regional Centers. She shared her positive experience with working with HRC. One question Taleen had was what are some of the coolest things that have happened within SDP. She shared that a client age 24 years thought the IFs were coming in to just speak with his mom. Taleen stated that when he saw his Spending Plan, his face lit up. Speaking about the different parts of his PCP caused him to grow more excited. The client began completing chores and doing things to get ready for his goals and ended up getting healthier and losing weight.

Another question was inquiring about some of the more difficult situations Taleen has encountered within SDP. Taleen explained that there was a family that had conflict with the Regional Center and Taleen was able to reconcile and now the client is flourishing. Linda asked what advice Taleen would give when there are two parties who do not quite see eye-to-eye. Taleen explained that it is important to stop and take a moment to look at things from the other person's perspective. She explained that Regional Center has certain responsibilities so sometimes things have to be explained further to meet in the middle. Taleen is open with everyone. A question in the chat asked Taleen if she has worked with clients who are still in school. Taleen shared that she has and she works with students who are in transition programs.

Taleen clarified that her clients are 15-65 years old. David Oster asked how long has she has been in the practice. He also commented on how awesome Guidelight Group is. Taleen shared that she started in education. She sold her business 3-4 years ago and then she went into advocacy focusing on transitioned-aged youth. At the SDP conference in 2019 she got connected with Guidelight Group. Taleen shared that all different groups of IFs work together to ensure clients are connected to appropriate IFs. They have a great network.

Presentation: Fernando and Elizabeth Gomez (ICC)

Linda introduced Fernando and Elizabeth from ICC who are strong advocates for the Spanish-speaking community. Fernando began the conversation focusing on the macro-perspective of how they work in SDP and Elizabeth would share the micro-perspective.

Fernando shared that they are well-versed in PCP, but they used Guidelight for their son's PCP and their experience was wonderful. Fernando feels SDP is a game changer and although it is a good one, it can come with challenges. Their journey in this field started 14 years ago when their son with Down Syndrome was born. They made sure they were knowledgeable. Throughout the process they realized how important it was to reach out into the community and be a part of the solution. They are also co-founders with DVU. Their focus is in disparities and how different cultures can come together. He views SDP as a celebration of life for the individual to make their own life decisions. Creating PCPs is about relationships and discovering solutions together. SDP gives the individual the ability to flourish, but also assists with bringing about systemic change.

Elizabeth added her perspective. She shared that she is a member of Westside Regional Center advisory committee and she absorbs information and continues her training. Elizabeth reiterated their work within the disparities and they help families within the traditional system as well and it was natural to also begin assisting people within SDP. They stay with families all the way through the process and maintain connections for life. ICC will continue to work with families both in SDP and the traditional system.

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Jordan took the time to share his thoughts and stated that he feels that individuals should enter SDP, but some do not have enough information or a lack of understanding, but there are resources to help.

Deaka shared that she appreciates the fact that ICC assists individuals in both the traditional service delivery system and SDP. She advocates for both sides. Deaka stated that it should be clear that SDP can be hard, but there are individuals who can provide guidance. Deaka feels that individuals should have the option and she thanked Elizabeth and Fernando for assisting both sides.

Taleen also shared that she recognizes the difficulties in SDP and that change is difficult, but that it is okay. She shared that it is important to work together and that it is not an “us vs. them/Regional Center” mentality. Working cohesively is most beneficial.

Presentation: Sunghee Park (BBT)

Linda introduced Sunghee who recently founded BBT to assist the Korean community. Sunghee presented in both English and Korean. Sunghee has a son who is a client at HRC. Sunghee shared that the priority for this year is to assist Korean families with entering SDP. BBT focuses on educating families and providing customized PCP and IF services. BBT empowers families to be more independent in SDP. Sunghee introduced Mrs. Kim who is also a mother of a client who went live in March 2021 to share her experiences.

Miss Kim shared her experience in Korean with Sunghee providing English translation. Miss Kim shared that it is very important to work with a qualified IFs who speaks the same language. She emphasized working as a team, relying on the professional background of the IF to assist the client in the best way. Miss Kim stated that individuals should not attempt to go into SDP alone. Miss Kim shared that she was able to find an agency suited for her son at a rate she agreed with. Miss Kim also decided to keep a few traditional services, so there was a balance. The PCP reflects her son's needs appropriately and she promotes families to change their PCP as time continues and as they see fit. Miss Kim shared that individuals with language or cultural barriers may feel that SDP may do a disservice, but she stated this is not true and to make sure families have proper guidance.

Linda made a statement that it seemed that the PCP drew heavily on the parent's perspective instead of the client's perspective. Sunghee explained that she disagrees and that the reason they spoke heavily on parent involvement is because Miss Kim's son is not in attendance for the meeting tonight. Sunghee explained that throughout the process, Miss Kim's son was very involved and they put his needs first. Miss Kim further explained that SDP geared her son towards more independence, but she still did studying on her own. Miss Kim's son is in college, but has unique needs so she wanted to make sure she was knowledgeable to further explain SDP to her son.

Sunghee provided her contact information via chat.

Letter of Introduction: Danielle Alvarado (IF and HRC Parent), Represented by Linda Chan Rapp

Linda provided a copy of Danielle's letter in the chat. Danielle has been successful in developing PCPs.

