



Regional Community Advisory Committee (RCAC) Region 3

El Monte Community Resource Center

3570 Santa Anita Ave, El Monte, CA 91731

Wednesday, November 20, 2024

10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Meeting Summary

Member Attendance				Staff/Management Present
Alicia Mendoza	P	Sandra Aramburo	P	Frank Meza , <i>Community Outreach Field Specialist</i>
Gladis Alvarez	P	Daniel Kwong	P	Ramon Garcia , <i>Community Outreach Field Specialist</i>
Johnny Chua	E	Fung Ha Leung Kwong	E	John Baackes , <i>CEO, L.A. Care Health Plan</i>
Layla Gonzalez	P	Roberto Santos	P	Mayra Velasco , <i>Manager, Community Resource Center, El Monte</i>
Linda Resendez	P	Ana Rubio	P	
Lluvia Salazar	P	Tanya Lopez	P	
Maria Angel Refugio	P	Elmano Osorio	P	
Marina Garcia	P	Jose Lopez	P	
Reyna Hernandez	P			

(P) Present **(E)** Excused Absence **(U)** Unexcused Absence

Public Attendance		Interpreter Attendance
Andrea McFerson, RCAC 5 Member		Isaac Ibarlucea, Spanish Interpreter
		Eduardo Kogan, Spanish Interpreter

MEETING SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND FOLLOW UP

I. Welcome & Introduction

Agenda Lead

A. Call Meeting to Order

- Maria Angel Refugio, Interim RCAC Chair, called the meeting to order.
- All RCAC Members, Interpreters, and the public introduced themselves.

*Maria Angel Refugio,
Interim RCAC Chair*

A. Approval of Agenda

- Maria Angel Refugio asked members to review the agenda prior to the approval.
- The agenda was approved as presented, with Gladis Alvarez making the first motion and Alicia Mendoza seconding it.

*Frank Meza, CO&E Field
Specialist*

B. Group Agreements

- Frank Meza reminded members that during the September RCAC meeting, members made recommendations to add a few additional agreements to the list.
- The following agreements were added:
 - Stay on topic and address the issue with Field Specialist after the meeting.
 - Raise your hand before you speak.
 - Place your phone on silent or vibrate.
 - Two minutes per comment or question.
- RCAC members volunteered to read the group agreements.

C. RCAC Meeting Minutes Approval

- Maria Angel Refugio asked members to take a few minutes to review the September 19, 2024, Meeting Summary prior to the approval.
- The meeting summary was approved with Reyna Hernandez making the first motion and Layla Gonzalez seconding it.

II. L.A. Care Updates

Agenda Lead

A. RCAC Chairperson Updates

- Maria Angel Refugio provided an update from the November 2024 Temporary Transitional Executive Community Advisory Committee (TTECAC) and Board of Governors meetings:
 - John Baackes, Chief Executive Officer, will be leaving L.A. Care at the end of December. Ms. Refugio also mentioned that, at the recent ECAC meeting, Mr. Baackes expressed his gratitude to all the RCAC members for their invaluable work and commitment to serving their communities.
 - Information regarding Prop 35 was provided at the November 7, 2024, Board of Governors meeting. Prop 35 makes permanent the existing tax on managed health care insurance plans, which, if approved by the federal government, provides revenues to pay for Medi-Cal health care services,
 - At the November Board meeting, Board Members Layla Gonzalez, and Fatima Vazquez provided an update regarding their recent visits to the Regional Community Advisory Committees (RCACs), noting that members have reported issues with specialist referrals and transportation services through Call the Car.
 - Additionally, Board Member Layla Gonzalez stated that there are motions approved at the Board of Governors meeting related to improving programs for L.A. Care members, approving providers applying to join the L.A. Care network, and financial decision. She also mentioned the issues with Call the Car.
 - Karen Rios, Manager of Territory Sales, provided a presentation about Covered California, highlighting the eligibility requirements and stating that Covered California is a good option for those who do not qualify for Medi-Cal. Additionally, she mentioned that Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients can now apply for Covered California.
 - At the November TTECAC meeting, Tanisha Johnson provided a presentation about L.A. Care Health Promoters program. Ms. Johnson stated that she was very proud of the work the Health Promoters have done. The Health Promoters provide health education classes in English and Spanish and in the past, they would frequently attend RCAC meetings to provide presentations.
 - Ms. Johnson addressed a question about whether the Health Promoters program will open for new members. She mentioned that at this time, it is closed, but there may be an opportunity in the future. She also addressed a question regarding the diversity of the Health Promoters, noting the importance of reflecting L.A. Care’s membership.

