

IHSS Public Authority Advisory Board Meeting
February 16, 2010
MINUTES

Members Present: Sondra Corday, Bharat Desai, Cindy Faulkner (via tele-conference), JoAnn Disbrow, Kai Lu, Jim Ramoni (ex-officio), Janie Whiteford, Theresa Wright

Members Absent: Richard Patterson, Elissa Young

COA Staff Present: Leticia Sabadin, Mary Tinker

Guests Present: Ellen Rollins, Potential AB Member, Brian Miller, Potential AB Member and Director of NAMI

Approve Minutes: January 2010 Minutes approved as written.

Announcements & Public Comment:

- Theresa Wright announced that she received a phone call from the Santa Clara County Clerk of the Board's office and they advised her she had been appointed to the Advisory Board by Supervisor Shirakawa.
- Mary Tinker distributed an article titled, "Budget Cuts Threaten In-Home Care Program" from The Press Democrat published February 15, 2010. Mary suggested everyone write a letter to their legislator indicating how IHSS cuts would impact them or people they know.
- Brian Miller shared his experience attending the last Santa Clara County Democratic Committee meeting. He and Janie Whiteford attended and ran into issues due to the elevators being locked making the room inaccessible for people with disabilities. This meeting is held in the basement of the County building located at 70 West Hedding and because it is held in the evening the elevators were locked. When trying to get someone to open the gates and make the meeting accessible some individuals made the comment, "we never thought about those people". Other than this issue, which was inappropriate and is indicative of the lack of understanding and sensitivity to people with disabilities, the meeting is a good opportunity to meet local politicians and educate them about the program. Brian discovered most of the attendees are completely unaware of the disability issues and programs.

CAPA Report: CAPA met January 28th in Sacramento. Mary Tinker reported that CAPA participated in the stakeholder meeting regarding fingerprinting IHSS recipients, she participated by phone. The meeting was not productive and created more objections and concerns than answers. It appeared State staff did not understand the gravity of the reaction advocates and recipients would have regarding this topic; the phone system used for the meeting was more disruptive than beneficial. There are several issues with the process and the costs involved in the multifaceted training, materials, and impact of requiring IHSS recipients to be fingerprinted. The device needed to do the fingerprinting costs \$4200 each and the state staff indicated there would need to be one purchased for every IHSS social worker. CAPA will continue active participation in this process.

During the Senate Budget Committee proceedings, Chair Denise Ducheny urged CDSS and Department of Finance officials to consider regionalizing the Public Authorities as an option for saving money. CAPA's Lobbyist scheduled a meeting with Senator Ducheny for the following week. Mary Tinker, CAPA Legislative Chair, PA Director Ann Guerra and Lobbyist Don Schinske met with Senator Ducheny to discuss her remarks, which she said were motivated by a desire to change the collective bargaining process. She did acknowledge that she had not considered the degree to which Public Authority funding had been cut last year, and for the moment, did not seem intent on introducing any specific proposals to restructure Public Authorities. Ann and Mary answered questions the Senator had and provided insight as to the actual functions of Public Authorities, which she indicated was very enlightening and provided a broader perspective.

CAPA remains involved in the discussions with CDSS staff regarding the DOJ appeal process established by the department. Details are still unresolved and must be finalized within the limits of DOJ regulations and not those made up by CDSS that contradict them. It is a work in progress.

CAPA's lawsuit filed January 25th against the State "PUTZ – vs – SCHWARZENEGGER" was granted the motion to have the case heard by Judge Wilkens who has heard other recent IHSS cases.

CAPA continues involvement with the IHSS Coalition in all aspects of the new mandated requirements and stakeholder meetings. CAPA and the Coalition continue to monitor the 1115 Medicare Waiver and the workgroups for that project. It could have broad implications for seniors and people with disabilities.

CAPA's Legislative Committee will be reviewing a range of proposals introduced prior to the February 19th deadline for 2010 bills.

Programs Report:

Benefits Administration : Mary Tinker reported there were 7,166 IPs enrolled in the Valley Health Plan and 7,680 IPs enrolled in the Dental/Vision plans during the month of January.

