

# IHSS Public Authority Advisory Board Meeting

March 18, 2025

## MINUTES

### **ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING for All/Guests:**

Pre-Registration is required.

Join Zoom Meeting:

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***\*\*This meeting is being recorded for purposes of capturing the meeting minutes.***

**Members Present:** Mathew Lubinsky; Narendra Pathak; Joanna Kent; Veroncia Marquez-Hothem (Ex-Officio); David Forderer (via Zoom); Joyce Felix-Builes (via Zoom), Natascha Walker

**Members Absent:** Janie Whiteford; Darcy McCann

**PA Staff Present:** Edith Gong; Vi Lam

**Guests Present (Virtual & In-Person):** Marisela Perez, Home & Community Based Services Specialist, Santa Clara Family Health Plan; Angelina Soria, Public Authority Registry Manager; Steve Kline, Board Aide for Supervisor Ellenberg's Office; Michelle Mashburn, IHSS Consumer; Amy Tsai, SEIU 2015 Union Organizer; Wayne Glusker, Assistant to David Forderer (via Zoom)

### **Announcements & Public Comment:**

- Narendra mentioned the concerns with Seniors and the disability community in the Bay Area and the country with regard to President Trump and Congressional leadership's proposed massive cuts to Medicare and Medi-Cal. This is something very important and impacts all US insurance plans, etc.
  - Narendra also attended meetings with the Santa Clara Human Rights Commission and the Santa Clara Family Health Plan Advisory Board. There are many discussions surrounding Medi-Cal, Medicare and IHSS- and how it is very important relating to quality improvement and service.
- Mathew spoke about the Chairperson's term start date proposal. This involved a discussion about potential changes to the chairperson's term, with a proposal to shift the start date from March to January. The aim was to provide more time for the chairperson to prepare for the budget cycle and make recommendations. The decision was left to be voted on in the next meeting.
  - Joanna proposed that she work with Mathew to write up the change in preparation for a vote.
- David announced a new county Disability Advisory Board that meets quarterly to address various issues; he is a member.
  - The board has 10 members, including individuals with disabilities. They have a full board (no open seats) and have had several meetings.

- David feels the Advisory Board should be aware of the group and work through him to raise any disability access issues.
- David's assistant Wayne noted that the group identifies issues, then reports to the appropriate authorities to remedy the situation. The group monitors and discusses progress on issues raised, such as ramps, building spaces, ADA parking, parks, etc.

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

- Motion by Narendra Pathak to approve the February 18, 2025 meeting minutes, with the edit to be made with regards to stipends; seconded by Mathew Lubinsky, vote was unanimous.
  - **The board discussed the approval of the minutes from the previous meeting, with an edit made regarding the approval of stipends at 50% or less of the budget.**

#### **Rally Day in Sacramento:**

- The upcoming Rally Day in Sacramento is May 20, with David agreeing to find out the dates, provide an event link, and forward the information to Leticia as soon as possible. He will have more answers by the next meeting.

#### **Consumer Event Planning:**

- Set for April 29th. The event will feature various programs and resources for consumers, their families, and caregivers. Edith provided an update on the registered attendees, with 10 organizations already signed up. The team agreed that it would be helpful to have the Union there to explain how they support providers and consumers and to answer questions. They also discussed the possibility of having a 1-pager to hand out to consumers, explaining the Union's role.
- The board discussed outreach efforts, with a focus on securing more tables and attendees. They agreed to follow up with contacts and explore options for housing resources.
- Agreement to send out an invitation for the event on March 21st, with a maximum of 400 registrations.
- Joanna to send the invite and Zoom link for the next Planning meeting scheduled for March 24<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Peer Mentoring:**

- Janie was not in attendance, so this will be agendaized for the next meeting.

Edith mentioned that she reached out to San Francisco's PA and has not heard back. Requested the presentation include how to set up consumer peer mentors, successes and challenges of the program so the AB can learn and possibly implement.

#### **Santa Clara Family Health Plan:**

- Joyce reported the referrals that her staff made to IHSS. For the month of February, there were 12 new requests and 13 reassessment requests. They are seeing a gradual increase by our staff, just due to some of the outreach efforts that our team has made.
- We have recently added another resource center – located in South County in the Morgan Hill and Gilroy area. It is called the Santa Clara Family Health Plan - South County Service Hub. Some of the services they provide are not as extensive as what we offer in our San Jose resource center.
  - Help with members applying for medical, their Medi-Cal application, or maybe they received a renewal notice and are not sure what to do with it. There's also assistance with Covered California applications.