*Maria Angel Refugio,
Interim RCAC Chair*

RCAC Members

*Frank Meza, CO&E Field
Specialist*

- Ms. Refugio invited the RCAC members that attended the October and November 2024 TTECAC and the Board of Governors meeting to share any updates or insights with the committee.
- Elmano Osorio attended the November 2024 Board of Governors meeting and emphasized the importance of the RCACs in the community. He highlighted that RCACs serve as a bridge between L.A. Care and its members by providing valuable feedback. The input helps identify key areas for improvement.
- Tanya Lopez provided an update from the November TTECAC meeting. She shared information about the discussion on Hoyer lifts, emphasizing their importance for individuals with mobility challenges. Ms. Lopez explained that Hoyer lifts are essential medical devices that assist caregivers in safely transferring patients, improving both safety and quality of care. She highlighted the need for greater awareness and accessibility of these devices, particularly for L.A. Care members who may benefit from their use.

B. RCAC Members Attending TTECAC and the Board of Governors Meeting

- Jose Lopez volunteered to attend the December 5, 2024, Board of Governors meeting.
- Ana Rubio volunteered to attend the February 6, 2025, Board of Governors meeting.
- Gladis Alvarez volunteered to attend the December 11, 2024, TTECAC meeting.
- Linda Resendez volunteered to attend the February 12, 2025, TTECAC meeting.
- Sandra Aramburo and Ana Rubio volunteered to serve as the alternate if the members assigned are not able to attend the TTECAC and Board of Governors meeting.

C. Community Outreach & Engagement Updates

**** Frank Meza paused the meeting to allow Maria Angel Refugio to introduce Mr. John Baackes, CEO of L.A. Care Health Plan. Mr. Baackes addressed the members, sharing the news of his planned departure from L.A. Care at the end of the year. In his remarks, Mr. Baackes expressed his deep gratitude and pride in the accomplishments of the RCACs during his tenure. He commended the members for their dedication and hard work, noting that the RCACs have played a pivotal role in identifying and elevating critical issues to the Executive Community Advisory Committee (ECAC) and the Board of Governors.*

*He highlighted the significant impact of the RCACs in shaping policies and advocating for the needs of the community, reinforcing their importance in the overall mission of L.A. Care. Mr. Baackes concluded by thanking the members for their ongoing commitment to improving healthcare access and equity. ****

Questions and comments from the Members

- *RCAC members thanked Mr. Baackes for all his efforts and were sad to see him go.*
- *A few RCAC members took a photo with Mr. Baackes.*

** Frank Meza thanked Mr. Baackes for attending RCAC 3. Frank Meza continued with Community Outreach & Engagement Updates of the meeting agenda **

Board of Governors Elections Application and Motion Summary

- In June, the TTECAC approved a timeline for the election of two candidates for the L.A. Care Board of Governors by consumer members.
- TTECAC recommended that a meeting of all RCAC members (an election convention-type) event be held to vote on the candidates instead of voting at the Community Resource Centers (CRCs) as was done last year. The election event will most likely be held in late summer of 2025.
- Consumer members who are approved by the Board of Governors during the election event (date to be determined) will be eligible to vote in the election.
- In October, TTECAC reviewed and approved the draft election rules and candidate application for RCAC member review.
- TTECAC also approved a motion to invite the two current Board Members to continue to represent consumers on the Board of Governors until the election is complete. Both current Board Members are willing to continue to serve as consumer representatives.
- The draft election rules and the candidate application are being shared for review at RCAC meetings in October and November 2024.
- At the February 2025 meeting TTECAC will consider:
 - Feedback from RCAC members about the rules and
 - Final approval of the rules and application for election as a candidate/nominee for the Board of Governors.
 - Date of the election event and the application deadline (application must be submitted 60 days prior to the election event).