There has been a decline in the total number of IPs enrolled in all three benefit plans for the first time since the inception of benefits provision for this workforce. There appears to be a correlation to the implementation of the New Provider Enrollment requirements from the state which went into effect November 1st. Benefits staff issued 3,049 Eco Passes during January.

New Provider Enrollment Process: There were three small group sessions held in January processing 75 new IPs. Staff conducted enrollment processing for existing providers all day January 12th and 13th at the union office. Staff processed 861 existing providers during this two day period. Processing the paperwork and data entry was done gradually as time permitted while Public Authority staff worked it in between their regular responsibilities.

PA had over 6,000 calls during the first two weeks of January. Additional information was provided from COA IT the end of last week regarding the total volume of calls for the full month but there has not been time to analyze it. Calls were coming in faster than staff could handle them, IT ended up raising the voice mail box limits from 50 to 100 and staff still was unable to deal with the high volume of calls.

Cindy Faulkner inquired about what the volume of calls were in reference to; most calls were regarding the new enrollment process, but there were also a high number of calls from IPs registering for training classes, ECO Passes and benefit questions.

Mary mentioned the PA no longer deals with IPs and consumers in person, face-to-face interactions at the office location are discouraged by staff. People are asked to phone, email or mail information to the PA due to reduced capacity in staffing. It helps staff handle the work load more efficiently.

Registry Services: There are 478 active IPs on the registry. The Registry completed 46 new consumer intakes, 34 matches and provided 209 interventions. The Urgent Care Registry authorized 23 hours of service for the month of January.

Provider Training: There were no training classes offered in January.

New Enrollment Process: Existing and New Providers are now completing the enrollment process. Public Authority Services (PA) is utilizing SEIU Local 521 Union office to conduct the Enrollment Sessions. PA is there every Tuesday and Wednesday between the hours of 8 am – 4 pm but IPs are scheduled between 9 and 3 in order to give staff time to set-up and close down. PA has begun mailing packets to IPs with information regarding the enrollment session and a phone number to schedule an appointment. The union makes robo calls to IPs who received the mailing reminding them to schedule their appointment. The union then receives the calls and schedules IPs in one hour blocks of time. Due to a fairly slow response from IPs the PA is also accepting walk-ins of existing providers; there is no appointment necessary for new providers. The union staff and volunteers have been very helpful at the Enrollment Sessions and have been assisting with translations as needed.

Mary passed around a sample Enrollment Packet being mailed to all current providers alphabetically. She indicated the PA is doing the best they can to try to get all IPs processed as quickly as possible to meet the deadline of June 30, 2010. When asked if she thinks this deadline will be met Mary responded that in her opinion it is highly unlikely.

JoAnn Disbrow stated that the PA department is doing a good job. JoAnn expressed her appreciation to PA staff for all of their hard work. Mary mentioned that the PA staff is very dedicated and determined to complete the enrollment process as effectively and smoothly as possible.

Staffing: There were no regular staff changes during January however due to the new enrollment functions COA brought four temp staff on board February 8th to work exclusively with the enrollment processing. They will be working at COA through the end of June.

Labor Negotiations: The Board of Supervisors voted to ratify the new MOA with SEIU Local 521 on January 26th. This agreement is in affect October 1, 2009 through January 31, 2012.

California IHSS Consumer Alliance Report (CICA): Janie reported that there were 185 people in attendance at the annual CICA Conference held January 22-24 in San Jose. It was a great conference that provided interesting information. She indicated receiving feedback from attendees stating this was the best CICA conference yet. The conference made money mostly due to the sponsors' contributions.

Janie reported she attended the Senate Budget Committee meeting in Sacramento. Senator Ducheny questioned CDSS staff as to why they are planning cuts where specifics have been enjoined.

CICA is scheduling regional conferences and the next is scheduled in May just prior to the Governor's release of the May Revise Budget Proposal.

CICA is involved with the Health & Human Services Coalition which has numerous groups as members. CICA remains very active in the IHSS Coalition as well.