- They also help to connect with other types of services provided by Social Services. CalFresh applications--If people have questions about the program, how do they apply for that?
- They also help get people connected with community resources. Any questions in general about, here's what my needs are, and I need help. We have staff members who can contact them, if needed, to case managers.
- Joyce announced that they are hosting an Older Adult Resource Fair at our Community Resource Center in San Jose, taking place on Saturday, May 17, 2025. This one is particularly for older adults and connecting them to resources that they may need. Joyce and Maricella are on the planning committee. Looking to recruit speakers, having panel discussions, etc.
  - If you are part of an agency or know somebody who is and who concentrates on older adults, just like with In-Home Support Services and other various agencies, feel free to reach out to Joyce so she can pass on the information to her community engagement manager.
  - Joyce and Edith discussed the promotion of an upcoming event, with Edith suggesting contacts at Senior Agenda and Aging Adult Services. Joyce clarified the contacts as Jennifer Kelly and Vanessa Merlano, respectively. Joyce confirmed that they could either hold a table or be part of a panel discussion. Edith expressed uncertainty about their attendance but appreciated the note.
- Joyce also mentioned an upcoming event with Hagar Dickman from Justice and Aging, discussing potential cuts to Medicaid funding. AB emphasized the importance of advocacy and encouraged attendees to contact their Congresspersons.

#### **California IHSS Consumer Alliance Report:**

- Janie was not in attendance but asked if these 2 items could be mentioned. Edith spoke:
  - Tomorrow's CICA call with guest speaker Hagar Dickman from Justice and Aging, discussing potential cuts to Medicaid funding.
  - There is a big campaign going on to encourage IHSS consumers or any consumer who is a Medi-Cal recipient to make their voice heard to all of your US Congresspersons and Senators. More importantly, advocate, contact individuals in Republican counties that are likely to vote for funding cuts. Spread the word; cuts will hurt the most vulnerable individuals, so please speak out. There are a lot of links that have been emailed; please acknowledge and do your part. Janie asked that I implore people to do that--emphasized the importance of advocacy and encouraged members to contact their Congresspersons.

#### **SEIU 2015:**

- Natasha states that they are in the middle of contract negotiations.
- As of February 28, 2025 there are 18,141 active members.
- They had 8 orientations in February. All of them were English. There are 2 on Fridays.
- There are volunteer translators, and they have forms that are printed out in Chinese, Vietnamese, Spanish, and Armenian now as well.
- She also mentioned the ongoing VTA strike and its impact on transportation for consumers. AB suggested contacting VTA board members to voice concerns about the strike. Natascha has a QR Code that she can share with regards to the strike and any concerns you may have.

AB discussed the challenges faced by providers who don't understand the enrollment process, particularly those who speak languages other than the four main languages in the county. AB also expressed concerns about the overwhelming nature of the IHSS orientation and the pressure it puts

on attendees. AB is trying to collect data on in-home providers and their stress levels and is considering ways to provide more support for these caregivers. AB also mentioned the need to address caregiver violence, which is being addressed in the contract.

### **Respite Care and VTA Strike**

AB and Joyce discussed the availability of respite care for caregivers in managed Medi-Cal plans. Joyce confirmed that Santa Clara Family Health Plan provides respite care and additional hours beyond IHSS. AB suggested that other health insurance providers may also offer similar services.

### **Report from Social Services Agency-IHSS:**

- Veronica reported that there is progress in recruiting for the upcoming Open House. They have about 8 volunteers so far.
- Discussed the backlog of cases, which they are working on by offering overtime to social workers.
- Mentioned a CNIF change request that was submitted due to the character limit issue in CMIPS. The team is hopeful that this will be approved soon.
- Mentioned that the number of reassessments is a project they are working on. (Currently around 6800 overdue cases). The team is also working on a report to expedite the process of pre-qualifying clients.
- Veronica will be working with the AB until the end of March, after which Kingston Lum will take over as interim IHSS Manager. Currently working on hiring a replacement for Terri.

