

**Counselor Certification Advisory Committee  
Meeting Notes  
November 20, 2007**

**ATTENDEES**

**Members and Others:**

Mike Belzman, Association of Christian Alcohol and Drug Counselors (ACADC)  
Jose L. Chavez, ACADC  
Paula Torres, California Certification Board of Chemical Dependency  
Counselors (CCBCDC)  
Richard Chiampa, CCBCDC  
Lori Miller, CCBCDC  
Charles S. Bertolini, ACADC  
Marvin Bennett, ACADC  
Warren Daniels, California Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors  
(CAADAC)  
David Del Rio, CADDTP  
Jack Kearney, California Association for Alcohol and Drug Educators (CAADE)  
Deborah Werner, Children and Family Futures  
Karin Marsolais, Forensic Addictions Corrections Treatment (FACT)  
Bo Yang, FACT  
Sherry Daley, CAADAC  
Luky Maldonado, Safety Center California Association of Drinking Driver Treatment  
Programs (CADDTP)  
Mike Breining, Breining Institute  
Jason Kletter, COMP  
Ken Jones, California Association of Addiction Recovery Resources CAARR  
Susan Blacksher, CAARR  
Cathie Smith, The Justin Foundation  
David Peters, CAARR  
Mark MacDonald, CAADE (McCallum Group)  
Deborah Harmon, CAADE (McCallum Group)  
Al Senella, CAADPE  
Tom Renfree, CADPAAC  
Elizabeth Stanley-Salazar, Phoenix House

**ADP Staff:**

Renee Zito, Director  
Rebecca Lira, Deputy Director – Licensing & Certification Division  
Joy Jarfors, Manager – Program Compliance Branch  
Kathryn Frost, Don Damewood, Tom Cunningham, Cindy Jamison – Counselor  
Compliance Unit  
Gladys Mitchell, Dianna Cervantes, Nadalie Martin – Facility Compliance Unit  
Morgan Staines, Chief Legal Counsel  
Nanette Ruffo, Legal Counsel  
Peggy Bean, Mike Ellison, Marjorie McKisson, Karen Johnson – Program Services  
Division

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**Welcome and Opening Remarks and Discussion (Rebecca Lira/Director Renée Zito)**

- Our common goal is to provide quality, consistent treatment to clients. We need to raise the bar, increase the quality of our treatment, and professionalize the field. Increase pay for Counselors; \$10/hour is not acceptable. We must have Clinical Supervisors in the field to help guide our Counselors.
- Rather than continue to certify facilities, ADP's goal is to license every AOD treatment facility that it provides funding to/for.
- Specialty fields we are addressing in the coming year, include: Treatment for Women and Youth.
- Pilot programs we are developing include: Assessment Tools and Cultural Diversity Competency Training.

**Women's Specialist - Counselor (Marjorie McKisson): {Presentation} The Need for a Women's Specialty – by Debra Werner:** Identifying the plan, the issues, the standards, and what the mission statement would be. Develop a work group to present the recommendations. Remember to include the women of color. The workshops should cost as little as possible so that the majority of counselors can afford to take the specialty certification course. How can women receive a better basic level of counselor services? We need input from CCAC members--about seven volunteers from this group. The following individuals stated that they, or a representative from their organization, would participate: Mike Breining, Father Jack Kearney, CAADE, Susan Blackshear.

**ADP Conference (Joy Jarfors):** "Implementing a Comprehensive Continuum of Services: Beyond Tradition—Creating Synergy," is the theme of the ADP 2008 Conference, being held June 18-20, 2008, in Burlingame, California. For more details, see ADP's Website at: <http://www.adp.ca.gov/calendar.shtml>. Warren Daniels, on behalf of California Association of Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Counselors (CAADAC), offered to collaborate with ADP on these annual conferences.

**Action Item:** CCAC Members requested a copy of the statistics presented; this information was emailed to the CCAC Members on December 6, 2007 by K. Frost.

**Counselor Complaint Investigation Process (Kathryn Frost):** Clarified terminology that allegations will be categorized as "substantiated" or "not substantiated." What actions are taken by ADP if a Counselor is not registered or certified? ADP contacts the certifying organization (CO) and the Counselor then has 30 days to comply. What is the manner in which ADP communicates with the Counselor's employer? The employer needs to communicate to close the loop between the COs and employer. When a Counselor has previously received certification through a CO, ADP also notifies the CO.