- Once the rules and the application are approved,
 - Potential Candidates can attend the election information session in February 2025.
 - Candidates must submit a complete application by the deadline approved by TTECAC and L.A. Care will confirm eligibility for the candidate.
 - Eligible candidates will then be able to attend RCAC meetings.
 - Candidates can be on the RCAC agenda only once for each RCAC.

- After the election, L.A. Care will notify Los Angeles County that the RCAC members elected two candidates/nominees to represent consumers on the L.A. Care Board of Governors. The nominees will be processed by the L.A. County Executive Office for appointment by the L.A. County Board of Supervisors.

Member Questions & Comments

- *RCAC Member, Linda Resendez inquired if there was a date finalized for the Board of Governors elections? Frank Meza informed Ms. Resendez that a date has not been finalized, however, the elections are tentatively scheduled to take place next year in the summer.*

- *Maria Angel Refugio asked if transportation will be provided for newly elected Board Members to visit the RCACs? Frank Meza stated, yes, transportation will be provided.*
- *Lluvia Salazar, RCAC member, stated if she runs for the consumer seat for the Board of Governors, will member's vote for her? RCAC Members laughed and stated Ms. Salazar needs to campaign and win their vote.*

- *Ana Rubio, a member, asked if L.A. Care provides interpretation for members who are mono-lingual and want to run for the Board seat? Layla Gonzalez, informed members to please not let your language keep you from running for the Board of Governors. She stated that L.A. Care provides translation for member materials and interpretation for the Board Meetings and subcommittees.*

- *Maria Angel Refugio stated that Ms. Lluvia Salazar and Ms. Deaka McClain are the current At-Large members who also visit the RCACs to bring information and concerns from the RCACs to share at the TTECAC meetings.*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Gladis Alvarez, a member, asked if the RCAC would vote today for four positions. Frank Meza clarified that the RCAC Chair and Vice Chair elections will occur on January 15, 2025, while the Board of Governors elections will take place later next year. Mr. Meza added that today, RCAC members are allowed to nominate themselves or another member for either the Chair or Vice Chair position.</i> • <i>Frank Meza stated that members will have their support and encouraged all members to run for either the RCAC Chair, Vice Chair or Board of Governors positions.</i> • <i>Tanya Lopez, a member, stated she is interested in running for one of the RCAC positions and inquired if she would be able request transportation to visit the other RCACs to learn and get to know the other RCACs.</i> • <i>Mr. Meza stated members are free to attend other RCAC meetings but would need to inquire if that is something that is provided by CO&E. During the Board of Governors elections, members who are running for the consumer or member advocate position, L.A. Care does provide transportation for the candidates to visit other RCACs to campaign.</i> 	
<p>III. Member Experience Feedback & Updates</p>	<p>Agenda Lead</p>
<p>A. L.A. Care New Global/Regional Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maria Angel Refugio invited members to share access to care issue related to their primary care doctors, pharmacy, medication, referrals to a specialist and L.A. Care. • RCAC member Tanya Lopez stated her concerns with members relying on Social Security benefits face significant financial barriers to obtaining prescribed medication. Many cannot afford essential medication, impacting their health and well-being. Medication is often not provided on time, leading to disruptions in treatment plans and potential health complications. • Physicians frequently lack access to complete or updated medical records, which can result in delayed or inadequate care decisions, leaving patients feeling neglected and underserved. • RCAC member Reyna Hernandez shared her difficulty in securing timely appointments with primary care providers. Reyna was redirected to urgent care, which may not always be the appropriate setting for her medical needs, highlighting gaps in appointment availability and care coordination. 	<p><i>Frank Meza, CO&E Field Specialist</i></p>

