

Riverside County In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Advisory Committee Meeting

December 7, 2023

1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Hybrid Meeting

IHSS Public Authority, 12125 Day Street, Ste 101, Moreno Valley, CA 92557

Alternative Meeting Site:

21200 Toltec Court, Desert Hot Springs, CA 92241

MINUTES

IHSS Advisory Committee (IAC) Members: Felice Connolly, Donald Brock, Barbara Mitchell,

Kristine Loomis, Eric Devezin, Dwight Solis

DPSS IHSS: Garrett Bethel

DPSS IHSS Public Authority: David Dai, Vanessa Johnson, Veronica Ortega, Nancy Alarcon

UDW: Rania Safi, Yensi Hernandez

I. Call to Order

Donald Brock called the meeting to order.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Barbara Mitchell led committee members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Introductions

Introductions were made.

IV. Adoption and Approval of Minutes from October 5, 2023, Regular Meeting for the In-Home Supportive Services Advisory Committee.

Approved.

V. Board Secretary (*Felice Connolly*)

- No additional items added.

VI. Follow-up Items from October 5, 2023

- A. Contacted County Counsel - County Memorandum and Committee protocols.

Discussion: Email response received by County Counsel with ADA exceptions applied to IAC members attending; includes proper notification of alternate meeting site(s).

- B. IHSS Advisory budget questions – in progress.
- C. Contact CICA for Brown Act Training.

Discussion: Public Authority contacted CICA, who is looking into the types of training that they can provide. In an outreach, Riverside County Counsel responded with tentative dates to present a Brown Act training for the committee. Dates offered in 2024 are January 20 or February 1 at the next IAC meeting. The Committee does not need a motion and decided on February 1. The presentation will be on ZOOM, during the meeting starting at 2:30 pm and the agenda will be adjusted to include the training.

- D. Ability to hire active provider at the Electronic Services Portal
Discussion: This update will be presented in Agenda Item C. In-Home Supportive Services Update.

VII. Discussion Items and Reports

A. Executive Committee Update (*Felice Connolly*)

a. IAC Membership Recruitment

- Discussion: Garrett shared that the IAC brochures have been distributed to IHSS regional staff. Initially, there was no response. This opened discussions on barriers to communication, relying on the brochures, and other options that would be helpful. David inquired on past practices to promote the IAC and vacancies and the types of communications applied to share the information. The brochures are also made available at In Person Orientations. Barbara introduced the need to assess the level of responses, identify the barriers to communication and the level of commitment to fill positions so that the IAC can advocate and bring forward issues that need to be addressed in constructive and positive ways. Referring to methods to achieve overcoming barriers, David shared his observations, 1) direct outreach – increase outreach and in person sessions and 2) how to articulate the message to clients. Also mentioned in discussion were lists to identify/target stakeholders and suggestions to target the districts with vacancies. David asked if the Committee has ever had a full membership; for the IAC to review past approaches and measure the value of adopting new methods.

Summary of suggested steps/methods:

- Use of video: Kristine shared from experience, that providers are the point of contact who also encourage and support client participation (transportation, interface on challenges) and the importance of incentives – social contact and the activity to help others. Kristine also suggested

the use of videos with client testimonies. Barbara identified the IAC videos. David stated that the video be short and provide an engaging message to the audience with a call to action.

- Outreach materials: Garrett suggested posters with key points placed in lobbies and potentially billboards to announce the IAC and vacancies.
- Communication blasts: Vanessa suggested to flesh out the major points and send email blasts. UDW suggested text blasts.
- Direct calls and inter-agency support: Don Brock said direct calls help and that passing out the IAC brochure works. He suggested inter-agency support, delivering/making visits to senior centers to meet with clients.
- HOME Call Center and direct conversations:
Rania suggested indoctrinating the HOME Call Center to be well equipped on the IAC. Further, that we can all have those conversations with consumers.

Action Items: PA to send brochures to IHSS DO and UDW
PA to review/send a digital -electronic email
Inter-agency involvement at the senior centers (includes Office On Aging, IHSS, UDW)
Focus on the areas with vacancies (Districts 1, 3 and 5).

b. 2024 Calendar - locations

The IAC alternates meeting locations throughout the year.

Discussion: Meetings will take place in February and October at UDW, Riverside. PA will host the remainder of the meetings (April, June, August, and December 2024).

c. IHSS Advisory Committee Training topics

Training sessions are to be scheduled throughout the year.

Discussion: Dr. Brock requested that Share of Cost training be offered.
Felice mentioned the importance of Medi-Cal income updates.

Action Item: Public Authority to seek presenter for Share of Cost training.

