

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES - DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
Substance Abuse Prevention and Control
Provider Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary – June 10, 2025

Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) MEMBERS PRESENT (20): Gary Tsai, M.D., (Co-Chair), Celia M. Aragon, Seth Blackburn, Deena Duncan, Alice Gleghorn, Baldomero Gonzalez, Maricela Gray, Colette Harley, John Helyar, Dylan Grace (in lieu of Jonathan Higgins), Neptune Linares, Hiroko Makiyama, Pedram Moshfegh, Adrian Reveles, Jose Salazar, Liana Sanchez, Paula Torres (in lieu of Jim Symington), Jina Tintor, Edith Urner, Kathy Watt.

Substance Abuse Prevention and Control REPRESENTATIVES (28): Nima Amini; Cailey Barnes; Aliya Buttar; Christine Cerven; Yolanda Cespedes-Knadle; Maria Elena Chavez; Alyssa Cohen; Nancy Crosby; Daniel Deniz; Carina Dominguez; David Hindman; Alexandra Hospodar; Brian Hurley; Kyle Kennedy; Vanessa Lam; Bernie Lau; Katherine Li; Yanira Lima; Elizabeth Olson; Kimberly-lynn Otello; Ilish Perez; Glenda Pinney; Ana San; Belia Sardinha; Armen Ter-Barsegyan; Emily Turner; Erika Valdez; Zena Yusuf.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (24): Pranab Banskota (CIBHS); Marcelina Ceballos (Penny Lane Centers); Ninfa Cespedes (Pacific Clinics); Roneel Chaudhary (CIBHS); Evangelica Child (Pacific Clinics); Vincent Contreras (LA CADA); Leslie Dishman (CIBHS); Krystal Edwards (CIBHS); Leslie Garcia (CIBHS); Jeanie Hansen (Safe Refuge); B. Freeman Jordan, MD; Claire Kobren (Changing Spirits); Irene Lim (CHLA); Karen Marder (NCADD-SFV); Lisa Moreno (HealthRIGHT360); Dr. Claudia Murillo; Tiffany Ngo (Pacific Clinics); Teresa Romero Ortiz (Pacific Clinics); Jaime Piscione (Child Family Center); Erin Quinn (CRI-Help); Leslie Salguero (San Fernando Recovery Center); Kelly Steiner (Rancho San Antonio); Leena Syhapanha (HealthRIGHT360); Stephanie Zapata (Pacific Clinics).

ABSENT (3): Nely Meza-Andrade, Christina Gonzales, Brianna Monroy.

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED: PAC Meeting Agenda; PAC Meeting Minutes (April 8, 2025); Meeting Presentation Slides; PAC Co-Chair Nomination Form; Photo Release Form

Topic	Discussion/Finding	Recommendations, Action, Follow-up
Welcome	Dr. Gary Tsai, MD, Bureau Director, Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health (DPH), Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (SAPC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Gary Tsai welcomed PAC members. 	
Approval of Meeting Minutes	Bernie Lau, DPH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bernie Lau (DPH) presented the minutes from the April 8, 2025 PAC meeting. A motion to approve the minutes with no changes was advanced by Pedram Moshfegh (Grandview Foundation) and seconded by Liana Sanchez (L.A. CADA). 	
PAC Provider Data Workgroup	Dr. Gary Tsai, MD, Bureau Director, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, SAPC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Tsai (DPH) recapped the implementation phase of the PAC Provider Data Workgroup, discussing agencies voluntarily exploring different data aggregation platforms. He also discussed that SAPC is 	