- RCAC member Gladis Alvarez stated that doctors do not spend enough time addressing patient concerns, leaving patients feeling rushed and their issues unresolved. Medication is not dispensed promptly, disrupting ongoing treatments, and creating stress for patients who rely on consistent access.
- A lack of effective communication between patients and physician's results in misunderstandings and unmet healthcare needs. A shortage of fluent Spanish-speaking physicians contributes to miscommunication and inequities in care for Spanish-speaking members.

Additional concerns regarding the facility:

- Challenges with care quality at Queen of the Valley and community clinics in the East Valley area (e.g., Covina).
- Reports of inconsistent care standards, especially when comparing L.A. Care services to other insurance providers such as Kaiser, creating perceptions of inequity.
- RCAC member Alicia Mendoza stated despite having a valid authorization for care, Alicia faced difficulties scheduling an appointment in a timely manner, causing delays in receiving necessary medical attention. She was told to contact her insurance provider to extend an authorization before its expiration, adding unnecessary stress to the process of accessing care.
- RCAC member Daniel Kwong encourages members to actively voice not only their challenges but also positive healthcare experiences to foster improvements in the system. He arrived for an appointment only to discover that the physician he was scheduled to see had left the practice over a year prior. This lack of updated provider information highlights significant administrative gaps.
- Mr. Kwong managed to locate the new provider, and transportation services facilitated his travel to the updated location on the same day. The new provider expressed dissatisfaction that their updated contact and location information had not been properly communicated by the system.
- RCAC member Linda Resendez reported issues with staff management and patient care processes at facilities in Covina, West Covina, Pomona, and La Puente. These concerns include perceived disrespect toward patients and poor handling of member needs.
- **Appointment Scheduling Challenges:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At the Covina location, members must physically visit the clinic to schedule an appointment as phone scheduling is not an option, creating additional challenges for those with limited mobility or transportation issues. ○ Members were previously restricted to certain clinic locations but were later informed they could visit any location of their choice. Scheduling appointments often requires a 2-3 month wait, leaving members without timely access to care. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Members report waiting in line for 20 minutes or longer just to enter the clinic. 	
<p>IV. Break</p>	<p>Agenda Lead</p>
<p>A. RCAC members took a ten-minute break.</p>	<p><i>Frank Meza, CO&E Field Specialist</i></p>
<p>V. New Business</p>	<p>Agenda Lead</p>
<p>A. RCAC Chair and Vice-Chair Information and Nominations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● RCAC Chair and Vice Chair nominations opened during the October and November 2024 RCAC meeting cycles. ● Frank Meza informed RCAC 3 members that nominations for the Chair and Vice Chair positions would open during their November 20, 2024, meeting. A nomination form listing all eligible RCAC members was provided and reviewed by members. ● Ms. Layla Gonzalez, Board Member, noted that her name was missing from the nomination form. Mr. Meza asked everyone to add Ms. Gonzalez’s name to the form. ● All active members may nominate multiple individuals for the Chair and Vice Chair positions; members are not limited to one nomination per position. ● RCAC members may run for both positions. If a member is elected to the Chair position, their name will be removed from the Vice Chair ballot. ● Frank Meza informed members that he would contact members who were nominated to confirm whether they accept or decline the nomination. If a member nominates themselves, no call is necessary. ● Nominations for the RCAC Chair and Vice Chair will close prior to the elections during the January 15, 2025, RCAC 3 meeting. 	<p><i>Maria Angel Refugio, Interim RCAC Chair</i></p>

- All candidates who accept their nomination for either position will be allowed to speak for up to two minutes before the elections occur.
- The Chair elections will take place first, with nominations closing before the Chair election begins.
- Vice Chair elections will follow the Chair elections, with nominations closing before the Vice Chair election begin. Mr. Meza clarified that all ballots should include the names of all individuals who accept their nomination. Additionally, all members running for either position must be present during the elections.
- During the elections, one CO&E staff member, a staff member from the Pomona Community Resource Center, and a member who is not running for either position will assist in counting the ballots for both the Chair and Vice Chair positions.

