

Executive Directors Report
RCDSC Board Meeting
September 29 2018
Eureka Ca.

In our Southern counties, we have recently emerged from the biggest wildfire event in the written history of the State of California. The people we serve, their families, our service providers, our staff and other community members, were once again traumatized and displaced. I am pleased to report that no fatalities, injuries or significant property losses have been reported within the RCRC community. I will go into more detail in this report regarding the steps that were taken to prepare for this event, our process of disaster response, and some of the lessons learned. We are now in a period of recovery, mindful that we must prepare for the next event.

2019 Performance Contract: Measures and Activities

It is the time of year that RCRC is required to conduct public meetings to obtain input from our communities that we will use to evaluate our current local policy outcomes, and the strategies we have employed to achieve progress toward meeting our local and public policy outcomes. As you may recall, public policy outcomes are required of all Regional Centers, and we may only propose the strategies we will employ, while local policy outcomes, reflect the priorities of our Regional Center. Local Policy Outcomes are chosen by us, and we use quantitative data, as well as public input to develop and evaluate them.

It was my desire this year to hold public meetings in Del Norte County and in the community of Ft Bragg. However, the fires interfered with my plans, and time constraints, combined with the number of other public meetings being held, compelled me to revise those plans. The number of outcomes we must address has more than doubled those of previous years, so this year, I decided to divide the content of the public presentations to allow for more discussion and comment. Next year, I would like to hold public forums in each of our counties.

A public meeting was hosted by People First of Ukiah in our offices on the evening of September 10th. It was well attended and there was a lively discussion with many good suggestions for improving our performance plan activities. I will share the public comment data with you at our November meeting and I will ask the Board to approve our proposed 2019 Performance Contract Measures and Activities.

At our September meeting, I will be presenting our 2018 public policy outcome measures and activities. I will describe the progress we have made thus far this year, ask for your input regarding the activities we proposed, and your input regarding what improvements we might propose for our 2019 Performance Contract. My presentation is included with this report, along with progress reports from the Director of Clinical and Community Services and our Diversity Outreach Specialist. Please review these prior to the meeting so that we can use our time efficiently (the Ukiah meeting ran for over two hours).

The Redwood Complex Fires

In early spring, I requested that our Directors Team review and revise our Disaster Response Protocol. I had attended a workshop sponsored by the Office of Emergency Services, and upon review of our protocol, felt we needed a more comprehensive and specific plan. To further our preparations, our Directors Team received training on Disaster Response from Tamara Rodriguez of DDS. A significant part

of this training involved the use of the Everbridge system, an on-line tool that could enable us to identify clients, staff and service providers within an area affected by a disaster. The Everbridge system also allows us to contact individuals within an affected area, to provide them with information about the disaster, and to ask if they need help.

On Saturday, July 28, I was contacted by our team member Sheila Keys, who informed me that the Ranch and River fires were threatening Lake and Mendocino Counties. Our team began monitoring the movement of the fire using various media. We used the Everbridge system to identify individuals in affected areas, to inform them of evacuation warnings/orders, and to ask them if they needed help. Our first large notification went out to approximately 380 residents of Lake County. Within five minutes, we received over 80 responses, 2 requested a call back. We followed up with on-line and phone contacts until all clients were accounted for.

Our Disaster response team met each day at 10am (some days more often) to review our response protocol and coordinate tasks. We were forced to close our Lakeport office on Monday July 30, and many of the communities in which our Lake County staff reside were under mandatory evacuation. RCRC staff from other offices worked remotely and in accessible areas of Lake County to ensure clients were safe and their needs met. We met daily with DDS, provided support to our service providers, and consulted with law enforcement, the Red Cross, and offices of emergency services.

Our service providers performed impressively and “beyond the call” to ensure the safety and wellness of the clients in affected areas. They have our gratitude. (Following this report you will find an Impact Report submitted by People Services in Lake County). Community Services and Service Coordination staff are working to ensure that all appropriate expenses incurred in the support of affected clients are reimbursed. Our team will be meeting to further debrief our disaster response and will be discussing ways that we can acknowledge the exemplary performance of our service providers.

In the face of this disaster, the process of following and revising our Disaster Response protocol, meeting regularly, monitoring changing conditions, and communicating with all involved parties, contributed to some positive outcomes. Our staff performed admirably, working long days and weekends. We realize that disasters come in many forms and that we must engage in a continual process of education, training and collaboration with our community partners to be ready for the next one.

Executive Director Annual Performance Evaluation

As per my employment contract with the RCDSC Board, it is my responsibility to inform the Board of its duty to conduct a performance evaluation of the Executive Director at this time. Please let me know what forms of information you require of me. I recently participated in the evaluation of the Executive Director of ARCA using an online platform, Boardsource. I thought it was a good tool for obtaining information from a variety of sources.

Noteworthy

In your Board Packet is a copy of an article, *Disaster Response and IDD*, authored by our own Dr. Lucille Esralew. This article deals with the application of Psychological First Aid as part of the effective response to natural disasters. Not only is it a well written description of best practices, but another example of the influence of Redwood Coast Regional Center staff upon statewide, national and international audiences.