B. United Domestic Workers Union Update (*Rania Safi, Yensi Hernandez*)

Rania reported how timesheet workshops continue to be offered on an as needed basis. This is about 10 people per week, but we do see a higher number of folks who are currently interested. We are also holding advocacy training, monthly as needed. We also just finished with the Caregiver Appreciation event collaborations with you all. So those are great events. In Palm Springs, I believe there were 136 and Moreno Valley, attendance of 216. These are a good turnout and with quite a few vendors. We distributed about 380 turkeys for our Union members via drive through. Along with our training center, UDW holds CPR training. UDW staff

attend different rallies in solidarity with other organizations on social justice issues. We are also heavily focused on building leadership amongst members and providing them with training and tools that are needed to advance their leadership skills. At the next IAC meeting, we will discuss what we're doing with our brochure. Yensi also announced that she is currently serving as a union representative, and starting in 2024, will also take over as regional manager for Yvette Elam, who has been promoted.

Discussion: IAC Chair, Dr. Brock, recognized provider Jessica who asked a question about reeducating providers on insurance and costs. Kristine asked if providers are getting a raise for in January, and the rate. And second, if there is a waiting list for providers to get medical coverage? Yensi responded that the wait is about a month. It used to be years, so tremendous progress has been made in this area. Under the current contract, providers are expected to receive a 75 cent increase effective 1/1/2024, but also because when minimum wage in the State goes up, language in the contract is added that providers receive 50 cents above. As a result, the total wage increase for providers will be a \$1.25 per hour, bringing it to \$18 effective.

C. In-Home Supportive Services Update (*Garrett Bethel*)

a. Call Center Statistics

Garret reported on behalf of Ryan Uhlenkott, the Call Center data for October 2023.

- 45,479 Calls to IHSS HOME - this is 6,777 calls above normal. Averaging an 87% answer rate for the last two weeks.
- b. Update on Hiring a Provider Through the ESP Portal**
- This functionality has been restored by the State. Clients can once again link themselves with known Riverside County IHSS Providers in the ESP.

Discussion: Vanessa shared that the portal was not working. Rania asked who to contact if it goes down. Garrett explained that ASD contacts the state. Rania asked for the average wait time on Call Center calls. Kristine also mentioned hearing from several people that it is still taking up to 4 months to be onboarded as a provider and to please encourage the IHSS team to keep working on it. Also asked where the forms are to apply for the IHSS program as a consumer. Vanessa replied by sharing that the IHSS online application is located at ihssriverside.org with a tile marked – apply here. Dr Brock mentioned how consumers used to call in, connect with someone over the phone, so they could send the social worker out to evaluate the situation; some level of assessment for eligibility and how many don't know the limits for social security is \$1,500/month. Vanessa clarified that applicants who don't have Medi-Cal, when they call IHSS HOME, or apply online, an application is automatically sent to Medi-Cal to review them for Medi-Cal as well. IHSS no longer screens over the phone because some people felt it was still unfair. Garret added that the benchmark for in person

assessment is having Medi-Cal. A provider thanked IHSS for assistance with timesheets.

D. Public Authority Update (*David Dai*)

a. FLSA Violations

David presented that from November 2023 – present, the total violations are .35 of the total population of caregivers in Riverside County. A small population with these issues in comparison to all providers. Mass emails are sent with information to avoid violations. In our findings, the first violation can literally be erased and on second violations, a provider likely had numerous or potential violations that are not recorded or received penalties. At the ESP, providers are prompted when there is an entry error before submitting to avoid violations. Please share with caregivers to call in when receiving those prompts so we can assist them to avoid violations.

Data on active and available caregivers from the Registry, in comparison over the last five years, is at an all time high. We have implemented changes to recruit and increase providers. Among active employees who are fully employed, in 2023 we have a higher total compared to previous years. We are working to gain providers to support and help the community.

In addition, the number of Registry applications received since March 2023 is higher and we are now activating over 100 every month.

b. November Caregiver Appreciation Events Update

David reported on the events held in Moreno Valley and Palm Springs with great food, great presenters; stating that a lot was learned through the activities; with UDW and the many supporters helping at the event. We have a summary of what we probably did very well, and the opportunities to improve, so that next year we can have even better events. We already have a potential new theme for next year's event. Something fun and making sure that attendees come and really enjoy themselves. Truly, the goal here is to thank all of you caregivers for all the things that you do every single day.

Discussion: Questions on violations: How are the violations accounted? Late October violations are delivered in November. Who has the percentage of the highest violations – new or continuing providers? More than 50 percent are new providers, and we also have providers who ask for help to avoid 2nd and 3rd violations. In the data it shows that only 5 individuals reached a 3rd violation. Most of these were newer providers with probably less than 6 months.

Question on the increase in Registry providers: What were some of the methods used? Public Authority (PA) partnered with internal agencies – for example, Welfare to Work and Office on Aging. We met with our stakeholders and learned that they didn't have a clear understanding of the PA, yet. Not many people go to the county website and look for Public Authority. I can share that in my forty years, I didn't. We want to be sure that the PA is present in the

community. Our need is to implement direct approaches. We have gone to schools, and partnered with the Lake Elsinore School District, and we are now part of their curriculum. Fifty students/caregivers to have PEARS accounts upon their graduation. With Altura Credit Union, we are working to get the message out to the east region. We are working to get the information to the public to increase opportunity there.