Report from Social Services Agency: Jim gave praise and expressed his appreciation to the PA department for doing so much with so little staff. Thanks to the PA, the enrollment process is underway and working towards the deadline to process over 15,000 providers; as well as enrolling NEW providers. Jim reported that IHSS has enhanced their telephone automation system with a new outgoing message greeting. Basically the greeting asks the caller to press a number to correspond to their preferred language. They have greetings in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Russian, Cantonese and Mandarin. The telephone tree goes on to state the various buttons to push if they need help with certain topics, i.e.: Provider Enrollment, Timesheets, Status of Paycheck, etc. Jim also stated that he is looking into a new interactive voice response

system which will provide the caller the ability to obtain information without actually talking to a live person. In many instances the caller will get the answer to their inquiry right away.

Jim also reported that IHSS is ramping up for the anticipated volume of calls expected in regards to the new wage rate of \$12.20, which became effective on February 1st. Jim indicated he doesn't think most IPs realize this change has taken place and will not see it until they receive their first paycheck after the timesheets are processed from the first pay period in February.

IHSS did receive an allocation for additional staffing for the new Fraud Prevention program. Five positions have been approved which included a social worker, an account clerk and three investigators.

Brian Miller asked Jim about Fraud and what is happening with Social Services and Fraud, and how much money is going towards this effort. Janie asked Jim if he could provide some fraud statistics and specific cases to present to the AB at the next meeting. Jim indicated he would bring it to the March meeting.

Jim reported on the stakeholder meeting regarding recipient fingerprinting. He indicated CDSS is preparing to have social workers fingerprint and photograph IHSS recipients starting April 1, 2010. The statute passed last year to require all recipients be fingerprinted never included photographing them. It appears State staff are pushing for this to prevent mixing up information between recipients.

Janie suggested that the AB members write to Assemblymember Beall regarding the consumer fingerprints and photographing and ask him to take a strong stand against this.

CICA Conference Reports From AB Members Who Attended:

Janie: It was a busy two days at the conference, she was thrilled with the turn out and the speakers were excellent. There was a lot work put into the conference to make it happen and be successful. She thanked the sponsors and mentioned some expenses that were made, such as closed-captioning, American Sign-Language, etc. which drive the cost of the conference up. The sessions were videotaped and are available for viewing on the CICA website.

JoAnn: The conference was very good. She liked the location of conference—the Doubletree Hotel, the services, speakers were all good. She thought the break-out sessions were worth while.

Bharat: The conference was very informative, budget changes regarding IHSS, enlightening legislative representatives, the session on the 250% Employment Program was very informative. It was a good opportunity to discuss with other Advisory Committee members issues and how they handle them, a great opportunity for social networking, understanding IHSS and various issues.

Cindy: Stated she felt the conference was very informative, especially the last session on Advisory Committees. It gave AC members a chance to create a poster that shows what their priorities are which was made it a fun and informative session. The food was good, but she thought there was too much food, and maybe it was going to waste which is too bad. She met

some very nice people.

Kai: Stated she agrees with what everyone said already, it was very informative, she found the internet access station very helpful. The close-captioning was very helpful for her since English is her second language this helped her to better understand what was being said by speakers. Her favorite session was the fingerprinting/fraud session with Deborah Doctor.

Ellen: As usual it was a very enlightening, fantastic conference. Ellen brought two guests from the Disability Caucus. (Mayor's Commissioner Aide from Alameda and Rebecca Armendariz from SEIU Local 521). Working people generally don't acknowledge their disability when it's invisible in the work place. Ellen says she received a lot of good information from the conference. She suggested that in future conferences it would be beneficial if CICA had representatives from all unions if there is a panel discussion with union representatives in order to get a more complete picture of the information.

Brian: Excellent conference got a lot of information especially as a new AB member. He suggested that there should be more people invited to the conference, people from various groups such as NAMI, Teamsters, SVILC, etc.

Elect Vice Chair: Mary asked the AB members to vote for a vice chair representative, since Bonnie Mello left the AB this position has been vacant. Consensus of the group was to have JoAnn Disbrow as the Vice Chair.

Discussion: How do we get consumers involved?: No time for this agenda item, deferred to the March meeting.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Advisory Board is scheduled for **Tuesday, March 16, 2010** from **11:30-1:30PM** at 2115 The Alameda, San Jose, CA 95126.