COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES - DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
Substance Abuse Prevention and Control
Provider Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary – February 14, 2023

Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) MEMBERS PRESENT ON MICROSOFT TEAMS: Dr. Gary Tsai (Chair), Kathy Watt (Co-Chair), Jose Aguilar, Deena Duncan, Brandon Fernandez, Nina Glassman, Christina Gonzales, Baldomero (Junie) Gonzalez, Colette Harley, JoAnn Hemstreet, Jonathan Higgins, Hiroko Makiyama, Claudia Murillo, Nora O'Connor, Rocio Quezada, Liana Sanchez, Denise Shook, Jim Symington, Edith Urner, Wendie Warwick

Substance Abuse Prevention and Control REPRESENTATIVES: Nima Amini, Emily Caesar, Alyssa Cohen, Nancy Crosby, Daniel Deniz, Michelle Gibson, Keith Gurtzweiler, David Hindman, Brian Hurley, Kyle Kennedy, Allison Kwan, Bernie Lau, Yanira A. Lima, Marika Medrano, Maurilio Mendez, Antonne Moore, Siddarth Puri, Kimia Ramezani, Belia Sardinha, Megala Sivashanmugam, April Stump-Earwood, Rosemary Taing, Anulkah Thomas, Roselyn Valdez, Ariel Young

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Chris Abernathy (Social Model Recovery Systems), Pranab Banskota (CIBHS), Christopher Botten (CIBHS), Charlotte Bullen (CIBHS), Leslie Dishman (CIBHS), Kamala Greene Genece (HMA), Joseph Henderson (CHESS Health), Sarayu Jaladanki (DHS), Amy Mcilvaine (CIBHS), Charles Robbins (HMA), Devon Schechinger (HMA), Bill Tarkanian (L.A. CADA)

ABSENT: Nely Meza, William Taetzsch, Aris Tubadeza

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED: PAC Meeting Agenda; PAC Meeting Minutes (September 13, 2022); Health Management Associates Strategic Plan Slides & Handout

Topic	Discussion/Finding	Recommendations, Action, Follow-up
Welcome	**Dr. Tsai, M.D., Director, Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health (DPH), Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (SAPC)** • Anulkah Thomas (DPH-SAPC) confirmed quorum established.	
Introduce New PSPHI Staff	**Anulkah Thomas, Systems of Care, DPH-SAPC** • Anulkah introduced Bernie Lau (DPH-SAPC), who is officially joining SAPC after long service in the COVID emergency response. She advised he is a part of the Provider Support and Health Program Improvement (PSPHI) section of Systems of Care and will be working closely with Anulkah and Emily, and thus the PAC.	
Strategic Planning Focus Group	**Charles Robbins, HMA Community Strategies** • Dr. Tsai (DPH-SAPC) advised that SAPC is updating its strategic plan. Belia Sardinha (DPH-SAPC) introduced Charles Robbins of Health Management Associates (HMA), who will share the new general strategic plan framework and request feedback from the PAC. • Charles (HMA) explained that SAPC's core strategic planning team used data and input from stakeholders to identify four key priorities: fortifying the workforce, system innovation & provider support, policy & fiscal acumen, and participant experience. Charles asked the PAC how SAPC can advance the latter two.	

