



**California Health and Human Services Agency  
Community Assistance, Recovery & Empowerment (CARE) Act  
Training, Technical Assistance & Communications Subgroup Meeting  
Minutes**

**January 17, 2024 | Virtual Meeting**

**Meeting Materials and Recording Available on [Working Group Site](#)**

**Public Zoom chat from meeting is included as an Appendix to this file**

For additional information and resources, please see the following sites:

- [CARE Act Resource Center \(managed by HMA for DHCS\)](#)
- [CalHHS CARE Act Site](#)
- [Judicial Council CARE Act Site](#)

## **Group Members in Attendance:**

- **Ambarin Faizi**
- **Amber Irvine**
- **Anthony Ruffin (Co-chair)**, Community Center Director 1, LA DMH Concierge Outreach Team
- **Ellen Guevara**
- **Katherine Warburton (Special Advisor)**
- **Linda Mimms**
- **Michelle Clark**
- **Mike Phillips**
- **Nicole Cable**
- **Stacey Robbins-Podvin**
- **Susan Holt (Co-chair)**, Behavioral Health Director and Public Guardian, Fresno County

## **1. Welcome, Introductions, and Goals of This Group**

**Karen Linkins, Principal, Desert Vista Consulting**, opened the meeting, thanked the group members and members of the public in attendance, and shared virtual meeting guidelines.

All group members in attendance introduced themselves, beginning with the group's co-chairs, Susan Holt and Anthony Ruffin, and the group's special advisor, Dr. Katherine Warburton.

Karen Linkins recapped the rules and objectives of the group, including that meetings are subject to Bagley-Keene requirements and that all materials are posted online. She shared that the purpose of this subgroup, which supports the efforts of the Working Group, is to review, assess, and provide feedback on training and communication material and strategies. Their goal is to provide recommendations to be applied at the local level that support uniform implementation.

## 2. Recap Previous Meeting

**Karen Linkins** provided an overview of the last meeting of this group, which was held in December, and laid out what would be discussed in today's meeting.

## 3. Discussion of CARE Implementation and Q+A

**Karen Linkins** introduced Jennifer Brya, Co-Principal of Desert Vista Consulting.

**Jennifer Brya** thanked Linkins and provided an update on the development of the Client Journey tool:

- She spoke to Amber Irvine, who presented at the last meeting, about how to incorporate learnings from Cohort 1 counties into the development of the tool.
- She emphasized the value of shaping the tool around Cohort 1 learnings from those doing outreach in the field.
- She continues to hear that a video would be a more useful medium for respondents than paper.
- The current development plan is to convene a group of outreach leads in each county to discuss best practices and effective messaging, including identifying common questions that require consistent answers.
- The client journey tool, which the Working Group requested be developed, needs to be informed by what the client journey actually is as observed in the field.
- The first convening of outreach teams will likely occur in February.

**Amber Irvine** echoed Brya's points and said that convening this group will also be useful to share learnings with Cohort 2 counties.

**Karen Linkins** invited comments from group members from Tuolumne County to speak to the Cohort 1 perspective:

- Stacey Robbins-Podvin shared that they are not far along yet, but engagement is happening early in the process.

Jennifer Brya encouraged members to attend tomorrow's Services and Supports ad hoc meeting, where more Cohort 1 perspectives will be shared.

### Questions and Discussion:

**Karen Linkins** invited questions from group members.

- Linda Mimms asked Amber Irvine if there are different outreach approaches for respondents based on their housing status.

- o Amber Irvine responded that based on their current numbers, they can see their outreach approaches have been effective. She shared that the strategies are differentiated based on respondents' unique circumstances and shared more details about those different strategies.
- Anthony Ruffin asked about what types of petitioners San Diego is seeing.
  - o Amber Irvine gave a breakdown of petitioners.

Jennifer Brya said that her and Amber Irvine will provide another update on the Client Journey at the next meeting.

- Ellen Guevara said she is curious about the discretion that Judges are using across counties to assist with the outreach process. Jennifer Brya said these variations across counties will be taken into account.
- Anthony Ruffin asked for more information on what family member petitioners have been expecting out of the CARE process. Amber Irvine gave more details about what they are seeing from families in San Diego.
- Susan Holt raised that there is a tension between needing to create something standardized and needing a tool that is adaptable to local contexts. She suggested that a portion of the tool could be an adaptable template.
- Linda Mimms asked Amber Irvine what happens when respondents refuse to engage in the process and if this leads to conservatorship. Amber Irvine provided clarification on the conservatorship process and that it is distinctly separate from CARE proceedings. Linda Mimms requested that this group discuss this further at future meetings because she is seeing a lot of confusion on the topic.
  - o Michelle Clark and Stacey Robbins-Podvin contributed their understandings of the LPS process.
  - o Ambarin Faizi said there is an opportunity for this group to address the service gaps between 5150 holds and conservatorships that relate to Mimms' concern.

Karen Linkins thanked group members for their comments.

## **Presentation from Health Management Associates:**

**Karen Linkins** introduced Laura Collins and Amanda Ternan from HMA to discuss their TTA plan for 2024.

**Laura Collins** provided a summary of the TTA topics that HMA has provided to date. She shared that many of these resources are available to view on their website. She gave an overview of the current TTA plan for 2024:

- Their upcoming TTA has been informed by needs raised across stakeholder groups throughout the first phase of implementation.