Public Questions for IFs and other Public Comments

- Jordan asked if the PCP, \$2,500 will continue to be paid for when the program opens to everyone in June. Fernando responded and stated at this time no one knows, but they are keeping up to date with directives. Fernando feels that something will happen to accommodate families.

- Christine Ashley asked how many clients each IF has with medical/communication issues that actually rule their daily lives. Shelia stated that she has a couple of clients with limited communication. She stated that these particular clients are going through appropriate therapy such as speech therapy. Shelia stated they

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look at creative ways to assist these clients. Fernando shared that all of the individuals they support (1200 families) have a unique situation with medical/communication challenges. Fernando referred to Miss Kim's story and although he does not speak Korean, they were able to understand her and read her body language to relate to her. Fernando shared that it is not necessarily about the language, but it is about the message. Sunghee shared that people need to hear other cultures and languages with interpretation so individuals can understand that SDP is possible for everyone. Taleen shared that she has clients who are medically involved and the focus is on their abilities. She also has clients with communication concerns and they work with them to find unique ways for them to express their voices.

- Linda asked the IFs to share what advice they would give for individuals who want to enter SDP in June. Fernando shared that whatever decision is made, it is the right decision and SDP is an amazing opportunity. Taleen shared that you do not have to rush and just because it opens in June, you do not have to sign up right away. Taleen also shared that individuals should get all the information they need and to attend the orientation available at their assigned Regional Center. Shelia expressed the importance of networking. She also shared to keep an open mind and open heart to remain receptive to a new program. Sunghee shared that SDP started in 2014 in New York and at first it was confusing, but now everyone does it in New York, so it is hopeful for the future. Miss Kim shared that she was the first one live in SDP at Lanterman Regional Center and Sunghee recommended Miss Kim to be a parent mentor. Elizabeth shared that when the individual is ready, there is always someone to support.

Harbor Regional Center Monthly Update – Antoinette Perez, Director Children's Services

- There are 95 individuals who are part of the SD Program
 - Of the 95: 20 participants are live as of February 1, 2021
 - 26 approved budgets
 - 22 spending plans completed
 - 25 completed PCP plans
 - 2 participants missing SDP orientation
- Currently working on other plans who are close to being live
- Orientations: 2 English and 2 Spanish. They will be offered on Saturdays. The first English Orientation is May 13th, 2021 and the first Spanish Orientation is May 15th, 2021. All of the information is on the website, but contact the Service Coordinator for further information.
- The last informational night was April 21st, 2021 (English) and the last Spanish information is May 19th, 2021.
- Staff and Provider Training is complete. Ongoing training is solidified.
- Fair Hearings and Outcomes: Since the last meeting, there was one outcome, the judge decided in HRC favor.
- Resource Development: The biggest concern is the quality of resources. Although there are a lot of providers interested in being vendored for things that are SDP-related, HRC is being very cautious and we are relying on word-of-mouth.
- HRC Roll out of SDP: Ready to open up in June. There was discussion of SDP being postponed until July, but HRC is ready to begin now. Everyone has been contacted and can sign up for orientation.
- Implementation Funds: Skills4Care will contact the 70 participants who have yet to go live and to see if they are still interested, any barriers, and if they are interested in the coaching program.
- DDS link on directive and extensions has been posted.
- Linda asked for clarification regarding the 25 PCPs in comparison to the 26 approved budgets. Katy explained that there are some participants who chose not to have a PCP and they just have their IPP.

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- SDP orientation with another Regional Center will be honored by HRC, however the process may look different. We will circle back to ensure families have all pertinent details.
- Sunghee asked if there is an information resolution meeting that can happen before going to Fair Hearing. Antoinette explained that there is and the Fair Hearing process is the same as traditional services.
- Antoinette shared that Liz and Katy completed short videos available on the HRC website and social media just explain that SDP is opening in June and what the next steps are.

Skills4Care – Paul Quiroz

- Finishing up the hiring process. They will have a Korean, Spanish, and English speakers.
- Currently going through the calls to identify and provide Antoinette with information.
- No money spent as of yet.

Statewide Updates:

- Statewide Committee- Linda Chan Rapp
 - Link to directives in 8 different languages
- DDS Updated FMS FAQ Page
 - Chart about different options

Office Clients and Rights Advocacy:

- Due to Johnanthony Alaimo's absence, there were no updates provided

State Council Update:

- Due to Brianna's absence, there were no updates provided

Public Comments:

- Suggestion from Patricia (in Spanish): IFs should be paid until clients are accepted into SDP. She had a situation where the IF only did the PCP and did not help with the Spending Plan
- Is there a deadline for approving budgets? Antoinette shared that the other directors at HRC are able to approve budgets. The budgets are approved within 48 hours and the longest may be about 4 to 5 days. Miriam shared that other Regional Centers have this issue, but not at HRC.
- Is there a DDS directive about whether or not other orientations are honored? Antoinette explained that it is up to each Regional Center and it is not up to the state. Antoinette stated we are working on having a uniform statewide orientation.
- **Next meeting:** June 2nd, 2021 via Zoom 6PM-8PM

Adjournment, Conclusion

Meeting was adjourned at 8:04 PM.
Minutes submitted by Ashley Brown.