

POS Expenditure Data Report

Redwood Coast Regional Center

May 2019

This report is provided to the Department of Developmental Services as required in Article VII: Miscellaneous, Section 6(b)(i) of Redwood Coast Regional Center's 2017-2018 Contract.

Public Meetings Held to Present Purchase of Service Data and Obtain Public Input

In March, Redwood Coast Regional Center conducted public meetings to share Purchase of Service Data and to obtain public input concerning ways to improve access and equity. Meetings were held on March 7, 2019 by video teleconference between Ukiah, Eureka and Crescent City. These meetings were held from 3:00-5:00 p.m. in an attempt to increase attendance. There were a total of 9 participants at the March 7 meetings. Meetings were held in the communities of Covello on March 14 and Hoopa on March 19. There were a total of 9 participants at these meetings. This represents a slight increase in community participation from the previous year.

Spanish language interpreters were available at all public meetings. For the first time, interpretation technology was used in the public meetings. Spanish and English versions of the meeting announcements were posted on the RCRC website and Facebook page, made available at all RCRC offices and other locations, and were distributed by RCRC staff. Public service announcements (English and Spanish versions) were provided to all area media, including those with Spanish language audiences/readerships, more than 30 days prior to the meeting dates.

All meeting participants received a handout (Spanish/English) containing color coded graphs and charts of the POS expenditure data from 2017-18, in an easy-to-understand format. The graphs and charts were prepared by RCRC and served as discussion guides for each meeting. The charts and graphs contained all required new information regarding expenditures and expenditure trends. An index to the materials was provided as well as explanatory notes and definitions of terms used in the report, and where available comparisons to statewide data.

A power-point presentation was also developed allowing participants to view the charts and graphs of the expenditure data provided in the report. During the presentations, participants were asked to refer to narrative information and tables provided in the printed handout. Participants were encouraged to provide comments or ask questions at any time during the presentation. Note takers were available at both meetings to record participant comments and main discussion topics. There appeared to be adequate time allotted for presentation and discussion. Discussion at both meetings was active with most of those present making contributions.

The following issues were identified by our analysis of the 2017-18 data:

1. The demographics of the area served by Redwood Coast Regional Center (RCRC) remain similar to those of recent years, and as in prior years, dissimilar to statewide data. The 2017-18 data suggests that the demographics of the population served by RCRC closely resembles that of the four counties served by our regional center. The primary ethnicity identified by RCRC clients is reported to be White (71.2%), followed by Hispanics (13.8%), Native Americans (6%), Other (8.3%), African American (2.2%) and Polynesian (1%). The primary language of RCRC clients is reported to be English (93%), Spanish (6%) and all other (1%).
2. Redwood Coast Regional Center has experienced growth in all categories of Purchase of Service with the greatest growth in children and youth. The average expenditures per person have increased.
3. Across age, diagnosis, race and ethnicity, most clients served by RCRC reside in their family homes, or in their own homes, supported by SLS and ILS services.
4. While persons served with a diagnosis of ASD have increased, POS spending for those individuals have decreased, likely due to funding of behavioral services being assumed by Managed Care organizations.
5. POS expenditures for individuals identifying as White are more than double that for those identifying as Hispanic and almost double that of persons identifying as Native American.
6. Review and analysis of 2017-18 purchase of service data suggests that RCRC should continue and intensify its outreach to underserved communities, particularly Hispanic and Native American communities.

Results of Stakeholder Meetings in Ukiah, Eureka and Crescent City

Discussion following the presentation of 2017-18 POS data during public meetings held on March 7, 2019 by video-conference between Ukiah, Eureka and Crescent City generated the following questions, comments and recommendations:

- a. There is a concern about data being collected regarding clients age 70 or older.
- b. Rates for services provided to clients differ, particularly for Supported Living Services. Service Providers may not be able to provide payment rates sufficient to attract bi-lingual employees.
- c. Overall, rates paid to providers and wages paid, are not keeping pace with the cost of living, particularly housing.
- d. Some families may not utilize purchased services due to language barriers between themselves and service providers. Hispanic families may receive and/or utilize fewer services due to this problem.
- e. Some clients/families may not feel comfortable receiving supportive services in their homes and may not utilize purchased services for this reason.

- f. There is a lack of information regarding services that the regional center offers, especially materials in Spanish. Families are unsure what services their child(ren) may qualify for.
- g. Improvement is needed with how RCRC shares information within our communities, especially the Hispanic community.
- h. Materials about upcoming events should be posted in RCRC offices as clients and families may not have access to the internet.
- i. More social events should be provided for Spanish speaking clients. Lack of transportation to vents is a problem in isolated rural communities.

Results of Stakeholder Meetings in Covello and Hoopa

Public meetings were held on March 14 at the Round Valley Indian Reservation in Covello, and on March 19 at the Hoopa Valley Tribe. Attendance at the meetings were Covello (5 participants) and Hoopa (4 participants). In addition to the meetings held in Ukiah, Eureka and Crescent City, these numbers represent a slight increase in participation from the previous year, and for the first time, meetings were held in historically underserved communities. Food and refreshments were available at both meetings. Comments and Proposed Strategies from the Covello and Hoopa Meetings include:

- a. Provide more education for the community about developmental disabilities to alleviate stigma of having a child with a developmental disability in the Native American community.
- b. Some parents experience shame, fear, denial and self blame for their child's disability and this may be a barrier to seeking help, or accepting a referral for RC services.
- c. Parents struggle with the process of accepting a child's diagnosis.
- d. RCRC should build more connections and partnerships within the Native community.
- e. There should be more support for parents, such as parent support groups, that enable parents to connect, share and learn from each other.
- f. Some community members do not seek out or accept services because of immigration status and fear of deportation.
- g. The cost and availability of transportation is a barrier for Native communities.
- h. Native Americans may feel intimidated at times, especially when interacting with Doctors during the intake process
- i. RCRC should conduct more presentations for parents and community members about developmental disabilities and services available. Create posters that are eye catching, general and straightforward, and post these around the community

- j. RCRC should conduct orientations for new families, as the process of eligibility and receiving services is intimidating
- k. Have food available at all events as it connects people, it shows you care, and may be the biggest draw for people to attend

Summary of Lessons Learned from the Public Meetings

Many of the themes expressed in the public meetings this year echo those of previous years. Clearly RCRC needs to do a better job of communicating with underserved communities, develop more trusting relationships in the Hispanic and Native American communities, and provide more parent/family support through education, peer support, and providing assistance with transportation to RCRC sponsored events. Participation in the public meetings was slightly increased, and for the first time two of the public meetings were held in targeted underserved communities. Translation equipment, purchased through our disparity grant, enabled Spanish speaking community members to participate in real-time.

A positive take away from the public meetings was our appreciation that many of the strategies suggested by participants are already in process through the Redwood Coast Equity Project. Parent support groups for Spanish speaking families are underway in Eureka and Ukiah, with more to be developed. A "Parent Academy" orientation process has been developed for families new to RCRC. Our staff is now out-stationed in remote underserved communities, and we are present at local cultural and community events. We are developing more informational materials that describe who we are and what we do and with the assistance of our community partners, are making these available throughout our four counties.