

POS Expenditure Data Report
Redwood Coast Regional Center
May 2022

This report is provided to the Department of Developmental Services as required in Article VII: Section 6 of Redwood Coast Regional Center's 2020-2021 Contract.

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

On March 30, 2022, 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 precautions, the meeting was held via Zoom video/teleconference. This meeting platform allowed community members from all 4 counties RCRC serves to participate. The meeting was held from 10:30am-12pm. There were a total of seven community members, two representatives of the Department of Developmental Services, twelve RCRC staff/contractors, and a representative of State Council on Developmental Disabilities in attendance.

Spanish language and ASL interpreters were available at the public meeting. Spanish and English versions of the meeting announcement were posted on the RCRC website, 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 graphs and charts of the POS expenditure data from 2020-21, 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 comparisons to statewide data were available. This information was also available on RCRC's website at:

<https://redwoodcoastrc.org/transparency/purchase-of-services-pos-expenditure-data>
The postings include the data for FY 2020-2021 as well as the POS Expenditure data the past seven fiscal years.

Dr. Roy, along with input from Dr. Blumberg and Dr. Smalley, provided a presentation of the RCRC analysis of POS expenditure data for 2020-21 and part of the vision statement of RCRC was shared, “We strive to be accessible”.

The following was identified by analysis of the 2020-2021 data:

- **RCRC Population by Primary Ethnicity:** Primary ethnicity within the RCRC service area is predominantly white at 74 percent, with the next largest population based on ethnicity being Hispanic at 14.3 percent.
- **Client Population/Per Person Expenditures:** POS expenditures for Native Americans has increased by 63 percent, whites at 44.4 percent, Hispanics at 32.3 percent.
- **In the 3-21 service category,** per-capita spending for Native Americans (9983) surpassed that of Whites (9351). Expenditures for Hispanics (7832) in this age category was found to be lower than Native Americans and Whites. Our analysis of public meeting and focus group data suggests that this disparity is likely due to a shortage of bi-lingual/bi-cultural service providers. (It should be noted that per capita spending for Hispanics has increased from 5,644 in 2018-19, a pre-pandemic year.)
- **Client Info: No POS/Utilization Rate:** This data shows significant increases in clients with No Purchase of Service and a decrease in utilization across all groups. This may be related to the COVID pandemic and individuals staying at home and isolating from others. The greatest increase in percentage of No POS, based on ethnicity, is whites & Pacific Islander. It is noted that when the total population number for a group is low (eg Pacific Islander), the changes within a few individuals can have a large impact on the percentage seen. Our analysis of POS data indicates that 7% of Hispanic clients of RCRC, across age groups, have no/low POS authorizations. Comparatively, 26% of whites, across age groups, have no/low POS authorizations. Moreover, our analysis of No POS data reveals that for the category of Hispanic, the majority of persons served by RCRC are in the 3-21 age range. This suggests that many needed services are likely being provided by school districts, and by behavioral support service providers funded through managed care organizations.
- **Client Information Based on Residence:** There is an increase in the percentage of those in home and those in Med/Rehab/Psych facilities such as the acute general hospital, psychiatric facility, a rehabilitation center, or a

community treatment center. This may be related to individuals not utilizing services needed related to COVID and subsequently reaching a crisis point where hospitalization and/or treatment is required.

Also noted is a substantial increase in per person expenditure for those with ILS or SLS (\$35,083 to \$70,020, equaling an increase in per person expenditure of \$34,937). This increase is in keeping with RCRC's aim to offer adequate SLS & ILS to enable individuals to obtain optimal community integration and reside in homes of their choosing. These services are provided as a valued alternative to congregate living arrangements, and are often more expensive than staff operated, segregated settings. Our analysis suggest that these services are more available in population centers, and are less likely to be available in remote, under-served communities. Based on ethnicity, the subpopulation that uses costly residential supports is predominantly white.

- Residence No POS/Utilization: There is a decrease in utilization of POS across all categories, likely reflecting 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. For per person expenditures, there was an increase across disability categories, 35.6 percent, with the exception of ASD where there was a decrease of 26.2 percent which is likely due to behavioral purchases for this group being funded by Managed Care organizations.

A discussion followed the presentation of the data, with Dr. Roy and Dr. Smalley calling for questions, input, and suggestions. The specific discussion topics/questions may be found in the attached meeting minutes.

It was recognized in the discussion that there has been a lack of service providers in and from our underserved communities. Some of the issues were also noted in last year's meeting, which highlights the importance of RCRC continuing to improve service access and equity. As a result, RCRC has been and is continuing to take several steps to improve service access and equity including:

1. Holding community meetings to address how the underserved communities would like RCRC to improve service access and equity. These meetings generated suggestions related to increasing RCRC's Vendor workforce capacity to include bi-lingual, bi-cultural staff. RCRC will continue to

- collect and analyze focus group and client satisfaction data in an ongoing effort to improve the cultural responsiveness of Regional Center services.
2. In response to suggestions from the community, RCRC is providing accessible courses and certification for the next two years to help build the workforce capacity of bi-lingual, bi-cultural staff, through the Service Access and Equity grant.
 3. Providing incentives for service providers to hire more bi-lingual/bi-cultural staff.
 4. Supporting the location of RCRC staff and service providers in underserved and remote communities, including travel reimbursement. (Due to the rural nature of the RCRC service area, it is often difficult for individuals and families to access Regional Center Services).
 5. Continuing participation in community and cultural outreach events to raise awareness of services provided through RCRC and recruiting bi-lingual/bi-cultural staff, overseen by the Diversity Specialist.
 6. Support for our Deaf and Hard of Hearing community through RCRC's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist
 7. Ongoing meetings to address our internal workforce shortage, high caseload to service provider ratios, challenges of providing services in our rural area, and increasing access for our underserved communities.
 8. Continuing to partner with local community based organizations, to support individuals and families to understand and access RC funded services including but not limited to respite, behavioral support, ILS/SLS, speech and augmentative communication services, etc...
 9. The onboarding of our new Enhanced Caseload service coordinators working specifically with underserved communities. These service coordinators have smaller caseloads to allow more time to develop relationships in the native and Latino communities.
 10. Providing training for RCRC staff and Vendor community in culturally appropriate practices and services
 11. Safely re-establishing services in home as things open up in relation to the COVID pandemic, to help improve utilization rates of services.
 12. Continuing to provide services to uphold RCRC's commitment to support individuals to reside in their community.

Dr. Roy thanked participants in attendance and for their input. Participants were asked to send any additional comments and/or questions by email to:

Disparitydata@redwoodcoastrc.org