

POS Expenditure Data Report
Redwood Coast Regional Center
May 2020

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 2019-2020 Contract.

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

On March 9, 2020, Redwood Coast Regional Center conducted a public meeting to share Purchase of Service Data and obtain public input concerning ways to improve access and equity. The public meeting was held at the Robinson Rancheria in Lake County. The meeting was held at this location with the intent of collecting input from residents of Lake County, and particularly to hear from members of Tribal communities. The meeting was held from 3:00-5:00 p.m. in an attempt to increase attendance. There was a total of 12 community members, 5 RCRC staff and a representative of DDS in attendance.

Spanish language interpreters were available at the public meeting. Spanish and English versions of the meeting announcement 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 2018-19, 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 were available comparisons to statewide data.

Dr. Rick Blumberg, RCRC Executive Director provided a brief presentation of the RCRC analysis of POS expenditure data and Mayra Ochoa, RCRC Diversity Outreach Specialist, gave a presentation of the RCRC Equity Project activities during 2018-19.

The following issues were identified by our analysis of the 2018-2019 data:

1. POS authorizations for Spanish clients increased by 25% over the previous year.
2. There was a 38% decrease in Spanish speaking clients with no POS authorizations. Utilization of services overall decreased by 8%.
3. Per person expenditures for people living at home decreased by 8.6% and utilization of services decreased by 20.9%
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. While overall per person expenditures by children and adults increased by 38.9%, utilization of purchased services decreased by 18%

Following the presentations, a World Cafe process was used to facilitate a discussion among meeting participants in response to the following questions that referenced disparities identified in the POS expenditure data:

- a. How can we better support children and adults living at home with families?
- b. How can we better support children and adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder?
- c. What would more culturally responsive services look like?
- d. What have you found to be most helpful in your interaction with the Regional Center?
- e. What would be the best ways for us to communicate with you?

The World Café process resulted in a series of engaging small group discussions, recorded by the discussion leaders. The specific suggestions/recommendations in response to each question may be found in the attached meeting minutes.

Summary of Lessons Learned from the 2020 Public Meeting

The World Café discussion process generated a large amount of community input. Many of the suggestions and recommendations that are detailed in the meeting minutes appear to be important issues for underserved communities, and the RCRC community in general. Many of the suggestions and recommendations have previously been expressed in prior year POS Expenditure meetings, which suggests that RCRC needs to intensify its efforts in the following areas:

- To develop more culturally responsive services.

- To improve services to children and adults living in family homes (e.g., recruit more bilingual service providers)
- To better support children and adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder (in particular early intervention services, respite, social skills development programs, transition and employment services)
- Improve access to information about Regional Center services, and improve responsiveness of RC staff.
- Make better use of a variety of communication media/methods including; social media, radio and newspapers, flyers, peer to peer and parent to parent; and on-line meetings and webinars.

A positive outcome of our analysis of the public meeting input was our appreciation that many of the strategies suggested by participants are already in process through the Redwood Coast Equity Project. In response to input, RCRC proposes to continue and intensify its efforts to:

- Partner with local CBO's and Family Mentors, to support individuals and families to understand and access RC funded services
- To support the location of RCRC staff and service providers in underserved and remote communities
- Provide incentives for service providers to hire more bi-lingual/bi-cultural staff
- Continue and enhance RCRC participation in outreach activities and nurturing with community partners in underserved communities in education, health /mental health care, housing, and employment.

Parent support groups for Spanish speaking families continue in Eureka and Ukiah, with more to be developed. A "Parent Academy" orientation process has been developed for families new to RCRC. RCRC staff are out-stationed in remote underserved communities, and we continue our presence 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. Utilizing our 2019-20 Equity grant funds, we will be hiring additional Equity Project staff to assist with outreach activities, improve our communications and develop more culturally responsive services.