- - Brandon Fernandez-Comer (Cri-Help) said that enhancing the electronic health record (EHR) systems used by most providers would help providers take a more data-driven approach to their work. He added that the network could benefit from a deep dive into the existing KPI tool.
    - Junie Gonzalez (Fred Brown) commented that, unlike some other EHR systems, Sage does not have a functionality to trigger a claim when a progress note is added.
    - Brandon said participant experience could benefit from more direct communication to providers about what areas have the most significant need and that this would be helpful for them to develop their own strategic plans.
  - Dr. Tsai (DPH-SAPC) acknowledged EHR is important and that SAPC is working to improve it. He clarified that the question Charles posed was about how providers could help SAPC advance the key priorities.
    - Kathy Watt (Van Ness) stated providers would be better able to offer useful data if they had a true understanding of the data-driven decisions being made by SAPC.
    - Jonathan Higgins (Beacon House) said there is no universal consensus about what data should be driving decisions. Though providers may define success differently, it could still be helpful to identify a small set of indicators.
    - Nora O'Connor (JWCH Institute) added that maintaining contact and receiving feedback from patients who have completed treatment is important to inform participant experience.
    - Brandon shared that since many providers are accredited and produce annual reports, it might be useful to share the benchmarks used in those arenas to help SAPC establish goals.
    - Dr. Tsai agreed, stating that SAPC submits data to the State to inform policies under development. He added that providers do not need to meet in SAPC-facilitated spaces to share this information.
  - Charles listed the cross-cutting strategies that would be used to achieve the key priorities: building a continuum of care, pursuing health equity, leveraging expertise, elevating structural operations, and enhancing communication and education. He asked for feedback on the cross-cutting strategies.
    - Kathy Watt (Van Ness) spoke about the importance of equity, noting that some people do not access services or fall out of care because the environment may not be welcoming for some community members.
      - Christina Gonzales (Impact) added that many providers have special niches or areas of expertise and she cautioned SAPC against a level of standardization that diminishes their ability to serve special populations.
      - Brandon agreed and stressed the importance of continuing to include the perspectives of persons with lived experience.
      - Jim Symington (Compatior) asked if there is a way to ensure that people in institutional settings, such as nursing care facilities, are aware of and have access to SUD services.
    - Jonathan noted that not many SAPC providers do outreach and suggested SAPC provide incentives to increase outreach activities as a strategy to reach the 95% and improve engagement after treatment.
    - Regarding building the continuum of care, Kathy said it is important that outreach and engagement activities link people to settings appropriate for their identities and needs.

Providers to complete HMA survey by 2/28/23.

	○ Kathy also offered that agencies need support to engage in effective continuous quality improvement, adding that not all these activities are reimbursable. ○ Brandon said he is hopeful that payment reform will cover the cost of this work. - Charles closed the discussion and requested providers complete the anonymous Qualtrics survey by 2/28/23. - Kathy asked the workgroup if they would be interested in starting a workgroup on key indicators. There was significant interest from PAC members. PAC members instructed to e-mail Anulkah Thomas and Kathy Watt if interested in joining the workgroup.	Co-Chair to form Key Indicators Workgroup, and discuss the workgroup parameters with Dr. Tsai – Chair of PAC.
Approval of Meeting Minutes	**Bernie Lau, Systems of Care, DPH-SAPC** - Bernie Lau (DPH-SAPC) presented 11/8/22 meeting minutes. - Motion to approve with no changes by Christina Gonzales (Impact) with a second motion by Claudio Murillo (House of Hope). - The finalized minutes will be posted on the PAC website.	Minutes approved and posted with no changes.
PAC Awards Workgroup Update	**Liana Sanchez, Workgroup Member, L.A. CADA** - Liana Sanchez (L.A. CADA) advised that the PAC Awards application would be released via e-mail on 3/3/23 and an overview will be provided at the Tuesday, 3/7/23 All Treatment Provider Meeting. - The awards will be distributed at the 5/2/23 All Treatment Providing Meeting. Since an in-person meeting is unlikely, the workgroup recommends just the award presenters and recipients meet in a SAPC conference room for the awards presentation. - There are two Individual Awards for Change Agent and Leadership and two Agency Awards for Community Impact and Collaborative Spirit. There are no self-nominations for Individual Awards and agencies cannot nominate themselves for Agency Awards.	SAPC will arrange for in-person awards ceremony, and will announce the process during the next PAC meeting scheduled for 4/11/2023.
Reaching the 95% Initiative	- Dr. Tsai provided an update on the transition from the workgroup phase to the planning and implementation of strategies to Reach the 95%. SAPC has consolidated the workgroup's recommendations around two main areas, outreach & engagement and lowering barriers to care. - SAPC is currently thinking through how to operationalize the recommendations and is considering tying them to incentive payments.	
Business Technology Workgroup Update	**Jim Symington, Workgroup Co-Lead, Compatior** - Jim Symington (Compatior) shared that the workgroup's plan to survey the full network will not move forward. Jim said the workgroup will discuss focus areas and next steps at the next meeting on Thursday, 2/16/23. - Dr. Tsai advised that David Hindman (DPH-SAPC) and Samson Kung (DPH-SAPC) can assist in thinking through the workgroup's purpose and goals and recommended they connect offline. - Anulkah Thomas (DPH-SAPC) invited Nora O'Connor (JWCH Institute) to lead a discussion regarding what agencies should do with the Topaz signature pads many acquired at SAPC's direction a few years ago. ○ Dr. Hindman (DPH-SAPC) advised that SAPC achieved compatibility with the signature pads in non-production environments before the State indicated that they were moving away from signature requirements. He is interested to know which forms providers would like to have the signature pad	Providers to submit recommendations

