

POS Expenditure Data Report
Redwood Coast Regional Center
May 2021

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, 2021, 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. Due to COVID 19 restrictions, the meeting was held via Zoom. This meeting platform allowed community members from all 4 counties RCRC serves to participate. The meeting was held from 3:00-5:00 p.m. in an attempt to increase attendance. There were a total of 7 community members, 2 representatives of the Department of Developmental Services, and 6 RCRC staff and a representative of State Council on Developmental Disabilities 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 an electronic handout (Spanish/English) containing color coded graphs and charts of the POS expenditure data from 2019-20, in an easy-to-understand format. The graphs and charts were prepared by RCRC and served as discussion guides for the 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.

Jennifer Garcia , RCRC Diversity Outreach Specialist, and Dr. Rick Blumberg, Consultant to RCRC, co-facilitated the meeting. Jennifer Garcia gave a presentation of the RCRC Equity Project activities during 2019-20.

J. Garcia provided a PowerPoint presentation from RCRC's Diversity Outreach for 2020 and early 2021 and touched on the following topics.

- Social media, especially Facebook and data received. RCRC will also be launching a new and improved website in 2021 and coming soon.
- Parent Academy is held the last Wednesday of each month and a dedicated Spanish Parent Academy is held on the last Thursday of the month.
- PPE Distribution at outreach events and some stand along PPE distribution events.
- Virtual bilingual events that included Voter Registration and Census Information, Holiday Sing-along. All announcements are provided in both English and Spanish.
- Upcoming Schedule of Events for 2021

Dr. Blumberg provided a brief presentation of the RCRC analysis of POS expenditure data for 2019-20. The following issues were identified by analysis of the 2019-2020 data:

- RCRC Area and Statewide Population/Ethnicity by County: Within the RCRC service area, population growth for people served reflects almost a 70 percent increase in growth for Hispanics, followed by Asians at almost 57 percent, Native American at 27.6 percent and African Americans at 27percent.
- Client Population/Per Person Expenditures: POS expenditures for Native Americans has increased by nearly 65 percent, whites at 41.1 percent, Hispanics at 31.4 percent; however, expenditures for the Asian population declined by 5.6 percent. RCRC will need to take a closer look why this has occurred.
- Client Info: No POS/Utilization Rate: This data shows significant increases in clients with No Purchase of Service across groups with the exception of Hispanic and Native Americans where significant increases in authorizations has occurred. This could, in part be due to the focus of RCRC's equity project with these two groups. In 2019-2020 there was a decrease in utilization of services across the board and Dr. Blumberg's analysis is that during the last quarter of 2020, we were under Stay-at-Home orders due to COVID-19, and individuals, families and service providers were trying to adjust to the new reality.
- Client Information Based on Residence: There was a significant increase in the number of those living in their own home and those living with the

support of Independent Living (ILS) and Supported Living Services (SLS). Expenditures for persons living in their own homes have increased over 17 percent over the previous year.

- **Residence No POS/Utilization:** There was an overall increase of 21.2 percent in No POS for individuals living at home. The increase of NO POS in home, may reflect the growth of school-aged children living at home who typically receive many services funded by their home school district. Decrease in utilization of POS across categories likely reflects a response to COVID-19.
- **Client Info: Based on Eligibility Diagnosis:** There has been a significant increase in those found eligible due to an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnosis and a decrease in persons with an Intellectual Disability (ID) diagnosis. When reviewing similar data nationally and internationally, we see that when people diagnosed with ASD goes up; the people diagnosed with ID generally go down. For per person expenditures, there was an increase across disability categories, 32.1 percent, with the exception of ASD where there was a decrease of 26.4 percent which is likely due to behavioral purchases for this group being funded by Managed Care organizations.

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. Meeting participants were assigned to breakout rooms and given time to discuss the questions below in small groups.

Breakout Room Questions:

1. We have presented information about our outreach to underserved communities during the past year. What other strategies should RCRC consider to deliver culturally responsive services to underserved communities?
2. How can RCRC improve access to information about RCRC and community resources?
3. How can RCRC improve services for children and adults living in family homes?

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.

Community Input from the March 2021 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. Some 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:

- Continue and expand efforts to work with the service provider community to recruit and retain bi-lingual/bi-cultural staff.
- Continue to provide trainings in culturally responsive practices and services (particularly within the Native American community).
- Due to the rural nature of the RCRC service area, it is often difficult for individuals and families to access Regional Center Services. RCRC should continue the practice of out-stationing staff in remote communities.
- RCRC should advocate for and work with community partners to provide improved internet connectivity for remote areas.
- RCRC should consider developing a diversity subcommittee within its Board of Directors and the Association of Service Providers.
- Continue to develop it's social media presence/use, and make improvements on it's website (currently being redesigned).
- Advocate for resumption of funding for Camp and social recreational activities.
- Advocate for development of Best Buddies chapters and collaborate with high schools and colleges to develop mentoring for youth and adults with IDD.
- Advocate for Self Determination and Participant Directed Services as a culturally responsive service for underserved communities.
- Advocate for smaller caseloads for service coordinators working with underserved communities.

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.

J. Garcia thanked participants and noted that the meeting notes will be posted to RCRC's website. Participants were asked to send any additional comments and/or questions by email to: Disparitydata@redwoodcoastrc.org J. Garcia reminded participants that a Report will be developed following today's meeting that will also be posted to the RCRC website.