If the CO has a complaint, do they notify the State? A complainant may concurrently submit a complaint to the State and CO, per regulations. It has been suggested that

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ADP share information at the outset of an investigation by contacting the appropriate COs.

**Action Item:** ADP to meet with Legal Counsel to improve investigation/working relationship with certifying organizations. A Legal Services Request has been prepared and submitted to determine whether ADP can notify the CO when complaints are received.

A comment was made that the COs can do more than ADP but not less. ADP is currently preparing and training ADP staff to conduct investigations and develop solid cases, especially regarding sexual allegations and/or personnel matters.

**Action Item:** A Legal Services Request has been prepared and submitted to obtain direction as to whether ADP can give certifying organization/employer(s) investigative reports, upon completion of the complaint investigation.

It is ADP's desire that Counselors receive ethics training up front. At CAARR, for example, Counselors are required to sign a Code of Ethics when they first begin.

Technical Assistance and Training are offered by the California Association of Addiction Recovery Resources (CAARR) through a contract with ADP.

During 2007, ADP-sponsored four sessions that were provided, free of charge, to approximately 2,000 Counselors which focused on Ethics Training but also included information on documentation and recordkeeping.

Related to ethics, it is ADP's goal to ensure that all National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) accredited organizations will conduct business in facilities separate from and not inside personal residences, where confidentiality and client safety can be protected.

ADP has investigated complaints even though the Counselor may no longer be working at the facility/program; ADP took action and is now facing legal ramifications.

FACT will communicate with ADP regarding any actions they take against a Counselor's certification/license. FACT also checks Web-sites of the other COs to ensure that they do not hire anyone with actions pending against them.

COs have authority and power and standards and need to act within authority and with consideration for legal ramifications. COs need to communicate with each other. How reliable is information at each COs Web-site? Regulations require COs to update their Web-sites every 24 hours for Counselor issues. COs need to be held accountable to ADP Regulations.

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ADP has been previously asked to define an "Educational Session." The definition was included in the agenda package on 11/20/07. Also, the Aging Toolkits were provided to each CCAC member present.

**Certified Addictions Counselor Ethics Violation and Sanction Matrix (Cathie Smith):** What comprises violation of code of ethics for counselors? The choice was to use minimum to maximum penalties. The COs' code of ethics state not only that but specifically include it in their ethics. As a non-voting member, ADP doesn't have a lot of authority within the regulations or statutes at this time nor does it have statutory authority to impose fines. Therefore, COs would be responsible for fining counselors.

Training issues: certified and sanctioned. Authority required to enforce the matrix issues. Father Kearney remarked that we need to hold our counselors to a standard of expectations.

MOTION on the table – Committee that represents majority of certifying organizations ADOPT the Matrix as is and submit it to ADP. Recommendations are going too far and should stick to regulations. COs have their own code. Workgroup submits it [the Matrix] to ADP for their use. If CCAC wants to move it to ADP, the nine certifying organizations will have the opportunity for input individually. Cathie asked for input from the CCAC members/certifying organizations by December 15, 2007.

The input from this CCAC meeting will be provided to Executive Staff from the CCAC members, who act as advisors.

**Action Item:** ADP will do a spreadsheet that will show what ADP has authority to do with the Matrix--under regulations or statutes. ADP will then provide Members with the next steps. ADP will also develop a flow chart that shows who (ADP versus CO) has what authority when.

It was noted that COs can agree to do these things; but, ADP cannot mandate fines. At this time, ADP cannot determine what portions of the Matrix will become part of regulation. It was confirmed that if [a program, facility, Counselor is operating] outside current regulations, then ADP can suspend/revoke. However, ADP cannot enforce something just because it is in the Matrix. In fact, ADP could go to the certifying organizations and say, "it is up to you." And, even if ADP cannot enforce, they will still investigate ALL complaints within ADP's jurisdiction.

The next meeting will be held on March 5, 2008, in Sacramento.

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT 2:13 p.m.**