

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES - DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
Substance Abuse Prevention and Control
Provider Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary – February 10, 2026

PROVIDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) MEMBERS PRESENT (21): Gary Tsai, M.D., (Co-Chair), Nely Meza-Andrade (Co-Chair), Seth Blackburn, Sarah Blanch, Dylan Grace, Lynetta Hale, Colette Harley, Claire Kobren, Irene Lim, Neptune Linares, Hiroko Makiyama, Zainab Mohammed, Brianna Monroy, Erin Quinn, Adrian Reveles, José Salazar, Leslie Salguero, Liana Sanchez, Jim Symington, Jina Tintor, April Torres

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION AND CONTROL REPRESENTATIVES (35): Aliya Buttar, Alyssa Cohen, Ana San, Antonne Moore, Armen Ter-Barsegyan, Belia Sardinha, Bernie Lau, Binaka Patel, Cailey Barnes, Carina Dominguez, Christina Villegas, Christine Cerven, Daniel Deniz, David Hindman, Emily Turner, Erika Valdez, Francisco Reyes, Glenda Pinney, Greg Schwarz, Ilish Perez, Janet Kim, Ka Chi Wong, Katherine Li, Kimberly-lynn Otello, Kristine Lloyd-Tangermann, Kyle Kennedy, Maria Elena Chavez, Michelle Gibson, Mikayla Ragsdale, Nancy Crosby, Nima Amini, Teresa De Anda, Vanessa Lam, Yanira Lima, Yolanda Cespedes-Knadle

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (41): Amy Mcilvaine (CIBHS), Andrea Escobedo (CHLA), Andrea Munteanu (ACWLA), Brenda del Castillo (CLARE|Matrix), Chris Botten (NCADD-SFV), Christian Port (Casa Treatment Center), Claudia Murillo-Hernandez (CIBHS), Diana Cortes (CHLA), Donna Dampier (HealthRIGHT360), Dulce Ruiz (Didi Hirsch), Emylze Garcia (CIBHS), Gena White (SFVCMHC), Halina Fardin (Beit T'Shuvah), Jaime Piscione (Child & Family Center), Jeanie Hansen (A Safe Refuge), Juan Navarro (L.A. CADA), Judy Morales (Rancho San Antonio), Karen Marder (NCADD-SFV), Kathy Watt (Van Ness Recovery), Leena Syhapanha (HealthRIGHT 360), Leslie Dishman (CIBHS), Leslie Garcia (CIBHS), Lewis Eldridge (HealthRIGHT 360), Liz McGhee (Fred Brown), Maja Trochimczyk (Phoenix House CA), Manny Flores (SFVCMHC), Maria Rodarte (The Way In), Martin Toledo (CIBHS), Micheal Rubio (L.A. CADA), Nancy Hernandez (CHLA), Patric Brillhart (L.A. CADA), Pedram Moshfegh (NCADD-SFV), Pranab Banskota (CIBHS), Priscilla Hernandez (Prototypes), Renee Sabshin (LACDMH), Sandry Esquivel (Prototypes), Sergio Camarena (CLARE|Matrix), Stephanie Borkovec (CCAPP), Vincent Contreras (L.A. CADA), William Ashby (SFVCMHC), William Taetzsch (Didi Hirsch)

ABSENT (1): Kelly Steiner

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED: PAC Meeting Agenda; PAC Meeting Minutes (December 9, 2025); Meeting Presentation Slides; DHCS' Implementation Plan for New Federal Eligibility and Enrollment Changes under H.R. 1; CAADPE SUD Policy Symposium Presentation Slides