RCAC Chair & Vice Chair General Roles & Responsibilities

- Frank Meza encouraged all RCAC members who are interested in running for the RCAC Chair or Vice Chair to review them, so that it helps members understand what is required of them for both positions.
- The Roles and Responsibilities of the RCAC Chair and Vice-Chair were reviewed by the RCAC members:
 - The Regional Community Advisory Committee (RCAC) Chair serves as a volunteer. The RCAC Chair’s term of office is two years. RCAC Chairs can be elected for no more than two consecutive two-year terms, or no more than four years in a row.
 - The RCAC Chair leads the regular meetings of the RCAC in partnership with the Community Outreach and Engagement Field Specialists assigned to that RCAC.
 - The RCAC Chair is responsible to guide the RCAC meetings in a manner that ensures full and respectful participation by all RCAC members, visitors, and guests.
 - The RCAC Chair represents the RCAC at the meetings and events of the Executive Community Advisory Committee (ECAC).
 - The RCAC Chair is responsible to report the activities, concerns and issues discussed at the RCAC to the ECAC and report back to the RCAC on the discussions, decisions, and activities of the ECAC.
 - The RCAC Chair is eligible to receive a stipend of \$100 for each ECAC meeting attended and \$180 for attending and chairing the meeting of their RCAC. A Social Security or ITIN number must be provided to receive stipends.

Member Qualifications

- The RCAC Chair must be a certified Consumer Member or Advocate Member of the RCAC at the time of nomination and election.
- The RCAC Chair must be able to attend and chair regularly scheduled RCAC meetings. Excessive absences may result in removal from office.
- The RCAC Chair should be able to speak in public and lead simple discussions. Being familiar with basic parliamentary procedures is preferred.
- The RCAC Chair must be able to interact with persons from different cultures and backgrounds, helping to facilitate a respectful environment during RCAC meetings and events.
- The RCAC Chair should have a basic understanding of how government sponsored health care programs such as Medi-Cal, L.A. Care Medicare Plus (HMO), L.A. Care Covered, or PASC-SEIU Homecare Workers Health Care Plan work. He/she should be able to correctly describe the mission of L.A. Care Health Plan, the role of L.A. Care's Board of Governors, the role of the RCACs and the ECAC.

RCAC Chair & Vice Chair Mandatory Training:

- The RCAC Chair and Vice Chair will receive mandatory trainings focused on meeting facilitation, meeting decisions, note taking, and reporting during their term.
- All trainings will be at L.A. Care Health Plan office in downtown Los Angeles and transportation services will be offered to eligible individuals.

