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California Legislature
Senate Select Committee
on
Autism & Related Disorders



Ensuring Fair & Equal Access to Regional Center Services for ASD

April 30, 2012 (10AM to Noon)

The State Capitol Building, Room 3191

HEARING OVERVIEW

Agenda item II: An Overview of California's Services for Individuals with ASD

The hearing will begin with a review of the Lanterman Act by **Ms. Delgadillo**, Director, Department of Developmental Services (DDS). This statute, enacted by the California in 1969, sets out the rights and responsibilities of persons with developmental disabilities, and creates the agencies, including regional centers, responsible for planning and coordinating services and supports for persons with developmental disabilities and their families. This entitlement means that individuals with developmental disabilities (mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism, pervasive developmental disorder-not otherwise specified) and their families have the right to receive services and supports which will enable them to make decisions and choices about how, and with whom, they want to live their lives; achieve the highest self-sufficiency possible; and lead productive, independent and satisfying lives as part of the communities in which they live.

Ms. Delgadillo will provide an overview of DDS, which has the responsibility of providing statewide policy direction and leadership to ensure that persons with developmental disabilities shall have the opportunity to lead more independent, productive and satisfying lives. She will also review the funding streams, as well as the requisite monitoring/oversights, by which DDS contracts with regional centers provide



the services and supports best suited to each individual consumer. The regional center has the mandate to ensure that the consumers for whom it is responsible receive services and supports which will assist them in living productively in their communities. The regional center may accomplish this task by securing services and supports directly, or by assisting consumers and families to locate and access services and supports from other agencies.

Agenda Item III: Identifying Gaps & Inequities in Regional Center Services for ASD

This panel will initiate a discussion on identifying the gaps and challenges that face underserved communities in accessing appropriate services and interventions for children with ASD. **Ms. Martin**, a nationally recognized disability rights attorney/advocate and co-founder and President of the Special Needs Network, Inc., will provide a public policy perspective on the inequities that currently face many families of color and those in low-income communities. **Dr. Freeman**, Professor Emerita of Medical Psychology, UCLA School of Medicine and internationally recognized authority on ASD, will discuss the impact of disparities in early intervention services on the lives of children with ASD and their families. **Ms. Matthews**, Directing Attorney of the Children's Rights Project at Public Counsel, will discuss data and legal efforts to promote the equitable distribution of services for ASD and other developmental disabilities. Public Counsel is the largest pro bono law office in the nation and impacts a wide spectrum of people who live at or below the poverty level. Volunteer attorneys work extensively in the areas of children's rights, early care, and education. **Ms. Blakemore**, Executive Director of Disability Rights California, the agency established under federal law to protect and advocate for individuals with disabilities. She will discuss state and national efforts to enhance the rights of individuals with ASD and other disabilities.

Agenda Item IV: Regional Centers and Their Systems of Care

This panel will focus on services and supports that are provided by regional centers to individuals with ASD and their families. The 21 regional centers, distributed throughout California, are 501C3 non-profit corporations designated by the Lanterman Act as having the responsibility of providing life-long services to consumers and their families. These supports include: community outreach, eligibility assessment/evaluation, preventive counseling/services, services for infants at high risk for developmental disabilities, service coordination, cost-effective, flexible, services/supports that are individualized and promote community integration,

assurance of quality/effective supports, and protection of consumer civil/legal rights. Consumers obtain regional center services by the development of an Individual Program Plan (IPP), through a person-centered planning process, which states the specific outcomes the consumer is trying to achieve, and the services and supports required to meet those outcomes.

In addition, the Lanterman Act requires the regional centers be accountable for the monies received to ensure the following: 1) Operate with a specified annual budget; 2) Develop innovative and cost effective ways to achieve the desired outcomes for consumers; 3) Secure services from qualified service providers, and only continue those services where there is reasonable progress; 4) Take into account parental responsibility for minor consumers when making a decision about the purchase of services or supports, but provide funds only for those interventions that are above what a parent would provide for a child without a disability; 5) Pursue all possible sources of funding, and ensure that the regional center does not pay for services and supports which should be provided by a generic agency such as the Department of Education.

Mr. Burton, Executive Director of the Regional Center of the East Bay, will provide an overview of the funding streams and process by which regional centers budgets established and purchase of services funds are allocated. Mr. Burton has a degree in economics from U.C. Berkeley and previously served for 25 years as a regional center chief financial officer. **Mr. Stevens**, Executive Director of the North Los Angeles County Regional Center, is a licensed clinical social worker and a political science graduate from UCLA. He will discuss the Individual Program Plan (IPP) and the process by which the needs of ASD consumers are assessed and implemented. Subsequent presentations by **Mr. Henderson**, Executive Director, South Central Los Angeles Regional Center, and **Mr. Riddick**, Executive Director, Central Valley Regional Center, will discuss programs by which their respective regional centers are providing innovative approaches for effective community outreach, with a particular emphasis on reaching underserved communities. Mr. Henderson has provided civic leadership capacities including serving on the Inglewood School District Board of Trustees, Los Angeles City Disability Compliance Program, and South Center Los Angeles Low Income Housing Project. Mr. Riddick is a licensed clinical social worker and has served as Co-Chair of the Central Valley Autism Regional Taskforce.

Agenda Item V: Moving Towards a Solution.

The final panel will provide an opportunity for an interactive discussion on potential

next steps and specific recommendations to address the inequities and reduce the barriers that have been identified during this hearing. The framework for this discussion will be provided by an esteemed panel of researchers and advocates.

Dr. Aguilar-Gaxiola, Professor of Medicine, UC Davis School of Medicine and Founding Director of the Center for Reducing Health Disparities, will review the challenges of providing appropriate and equitable healthcare to minorities and underserved populations. **Dr. Wheeler**, Associate Director, USC Center of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, will review her extensive research in studying and addressing racial disparities for individuals with developmental disabilities. **Dr. Blacher**, Distinguished Professor of Education, UC Riverside and Founding Director of SEARCH-a newly established family resource center, will outline her innovative approaches to effective community outreach for ASD with particular emphasis on connecting with Latino families who are often living in remote, rural areas. **Ms. deMateo Smith**, Executive Director, Area Board 5 on Developmental Disabilities, will provide specific recommendations for providing supports and services to Latino families who are in an urban environment. **Mr. Bonnet**, Executive Director, Alta California Regional Center in Sacramento, and **Ms. Martin** will also participate in this discussion.

The hearing will conclude with “public input” and “closing comments” by the Committee Members.

Respectfully submitted,

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