### **PROGRAMS REPORT**

Highlights in yellow.

Wait time for enrollment appointments continues to be high and is directly related to the small number of staff on the Enrollment team. Care Coordinators and Regular Registry continue to be challenged by many referrals and high call volumes, respectively. The Trump Administration's announcements of impending cuts to Medicaid are top of mind among consumers, providers and the PA Staff. In the midst of the turmoil, the PA staff is focused on meeting the needs of consumers and providers; customer service is top of mind. The first collective bargaining meeting was held on February 26 at the SEIU facility.

Edith discussed the staffing issues in the enrollment team, highlighting that they are understaffed compared to other counties like San Francisco and Sacramento.

Edith discussed the ongoing challenges with provider enrollment, citing high demand and limited resources. The team is trying to be creative by scheduling multiple appointments simultaneously, but the backlog remains significant, with about 1,500 future appointments. She explains that while the information is already available through orientations and videos, these appointments serve as a final opportunity to address individual questions and verify documents. Despite suggestions for alternative approaches like large-scale events, Edith notes logistical constraints such as limited staff, equipment, and space.

This just goes to show you that Santa Clara PA is severely understaffed for the number of people we're trying to serve. The only way to get that number smaller than 8.7 weeks is to add more heads. Edith also shared that she was just told that the PA budget is flat for next year. So she had put in and asked for one head in Benefits and one head in Enrollment and was told that it's a completely flat budget.

This is going to continue for the near future unless there's some other assistance in getting either more people or more funding. Edith asks for everyone's patience. This is something that SEIU needs to understand as well. There is only so much we can do.

The registry team is also facing additional challenges with staff on leave, but they have still managed to increase the number of active providers and matches, conducting registry introduction trainings in four languages.

## **BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION**

There are **14,069** Providers (IPs) enrolled in the Valley Health Plan (VHP) medical insurance. **2,462** of those in the Classic Plan and **11,607** in the Preferred Plan. **14,782** IPs are enrolled in the Dental/Vision plans. There were **152** Smart Pass VTA bus pass Cards issued.

**Sick Leave:** **35,073** active IPs have accrued 40 hours of sick leave. **11,584** have claimed some hours and **7,104** have claimed all 40 hours.

## **ENROLLMENT**

Number of Providers (IPs) enrolled: **697**

DOJ fingerprint reports delayed over 30 days: **0**

Group Orientation Meeting (GOM) attendees: **831**

There are **1700** future IP enrollment appointments scheduled. Next appointments are available **61** days (**8.7** weeks) after an IP watches the online orientation videos.

## **REGISTRY**

There are **995** active IPs on the registry and **3,215** active consumers.

### **Regular Registry:**

- Completed **73** new consumer intakes
- Generated **400** referral lists
- Attained **99** matches (assignments)
- Provided **1024** new interventions with over **559 hours** spent on the interventions

**Care Coaching:** The Registry received **28** referrals for Care Coaching

- **22** care coaching consultations were conducted
- Total active consumers **170**

**On-Call Registry (OCR):** There were **22** eligible requests to the On-Call Registry out of **33** total calls. **13** requests were fulfilled for a total of **202.38** hours utilized. There are a total of **168** providers on the On-Call Registry.

### **Outreach and Recruiting**

**Registry Introductory Training (RIT):** **5** remote RITs were held; **2** in English; **1** in Spanish, **1** in Vietnamese, and **1** in Chinese.

- **61** interviews were conducted
- **74** providers were invited to the eRITs
- **55** providers were added to the registry

### Outreach Activities

Location	Type	Reach/Individuals Assisted
VASC	Once a month – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday	4 IPs, 1 Consumer
IHSS	Teams Presentation	9 Contacts
Milpitas Adult School	In-person Presentation/Meeting	56 Contacts

**EPG:** A total of **40** kits were picked up with **22** sets going to IPs and **18** to Consumers for a total of **320** masks and **800** pairs of gloves. **77%** of those who requested PPE came to pick it up.

### TRAINING

**11** training classes were held. **117** individual IPs received an incentive with **175** seats filled. Incentive payments this month totaled **\$6125**. **23%** no shows this month.