Felice commented on identifying locations to hold Caregiver Appreciation events in different areas to reach providers from different regions. David explained that we looked at these considerations and had done this in the past, too. The issues we have are mostly about location, space for vendors and if the venue is big enough to hold a large group, and costs associated with the event. The budget has limits so we're trying to locate funds. Moreno Valley, in terms of cost, is tremendously more affordable, and kind of in the middle of the west region. For these reasons, a large space made it quite possible for us. There is a possibility that we can go to a different location, but again, it will be a matter of space that can hold enough people so we can host and appreciate as many of the caregivers as we can; meeting costs and all else.

Break

E. Office on Aging Advisory Council Update (*Barbara Mitchell and Donald Brock*)

- Dr. Brock reported that the Council had the same problem, filling positions, and may have a full board now. As mentioned earlier, we'll be helping to push this drive, and we'll be going to our senior centers. Since COVID, we have not been to the centers in a long time. Another thing that Dwight Solis mentioned is to reach out to the main body in the community, the church, with these fliers. Another group that doesn't even know about IHSS.
- We give out gift cards to the senior centers in different areas every year. At next week's meeting, we will be talking about the CA Seniors Legislature (CSL). A lot of people don't know that we have a group of assembly and senators, and we work hand in hand to make changes possible and represent seniors in Riverside County. That was our first meeting in person since COVID. We're looking forward to Seniors' May Day and all the senior events coming up in the beginning of the year. We must keep you abreast of this. There is one opening in this area for an assembly person and that'll be coming up on the first of the year. For work on bills and for senior citizens' issues, see me (CSL).

F. Advocacy for the Disabled Update (*vacant*)

- No Updates

G. Barriers to underserved populations (*Eric Devezin*)

- Eric Devezin had technical difficulties and this item will be moved to the next meeting.

H. California In-Home Supportive Services Consumer Alliance (CICA) Update (*Felice Connolly*)

- At the Southern California meeting for CICA, held November 14, basically, most of the of the counties have the same problems that we face in Riverside County. Asked is to have meetings every quarter for all counties to meet with the Charter. I will leave that to the incoming chair if you would like to do that. Kristine, as a member of the CICA Executive Board, mentioned that she took a small part in the planning and thought it was good, because for years had been trying to bring together different counties in the southern region like San Bernardino, Orange, LA Counties, Riverside, so that we can share best practices. It opened our eyes to a lot. It was a Zoom Meeting, so you didn't have to go in person, and Kristine really wanted to thank Felice, as our past Chair, and David for coming and presenting on IHSS in Riverside at the meeting. It was awesome. Thank you.

I. Enrollment Advisory Committee Update formerly CCI Stakeholder (*Felice Connolly*)

- CCI now, the Enrollment Advisory Committee, with their main purpose to help those having problems with Medi-Cal enrollment. Those that are being terminated, the main purpose is to have them understood and to have them re-enrolled in the Medicare in the Medi-Cal program. Again, transportation is still an issue among the providers and beneficiaries – for consumers to be able to visit doctors, and so forth. Basically, both disability contracts, covering transportation, also using license. Molina issues vouchers for transportation and they also have groceries as part of their benefit. Both have phone, vision, and modified hearing benefits.

Provider, Jessica recognized by the Chair: asked-if vans accommodate wheelchairs; commented on transportation and Uber and on the amount of effort it takes to schedule transportation. How some private companies require caregivers to also be uber drivers. Kristine shared having been in lots of discussion with IEHP, and how IEHP provides vans that will come to the door of the consumer with a wheelchair and for rides to appointments. Must register 5 days in advance. This is a disadvantage and there are problems with them, being late, finding her, but getting better. Both Molina and IEHP provide transportation of that type. Dr Brock shared that insurances provide transportation and benefits. For consumers to review their policy. Check Medicare, prescription, transportation options.

J. IHSS Advisory Committee Budget Update (*Donald Brock*)

a. Budget Update

\$5,976.00 22/23

\$ 126.28 Spent to date

\$5,849.72. remaining balance

- The balance includes transportation that was paid out, pending expenses for promotional items purchased for distribution at the caregiver. In addition, there will be CICA dues forthcoming in March/April. Dr. Brock stated that we should be planning to purchase items for next year.

K. Training Committee Update (*Kristine Loomis/Barbara Mitchell*)

- Kristine shared that she is working closely with Home Bridge, an organization that is doing statewide care provider training. They're starting to get input from consumers. Kristine has sent them written input and is doing reviews of the different curriculums, which is an important cause. A lot of issues from the consumer point of view are missing and this can be adjusted.

L. Announcements

- No announcements

M. Roundtable

- No announcements

N. Adjournment

- Felice motioned to adjourn. Barbara seconded the motion.

O. Meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 2, 2024

Hybrid Meeting

Location: Office of UDW

1445 Spruce Street, Ste A, Riverside, CA 92507