RCAC Chair & Vice Chair Approval and Timeline

- When all RCAC members have voted for their Chair and Vice Chair, their names will be forwarded to the February 2025 TTECAC meeting for review and approval.
- Once approved by TTECAC, the list will be sent to the Board of Governors for final approval at their March 2025 meeting.
- The TTECAC will continue their Temporary Transitional role until February 2025.
- The newly elected Chairs will join the ECAC as official committee members in March 2025. At that time, it will also be announced that the At-Large elections will take place during the April 2025 ECAC meeting.
- The only TTECAC members remaining on the ECAC will be the two At-Large Members, Deaka McClain from RCAC 8 and Lluvia Salazar from RCAC 3.
- RCAC members who are interested in running for the At-Large position will need to submit an application and attend the April 2025 ECAC meeting.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the April ECAC meeting, ECAC will vote for the two At-large positions and forward the final names to the Board of Governors for approval during their May BOG meeting. • By May 2025, the ECAC will be fully formed with 8 Chairs and 2 At-Large members. 	
<p>VI. Future Agenda Items</p>	<p>Agenda Lead</p>
<p>A. Maria Angel Refugio invited members to bring up anything for future agenda items.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alicia Mendoza requested the CO&E Department provide training on creating an email address, she highlighted the need for training on how to create an email address to stay connected to L.A. Care and for general purposes. Additionally, she mentioned that some health plans have a member portal where members can review their medical information and medications. • Frank Meza stated that L.A. Care has a member portal on their website and member can request a new I.D. card and change their primary care provider. Members can also access additional resource on the member portal. • Another member suggested including training on how to navigate the member portal and potentially having the training at the El Monte CRC. • Frank Meza stated he can investigate the request and provide an update at the next scheduled RCAC meeting. • RCAC member Ana Rubio requested a presentation on L.A. Care Medicare Plus. Ms. Rubio stated she wants to learn more about the benefits the plan offers and what is covered under the plan. • RCAC member Maria Angel Refugio requested a presentation on how to better navigate healthcare and telehealth services. Frank highlighted that the CRCs offer resources to support telehealth usage and that these services are available without the need for an appointment. • RCAC member Lluvia Salazar suggested the need for increased member participation in Community Resource Center (CRC) events. She emphasized the importance of these events in fostering community engagement and expressed interest in finding ways to encourage greater attendance and involvement from members. 	<p><i>Maria Angel Refugio, Interim, RCAC Chair</i></p> <p><i>Frank Meza, CO&E Field Specialist</i></p> <p><i>RCAC Members</i></p>
<p>VII. Public Comments</p>	<p>Agenda Lead</p>
<p>A. Public member will speak for up to 2 minutes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maria Angel welcomed the public to share question or comments. 	<p><i>Frank Meza, CO&E Field Specialist</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RCACs were able to continue functioning without interruption throughout the pandemic. A member disagreed with the notion that the RCACs stopped meeting, emphasizing that this continuity allowed for consistent engagement from members in the RCACs. • A one-minute limit for public comments is insufficient and should be reconsidered to allow members to fully express their concerns. • The Code of Conduct should be actively referenced and utilized to ensure consistent and respectful interactions during meetings. • Some pharmacies, such as Mi Pueblo Pharmacy, automatically request medications without verifying whether the prescription has been updated or changed, which can lead to errors or unnecessary refills. 	<p><i>RCAC Members</i></p>
<p>VIII. Resource Sharing and Meeting Evaluations</p>	<p>Agenda Lead</p>
<p>A. Mayra Velasco, Manager of the El Monte Community Resource Center invited all RCAC members to visit the center more frequently and to take advantage of the resources and free classes the center offers the community.</p>	<p><i>Maria Angel Refugio, Interim RCAC Chair</i></p> <p><i>RCAC Members</i></p>
<p>IX. Adjournment</p>	<p>Agenda Lead</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting adjourned at 12:30pm. • Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, January 15, 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Pomona Community Resource Center at 696 W. Holt Avenue, Pomona, CA 91768 	<p><i>Maria Angel Refugio, Interim RCAC Chair</i></p>

<p>Respectfully Submitted by:</p>	<p>Approved by:</p>
<p>Frank Meza, Community Outreach Field Specialist</p>	<p>Maria Angel Refugio, RCAC 3 Interim Chair</p>

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<p>IX. Adjournment</p>	<p>Agenda Lead</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting adjourned at 12:30pm. • Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, January 15, 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Pomona Community Resource Center at 696 W. Holt Avenue, Pomona, CA 91768 	<p><i>Maria Angel Refugio, Interim RCAC Chair</i></p>

<p>Respectfully Submitted by:</p>	<p>Approved by: <i>Maria Angel Refugio</i></p>
<p><i>Frank Meza, Community Outreach Field Specialist</i></p>	<p><i>Marla Angel Refugio, RCAC 3 Interim Chair</i></p>