Topic	Discussion/Finding	Recommendations, Action, Follow-up
Welcome	<p>Dr. Gary Tsai, M.D., Bureau Director, Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health (DPH), Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (SAPC)</p> <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 December 9, 2025, PAC meeting. A motion to approve the minutes with no changes was advanced by Liana Sanchez (L.A. CADA) and seconded by Erin Quinn (CRI-Help). 	The minutes from the December 9, 2025 meeting were approved and posted on PAC webpage.
Workforce Development Workgroup	José Salazar (Tarzana Treatment Centers) and Seth Blackburn (Roots Through Recovery) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> José Salazar reported on the planning of three workforce activities, including a Listening Session on March 2, which is focused on current and future SUD workforce needs. Upcoming activities will also focus on sharing best practices for employee onboarding, retention, and wellness, and hosting an in-person networking event to strengthen collaboration among providers, certifying bodies, and educators. Dr. Tsai asked the PAC if there were any issues with AB 2473 Curriculum and SUD counselors completing 80 hours of core competency education. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PAC members reported no issues. 	
Building Communities of Belonging Workgroup	Hiroko Makiyama (KYCC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiroko Makiyama (KYCC) reported that the workgroup has been discussing policy barriers affecting clients with Unsatisfactory Immigration Status (UIS), culturally responsive practices, language access, and ways to improve care for women in SUD settings. Antonne Moore added that the workgroup provides concrete input to SAPC and supports LA County’s efforts to ensure cultural competency. 	The next workgroup meeting is March 10, 2026 from 3 PM – 4 PM
2026 PAC Membership Selection	Bernie Lau (DPH) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bernie Lau (DPH) announced that 2026 PAC Membership Selection Applications open in March for 11 members. The current co-chair, Nely Meza-Andrade, is also terming out, so members are encouraged to consider applying for co-chair. 	
SAPC-LNC Provider Administrative User Role	Dr. David Hindman (DPH) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. David Hindman provided an update on the rollout of an administrative user role for the SAPC Learning and Network Connection (LNC) platform, which will allow agencies to assign trainings, track staff progress, and manage users. A pilot phase will begin in March 2026. Full rollout is targeted for May 2026. 	Providers interested in participating in the pilot phase can email SAPC-LNC@ph.lacounty.gov
Sage Updates	Greg Schwarz (DPH) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greg Schwarz (DPH) announced the availability of new Medi-Cal Eligibility Change Report, which shows any changes in key eligibility fields over any two-month period selected in the report parameters. The report tracks changes to help agencies act quickly, especially for UIS clients at risk of losing coverage. Sage Access Team will reach out to agencies with high number of providers needing C-Number extensions to confirm staff members and streamline the extension process. Pedram Moshfegh (NCADD-SFV) asked if providers if this report replaces the 270 Eligibility Request? 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Greg Schwarz (DPH) and Dr. Gary Tsai (DPH) clarified that the 270 Eligibility Request Form does need to be completed by providers. 	
CalFresh & General Relief Benefits for Residential Clients	<p>Dr. Brian Hurley (DPH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Brian Hurley (DPH) reviewed current policy allowing agencies to act as authorized representatives for clients with CalFresh and General Relief (GR) benefits to help manage funds that can be used to pay for preparing and serving food to clients in residential treatment. He emphasized that agencies cannot require clients to apply for CalFresh or be required to have the agencies serve as their authorized representative. • Liana Sanchez (L.A. CADA) stated their agency does not manage client benefits to promote client independence and successful transition. • Kathy Watt (Van Ness Recovery) reported inconsistent eligibility guidance from DPSS workers regarding client eligibility for clients in residential treatment. • Dr. Tsai recommended for providers to email the SAPC policy to DPSS leadership and obtain written guidance from them. Providers can share the written guidance from DPSS leadership with DPSS workers to address inconsistent eligibility determination. 	
SAPC IN 26-02: Coverage for Clients Who Are Ineligible For Federally Funded Substance Use Disorder Treatment Services	<p>Dr. Brian Hurley (DPH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Brian Hurley (DPH) announced a new financial eligibility category to provide coverage for clients who are ineligible for Federally-funded SUD services. Providers can provide coverage by updating the client’s guarantor in CalOMS to “Client Ineligible for Federal Programs (CIFP).” • Gena White (SFVCMHC) asked whether coverage under the new category would shorten treatment duration. • Dr. Hurley (DPH) explained that clients under the new coverage category will receive the same standard treatment as Medi-Cal clients. As such, treatment is not shortened and must follow all medical necessity requirements, with extensions approved based on continued need. 	
Medi-Cal Coverage for Children in Mixed Immigration Status Families	<p>Irene Lim (CHLA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irene Lim (CHLA) raised concerns about mixed-status families where undocumented parents may be reluctant to apply for Medi-Cal for eligible U.S.-born children. Irene also reported inconsistent guidance from DPSS on minor consent Medi-Cal regarding renewal timelines (monthly vs. six months with LPHA letters), barriers in activating minor consent Medi-Cal, and lack of clarity on retroactive coverage. • Dr. Tsai requested providers to submit these issues in writing for SAPC leadership to follow-up with DPSS and address access barriers. 	Providers can document challenges with DPSS (including minor consent form), and email SAPC-SOC@ph.lacounty.gov
DHCS H.R. 1 Implementation Plan	<p>Dr. Gary Tsai (DPH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Gary Tsai (DPH) emphasized that agencies should begin preparing for DHCS H.R. 1 implementation by strengthening their Medi-Cal enrollment and renewal processes. • Brenda del Castillo (CLARE Matrix) shared that their agency is working to develop an effective workflow and is seeking ways to better track renewal and end dates to prevent coverage lapses. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Tsai reported BenefitsCal.com to be the best source to identify end dates. He also referenced the Medi-Cal Eligibility Change Report as a key tool to assist with developing workflows. • Nancy Crosby (DPH) clarified that clients in redetermination periods may appear inactive on BenefitsCal.com but can be reinstated retroactively. Nancy agreed to assist with developing written guidance on Medi-Cal redetermination for providers. 	
CENS Regional Network Meetings	Bernie Lau (DPH) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bernie Lau announced upcoming Client Engagement Navigation Services (CENS) Regional Network Meetings and encouraged PAC members to attend for their assigned SPAs and represent both their agencies and the PAC to support referrals and timely access to treatment, which align with R95 goals. 	
SAPC R95 Case Scenarios Discussion	Maria Elena Chavez (DPH) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maria Elena Chavez invited PAC members to attend an upcoming feedback session about the R95 Case Scenarios Discussion Guide, which is designed to support providers in facilitating staff discussions on R95 implementation. • Dr. Tsai (DPH) reminded providers that R95 aligns with national guidance from the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) on low-barrier services. He also emphasized the importance of developing on-demand treatment and intake models to support greater reach of clients. 	
Public Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim Symington (Comptroller) inquired about LA County’s succession planning and how SAPC prepares future leaders while preserving institutional knowledge during transition periods. • Dr. Tsai (DPH) explained that SAPC leaders share operational knowledge across broad areas, such as finance and operations. He also highlighted SAPC’s commitment to cultivating SUD leadership statewide (e.g., through legislation and R95 policies) to ensure continuity and maintain momentum even under new leadership. 	
Meeting Wrap Up	Bernie Lau (DPH) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The minutes from the December 9, 2025 meeting were approved. Liana Sanchez (L.A CADA) motioned for approval, seconded by Erin Quinn (CRI-Help). • Providers interested in participating in the SAPC-LNC Provider Administrative User Role pilot phase can email SAPC-LNC@ph.lacounty.gov. • PAC Members can document challenges with DPSS and email SAPC-SOC@ph.lacounty.gov. • Nancy Crosby (DPH) will develop a written guidance plan for Medi-Cal redetermination. 	
Next Meeting	Reminder: Next Provider Advisory Committee Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next PAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 14, 2026, from 2 PM – 4 PM. 	