- The full list of topics is currently under review by CalHHS, so cannot yet be publicly shared.
- The major categories that TTA will cover will be:
  - Outreach and engagement strategies
  - Assessment and treatment planning activities
  - Trainings for first responders
  - Housing
  - Topics specific to the justice impacted population
  - Issues specific to rural counties
  - Behavioral Health best practices for clinical and non-clinical audiences
  - Eligibility and petitioning
  - Family psychoeducation
  - Data collection and reporting
- There are placeholders in the plan that will be filled with county priorities as they emerge
- Aiming to increase county participation in training development
- The team of liaisons has been expanded to provide support to more counties. These liaisons function as a single point-of-contact for counties to get connected to answers for any questions they may have at any point in the process. Liaisons will be reaching out to Cohort 2 counties right after the upcoming kickoff.
- Cohort 2 counties may have meetings according to specific subgroupings
- An implementation guide is currently under development and is informed by lessons learned from Cohort 1 counties, which liaisons will use to assist Cohort 2

**Amanda Ternan** provided a brief walkthrough of the CARE Act Resource Center website, where trainings and other TTA materials are housed. The website also includes a county directory, which contains county specific websites, local NAMI information, and other resources by county. All new trainings and resources are reflected in regular e-blast updates to the listserv, which can be joined through the website. The HMA team is currently reconfiguring some elements of the website to make it more user friendly.

Karen Linkins thanked the presenters. There were no questions from group members.

### **Discussion of Priority Issues:**

**Karen Linkins** invited the group co-chairs, Anthony Ruffin and Susan Holt, to lead a discussion of priority topics that this group could take up in future meetings. She provided an initial grounding for the discussion.

Susan Holt opened the discussion and offered prompting questions for the group to consider as they brainstorm priority topics.

Group members offered suggestions:

- Linda Mimms said she is unsure if all key players understand the fundamental clinical information. For example, Judges and first responders could receive trainings and/or a fact sheet on psychosis.
  - Dr. Katherine Warburton responded that she recorded multiple brief trainings for Judges along these lines. She is also putting together a larger series in collaboration with Mark Avery that will be available on the resource site.
  - Mark Avery said they will consider also producing a one-pager.
  - Susan Holt suggested partnering with the relevant stakeholders, such as paramedics, in the development of TTA materials.
- Amber Irvine raised that the diagnostic process is not as straightforward as the statute lays it out to be. There is often a complex interplay of factors that makes it difficult to create a clear diagnostic picture within such a short timeline.
  - Ambarin Faizi asked how San Diego has navigated that diagnostic challenge, to which Amber Irvine replied that they make the best determination they are able to with the information they have available.
  - Dr. Katherine Warburton said this is a great question and she will have internal discussions about it. She said San Diego's approach sounds like the right one.
- Linda Mimms asked a clarifying question of Amber Irvine about tracking respondents who engage in services voluntarily.

Karen Linkins thanked the group and co-chairs and invited them to submit further suggestions via email.

## 4. Call for Public Comment

**Karen Linkins** shared instructions for how to make public comment and said that comments can also be submitted at any time via email at [CAREAct@chhs.ca.gov](mailto:CAREAct@chhs.ca.gov).

- Chris Schneiders thanked the group for their work. He supported the idea of partnering with first responders and said that there is collaborative training that has been done related to psychiatric advanced directives and he can connect the group with those efforts so they would not have to reinvent the wheel.
- Elizabeth Kaino-Hopper thanked the group and said she appreciates the open dialogue. She shared that from a family perspective, it is often very difficult to have conversations about her daughter's needs for care when she is in psychosis, and people often shy away from these conversations in her county. She said that higher levels of care with a path to step-down care has been very effective for her daughter.

- Christine McCammond, Housing Program Manager for Los Banos, said she is very happy to hear everything the group is discussing. She said that in her work, she often sees people who do not qualify for a 5150 hold but are in desperate need of care. She shared that she would like more information on what tools a Judge has if a respondent refuses to engage.

## 5. Meeting Wrap Up and Next Steps

**Karen Linkins** encouraged the group to familiarize themselves with the communication tools that have already been developed and are accessible online. She shared the date of the next CARE Act Working Group meeting and said that the next meeting of this group will take place on March 13 and following third Wednesdays. She also shared meeting information for the other ad hoc subgroups and encouraged members to attend. She thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting.

## Appendix I: Public Zoom Chat

13:10:55 From John Freeman to Everyone:

Information about this and other meetings is available on the CARE Act Working Group Site: <https://www.chhs.ca.gov/home/committees/care-act-working-group>

Email us at [CAREAct@chhs.ca.gov](mailto:CAREAct@chhs.ca.gov) to join the CARE listserv to receive updates and information on future stakeholder events.

13:40:03 From John Freeman-DVC to Everyone:

Training and Technical Assistance and other resources are available on the CARE Act Resource Center <https://care-act.org/>

13:57:48 From John Freeman-DVC to Everyone:

That inbox again was: [Info@care-act.org](mailto:Info@care-act.org)

14:18:25 From John Freeman-DVC to Everyone:

Email us at [CAREAct@chhs.ca.gov](mailto:CAREAct@chhs.ca.gov)

14:21:20 From John Freeman-DVC to Everyone:

For reference, here are a few sites to keep in mind for additional information:

CARE Act Resource Center <https://care-act.org/>

CARE Act Working Group Site: <https://www.chhs.ca.gov/home/committees/care-act-working-group>

Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) CARE Act Website:  
<https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/Pages/CARE-ACT.aspx>

Judicial Council of California (JCC) CARE Act Website (court forms and more):  
<https://www.courts.ca.gov/48654.htm>

CalHHS CARE Act website: <https://www.chhs.ca.gov/care-act/>

14:26:52 From John Freeman-DVC to Everyone:

Email us at [CAREAct@chhs.ca.gov](mailto:CAREAct@chhs.ca.gov) to join the CARE listserv to receive updates and information on future stakeholder events.