Language	#	Location	#
English	9	Central – San Jose/Santa Clara	0
Mandarin	1	North - Milpitas	0
Spanish	0	South – Morgan Hill	3
Vietnamese	1	West – Sunnyvale/Cupertino	0
		Online	8

**Life Enhancement Fund (LEF) Payments:** One IP was paid a total of **\$500** from the fund.

### GENERAL INFO

**Public Authority Phone Calls:** The PA received a total of **6,223** phone calls. Breakdown of the calls:

- Registry 2,328
- Enrollment 1,766
- Benefits 1,824
- Training 305

### CAPA REPORT

Highlights in yellow.

Focus: This legislative session and its potential impact on funding.

The CAPA Board meeting was held on February 27.

Dario Santiago was ratified as the new Central Region VP taking over for Juan Magana (Santa Clara County is part of the Central Region).

### Legislative Update

The legislative session has begun with several new bills having been introduced that are of interest, including two related to the Brown Act. CAPA is sponsoring SB 239 (similar to the one introduced last year). The Senate Local Government Committee Chair is sponsoring SB 707.

The potential cuts to Medicaid could impact millions of Californians, so advocates (consumers and providers) must articulate the cost savings aspect of the IHSS program to counter the argument of cutting costs to their State Assembly and Senators and their US Congressmen/women and Senators.

AB 283 – IHSS Employer-Employee Relations Act is scheduled to be heard on March 19, 2025. Of concern is the Scope of Representation that has nothing to do with bargaining wages or benefits. It includes items such as: operation of rules applicable to county-level IP registries, including appeals procedures for registry decisions; rules and regulations applicable to the identification and scheduling of backup providers; payment, payment reporting, and payroll procedures applicable to IPs; recruitment and retention of IPs. These items are related to service delivery by IHSS and the Public Authority and should not be included in bargaining. Several members of the CAPA Executive Committee are scheduled to speak with Assembly Member Haney's office (bill author) to discuss the concerns of these specific provisions in the bill.

Since it is early in the legislative session, the Legislative Committee has not been able to review all the bills in detail and determine a position.

CAPA is currently tracking 27 bills; the complete list of bills and positions (if any) can be found here in CapitolTrak: <https://ctweb.capitoltrack.com/public/publish.aspx?session=25&id=a6e4cdd6-bb65-4ccb-9bdd-575a0103d068&showimage=1>

#### CDSS Update

CDSS provided detailed training on the process, documentation, tools, deadlines and approvals for processing PA rate changes. Once rate changes are approved, they become effective on the first day of the month following approval.

CDSS reported that the Statewide Collective Bargaining Report was in the final stages of approval, but no date was given as to when it would be released.

Concern was expressed that WPCS and BUPS payments to providers were delayed. CDSS explained that the delay in BUPS payments would be due to the delay in data entry or perhaps adding the \$2 segment differential in CMIPS; there is no payment delay from CDSS. As long as providers complete their time sheets and the approvals are complete by consumers, pay for BUPS hours are processed immediately just like regular hours.

Clarification was requested on the responsibility of reviewing provider background checks (CORIs, sending Tier 2 waivers, NLIs, etc). The WIC code states that Provider Enrollment (which includes completing a background check) is the responsibility of IHSS. When rebasing was done several years ago, most PAs were completing the background check reviews for the Registry, so many PAs took on the responsibility of reviewing all background checks for any enrolled IHSS Provider and CDSS provided funding for PAs to do this task. IHSS can assign the task of background check reviews to Public Authorities.

#### Side notes as the meeting came to an end:

- Reminder of the Event Planning meeting scheduled for March 24<sup>th</sup>.
- The board discussed the possibility of cancelling the next meeting due to volatile political circumstances, *and also because of the event scheduled for April 29<sup>th</sup>.*

- Instead, the board decided to hold an informal meeting, if needed, via Zoom to address any urgent matters while prioritizing and focusing on consumer event planning.
- The board also discussed the members attending the upcoming event and figuring out the timing, who will be at the PA/AB table, and the need for a single flyer explaining the Advisory Board's role.
- Reschedule the May 20<sup>th</sup> AB meeting due to folks attending the Rally in Sacramento.

**Next Meeting:**

Location: Social Services Building; Auditorium Conf Room , 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
@ 333 West Julian Street

- **Tuesday, 20, 2025, from 12 noon to 1:30 pm** via In-person/Hybrid.