	functionality and suggested this as a topic for the Business Technology Workgroup. He shared the patient handbook summary document and the DHCS Health questionnaire as examples of forms where collecting an electronic signature could be useful. o Brandon Fernandez-Comer (Cri-Help) said it would be helpful to eliminate the use of paper. • Anulkah reiterated that the next Business Technology Workgroup will be held at 12:30 pm on Thursday, 2/16/23 and added that there is an agenda item on KPI to be led by Dr. Esther Orellana (DPH-SAPC).	on use of digital signatures in Sage.
Funding Utilization Workgroup Recommendations Update	**Ariel Young, Finance Services, DPH-SAPC** • Ariel Young (DPH-SAPC) provided updates from the SAPC Finance Services Branch on actions taken based on Funding Utilization Workgroup (FUW) recommendations. A recent Sage communication released 2/10/23 addressed some items from the FUW report including how to record gender and contact information for specific finance matters. Ariel noted providers should contact the Sage help desk for claims questions. • A KPI training has been scheduled for 3/9/23 9 – 11 a.m. The training will cover how to find and identify claims, troubleshoot denials, and open a Sage help desk ticket. It will also cover four different KPI sheets related to financial information. Registration is required. • The Sage communications distribution list was expanded to include all Sage users. Individuals who are not Sage users can access the Sage Provider Communications page.	
Discussion Items	**Anulkah Thomas, Systems of Care, DPH-SAPC** • Anulkah Thomas (DPH-SAPC) invited Kathy Watt (Van Ness) to lead a discussion on collaborative efforts to resolve billing challenges. • Kathy suggested that since users can see which other providers work with their clients in Cal-OMS, they can work together to resolve billing problems and/or share fixes. • Brandon Fernandez-Comer (Cri-Help) said it is a good idea to contact other agencies when trying to resolve denial issues and asked if there is a way for SAPC to facilitate this. Daniel Deniz (DPH-SAPC) advised that SAPC sends out communications whenever there are denial resolutions to share. He added that the help desk can also assist with troubleshooting and can escalate the matter if necessary. • Brandon asked if there were any updates on payment rates. Michelle Gibson (DPH-SAPC) noted that Daniel Deniz recently shared information on inpatient and ambulatory withdrawal management rates, which SAPC is still assessing. Residential rates are outstanding. SAPC is hopeful that all rates will be higher than the current levels. Michelle encouraged providers to participate in the payment reform meetings. The next payment reform meeting will be held on 2/22/23. In addition to future conversations around rates, Michelle said SAPC would also like to engage regarding staff recruitment and retention challenges and is interested to hear ideas for how to tie this to incentives.	
Brainstorm Topics for Elevation at Future Meetings	**Bernie Lau, Systems of Care, DPH-SAPC** • Bernie Lau (DPH-SAPC) asked for recommendations for topics at future meetings. • JoAnn Hemstreet (Homeless Health Care of Los Angeles) said that moving to a completely electronic or paperless chart is worth exploring and may be something for a workgroup to take on. She no longer works in	

	treatment but hears from colleagues that there are still steps involving paper consent forms and referral tracking sheets that are uploaded into Sage. Kathy agreed it might be a good topic for a short-lived workgroup. • Jim Symington (Compatior) asked if there is a portal solely for providers where they can share information. Junie Gonzalez (Fred Brown) said this would be useful because some agencies may have overcome some issues that other agencies are still struggling with. Bernie Lau (DPH-SAPC) and Yanira Lima (DPH-SAPC) advised that there is a SAPC page specifically for providers but it does not offer the interaction capabilities Jim described.	