	working to integrate the workgroup’s shared metrics into incentivized structures as part of SAPC’s broader payment reform efforts.	
Building Communities of Belonging	Maricela Gray, House of Hope <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maricela Gray (House of Hope) shared updates regarding the workgroup’s updated proposal on supporting culturally responsive SUD care. Additionally, Hiroko Makiyama will become the new co-lead of the workgroup following Maricela and Junie’s term completion. 	The next BCB workgroup meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 8, 2025.
2025 PAC Awards	Bernie Lau, DPH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bernie Lau (DPH) discussed the upcoming 2025 PAC Awards and encouraged providers to submit nominations. The 2025 PAC Awards will feature three individual awards and one agency award. 	
Concerns with immigration enforcement	Kathy Watt, Van Ness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kathy Watt (Van Ness) discussed growing concerns among clients from immigration enforcement activities causing safety concerns and declining outpatient attendance. She also expressed concerns for budget cuts toward HIV prevention, such as condoms and STI resources. Liana Sanchez (L.A. CADA) discussed that their agency has responded by adapting internal policies and protocols to ensure continued service delivery and client safety. Dr. Tsai (DPH) encouraged the PAC to share solutions developed by providers. SAPC will continue to support policies and approaches that strengthen communities and fundamentally support the best interests of the individuals that we serve - those at-risk of an SUD, those who use drugs, and those with SUDs. Dr. Tsai also requested a follow-up with the Division of HIV and STD Prevention (DHSP) to discuss resources they can allocate for the provider network. 	
Recovery Bridge Housing Referral Challenges	Jina Tintor, HHCLA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jina Tintor (HHCLA) discussed challenges with accessing Recovery Bridge Housing (RBH), especially for non-RBH providers referring clients. Jina suggested RBH providers may be prioritizing their own clients, posing barriers to their clients. Dr. Tsai (DPH) acknowledged the long-standing issue and reiterated that restricting RBH access to internal clients is against policy and urged providers to report specific incidents for further investigation. SAPC is considering other options to improve referral system, such as centralizing management of RBH. Yanira Lima (DPH) urged providers to share specific details (e.g., provider names, incidents) if they are experiencing access issues. This would allow SAPC to follow up, provide technical assistance, or address policy violations. Edith Urner (Exodus) mentioned that some RBH providers, such as Exodus Recovery, are not listed on the Service & Bed Availability Tool (SBAT), making them harder to find. Yanira Lima will follow-up on this. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Tsai also discussed that contractual bed capacity may be inflated because some providers may contract the same beds to multiple payers. While SAPC can't fully resolve the housing crisis, they are committed to improving visibility, accountability, and planning practices within their network. 	
Challenges of Client Screening Requirements	<p>Pedram Moshfegh, Grandview Foundation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pedram Moshfegh (Grandview) expressed challenges with the updated client screening and warm hand off process required by SAPC, including insufficient staffing to complete requirements and challenges with HIPAA constraints when coordinating with other agencies. Dr. Tsai (DPH) acknowledged the difficulty for smaller agencies. He suggested some strategies to address challenges, such as agencies consolidating with other providers or using revenues from payment reform to invest in needed workforce. However, he emphasized that the warm handoff process is not optional, as providers should prioritize connecting clients to care. Dr. Tsai also informed that agencies may conduct warm handoffs through Recovery Services billing codes (H2015, H2017) or continue with the screening code, depending on what works best operationally. Junie Gonzalez (CRI-Help) shared that despite initial staff resistance, compliance improved after leadership pushed implementation, and the feedback now is that the process is more manageable than initially feared. 	
SAPC-LNC and New On-board: Expediting Process	<p>Celia Aragon, Behavioral Health Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celia Aragon (BHS) raised concerns that new staff are delayed in providing billable Drug Medi-Cal services because they must complete mandatory ASAM A and ASAM B trainings, which cannot be accessed via SAPC-LNC without a C-number. David Hindman (DPH) clarified that new users can create SAPC-LNC accounts and begin ASAM trainings immediately, even before obtaining a C-number. The C-number can be added later to associate the user with an agency. 	
Addiction Medication Updates	<p>Dr. Brian Hurley, DPH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regarding the Workforce Capacity Initiative, Dr. Hurley (DPH) encouraged agencies to bring up ongoing challenges related to addiction medication delivery so they can be prioritized for support with California Institute for Behavioral Health Solutions (CIBHS). SAPC is aware that PCNX lacks prescribing capabilities and has no built-in medication or allergy section. Regarding malpractice insurance, agencies can either cover clinicians under their own malpractice insurance or allow clinicians to maintain their own and list the treatment sites under their malpractice. Dr. Hurley posed one provider challenge when a DHCS Licensing Analyst informed them to complete Form 6042 to include MAT as a service category. Dr. Tsai clarified that the expectation to complete 6042 is not based on formal policy, so providers are advised not to integrate Form 6042 into their workflow. The purpose of raising this issue was simply to keep agencies informed and SAPC leadership is expressing concern that requiring a special form for MAT contributes to the ongoing stigmatization of MAT services. 	

Ensuring Representative Questions for PAC Topics	Dr. Gary Tsai, MD, Bureau Director, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, SAPC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Tsai (DPH) emphasized that PAC members serve as representatives for the provider network and their specialty areas rather than just their individual agencies. When raising meeting topics and questions, PAC members should consider other providers in their area and represent the broader perspectives and needs of the provider community. PAC members are encouraged to connect with other providers to gather broader input that can be raised at PAC meetings. 	
PAC Co-Chair Updates	Bernie Lau, DPH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bernie Lau (DPH) thanked Kathy Watt (Van Ness Recovery) for her leadership as PAC Co-Chair in elevating important topics and fostering group cohesion. He informs that Kathy is concluding her term, leading to an opportunity to identify a new Co-Chair. Interested members are encouraged to submit a candidate form by July 31, which will be emailed. Candidate statements will be shared with the full PAC, and during the August meeting, candidates will have a few minutes to speak. Voting will occur by email, with a majority (50% or more) required to win; if no one meets that threshold initially, a runoff between the top two candidates will follow. Newly joining PAC members are also eligible to run. 	
Public Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pedram Moshfegh (Grandview) raised concerns about a SAPC e-mail regarding mandatory registration for the DHCS Medi-Cal provider portal by July 7, which recommended calling a DHCS phone number listed in the email. After providers contacted DHCS as suggested, there was reported confusion from DHCS and providers received unclear or conflicting information. Dr. Tsai (DPH) informed that SAPC will follow-up with Greg Schwarz and Nancy Crosby to retrieve more information and update the PAC. 	
Meeting Wrap Up	Bernie Lau, DPH, Systems of Care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minutes from the April 8, 2025 meeting were approved (attached). Pedram Moshfegh motioned for approval, seconded by Liana Sanchez. Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PAC Members: Submit self-nominations for PAC Co-Chair to Armen Ter-Barsegyan, due July 31, 2025. SAPC: Discuss with <i>Division of HIV and STD Prevention</i> about condom and STI resources. SAPC: Follow-up regarding guidance for providers on confirming Medi-Cal eligibility. 	
Next Meeting	Reminder: Next Provider Advisory Committee Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 12, 2025, from 2 PM – 4pm. 	