SAPC Announcements	**Anulkah Thomas, Systems of Care, DPH-SAPC**
	• Maurilio Mendez (DPH-SAPC) asked providers to share feedback on the FY 2023-24 rates and standards matrix formatting as was requested in an email sent out the day before. Feedback is due Friday, 3/3/23.
	• Daniel Deniz (DPH-SAPC) followed up on an inquiry regarding DMH's indirect cost rate from the 11/8/22 meeting. DMH confirmed that they have negotiated indirect cost rates but they do allow for the 10% federally approved indirect rate.
	• Anulkah Thomas (DPH-SAPC) advised that the new member selection process will start next month and that half of the members' terms end June 2023. Anulkah explained the bylaws allow members to serve no more than two terms consecutively, meaning that members who are just ending their first term are eligible to re-apply for the FY 2023-25 term. The selection committee will be made up of five SAPC staff members and 4 PAC members, one of which must be the co-chair. Anulkah asked PAC members interested in serving on the selection committee to let Kathy Watt know by 2/21/23. Anulkah advised that the application will be released 3/17/23 and will be due 4/17/23. SAPC will hold a member onboarding session in July and the first PAC meeting of the new term will be held in August.
	    ◦ Claudia Murillo (House of Hope) and Liana Sanchez (L.A. CADA) volunteered to join the selection committee.
	    ◦ Junie Gonzalez (Fred Brown) said that some of the members were not sure if they were in their first or second term. Anulkah advised that those whose terms are ending in June are in their first term and are eligible to apply.
	    ◦ Yanira Lima (DPH-SAPC) advised SAPC would get back to the four members who had been selected via special election about their term dates.
	    ◦ Kathy shared that serving on the PAC is a useful and informative experience that allows providers to network with colleagues from other agencies.
	    ◦ Christina Gonzales (Impact) added that it is important that people who join the PAC understand the time commitment involved, particularly when serving on subcommittees.
	    ◦ Claudia Murillo (House of Hope) reminded group that joining the PAC is not required to participate in the meetings or workgroups as they are all open to the public.
		Providers to submit feedback on rates & standards matrix format.

Meeting Wrap Up	**Anulkah Thomas**, Systems of Care, DPH-SAPC Anulkah provided a summary of decisions and next steps discussed during the meeting: ***Decisions*** • Approved November meeting minutes	

	SAPC Next Steps
	- Update the PAC member roster to note number of terms
	- Dr. Hindman will connect with PAC Business Technology Workgroup to discuss signature pads/list of potential forms in Sage where that functionality would be beneficial; potentially connect with PAC more widely to get feedback and ideas.
	PAC Next Steps
	- All are welcome to join the next PAC Business Technology Workgroup meeting on Thursday, 2/16/23 from 12:30 – 2 p.m.
	- Providers should share input on SAPC strategic plan with HMA via survey by 2/28/23: https://healthmanagement.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5bQfeKVcnYFMKSq.
	- Providers should share feedback on rates and standards matrix formatting by 3/3/23.
	- PAC members interested in participating in member selection process should contact Kathy by 2/21/23.
	    ○ PAC members who expressed interest during the meeting: Claudia, Liana.
	- Email Kathy and Anulkah if you'd like to be part of the Key Indicators Workgroup
	    ○ PAC members who expressed interest: Brandon, Claudia, Deena, Denise, Edith, Hiroko, Jonathan, Junie, Liana.	

Public Comment	**Michelle Gibson**, Deputy Director, DPH-SAPC - No comments made by members of the public.	
Next Meeting	Next meeting is scheduled for April 11, 2023, at 2 pm.	