

**Purchase of Service (POS)
Expenditure Data Report
Redwood Coast Regional Center
May 2024**

This report is provided to the Department of Developmental Services as required in Article VII: Section 6 of Redwood Coast Regional Center's 2022-2023 Contract.

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

On March 27, 2024, Redwood Coast Regional Center (RCRC) conducted a public meeting to share Purchase of Service Data and obtain public input concerning ways to improve access and equity. The meeting was held via Zoom video/teleconference, allowing community members from all four counties RCRC serves to participate, along with other participants from across the State of California. The meeting commenced at 10am, and concluded at 12pm, allowing all community members with questions/input opportunity to speak. There were a total of thirty-eight community members, three representatives of the Department of Developmental Services, seven RCRC staff, four community partners, a representative of the Board of Directors, and a representative of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities in attendance.

The presentation of RCRC's analysis of POS expenditure data for 2022-23 was presented first in Spanish and then followed in English by RCRC's Outreach & Diversity Specialists, Alma Ingram and Argelia Munoz. The PowerPoint slides for the presentation were also provided in both Spanish and English. Two ASL interpreters were available for interpretation of the presentation and community questions/input session. The presentation was presented in Spanish, and a Spanish interpreter was available for the community question/input session.

Spanish and English versions of the meeting announcement were posted on the RCRC website and social media, made available at all RCRC offices, published in the RCRC Newsletter and distributed by RCRC staff. Public service announcements (English and Spanish versions) were provided to all area media, more than 30 days prior to the meeting dates. All meeting participants were directed to the RCRC website containing graphs and charts of the POS expenditure data from 2022-2023, 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 required new information regarding expenditures and expenditure trends. Explanatory notes and definitions of terms used in the report (Spanish/English) and comparisons to statewide data were available. The information can be found at: <https://redwoodcoastrc.org/transparency/reporting/pos-expenditures/> The postings include the data for FY 2022-2023 as well as the POS Expenditure data the past eleven fiscal years. This data was received from the Department of Developmental Services. The data does not account for individuals that self-identify with more than one ethnicity. The terms to describe ethnicity in the data and presentation are reflective of the terms used in the data received.

Alma Ingram and Argelia Munoz opened and closed the presentation, sharing part of the vision statement of RCRC, “It is the vision of Redwood Coast Regional Center that all people in our community, including individuals with developmental disabilities, will live, learn, work, travel, and play in the best, most inclusive environments”. Presentation of the data was followed by steps RCRC has been taking in outreach, service access, and equity to address disparity in the RCRC community, followed by a presentation by Amy Benitez sharing steps RCRC is taking to increase the bi-cultural multi-lingual workforce capacity in RCRC client areas of need.

Consistent with last year, a Spanish speaking only small group meeting was conducted on May 2, 2024.

The following was identified by analysis of the 2022-2023 data:

RCRC Population by Primary Ethnicity:

Primary ethnicity within the RCRC service area is predominantly ‘white’ at 68.5 percent, with the next largest population based on ethnicity being ‘Hispanic’ at 14.9 percent, followed by ‘Native American’ at 5.4 percent.

Client Population/Per Person Expenditures:

In comparison to the year prior, there has been increase in the population across all ethnicities. The lowest increase has been in the ‘white’ population.

The greatest increase in per person expenditure is in RCRC’s ‘Asian’ Community at 8.3 percent, followed by RCRC’s ‘African American’ Community at 6.7%. The greatest per person expenditure overall based on ethnicity is ‘white’.

Analysis of the data of the two largest groups by population and ethnicity, ‘white’ and ‘Hispanic’, shows a per person expenditure difference of \$19,148. Upon further analysis of data, data related to age of the client and their residence has shown to have an influence on the total per person expenditure rate. When these factors are considered, the difference is reduced.

Analysis of the data of total expenditures by ethnicity reveals that for RCRC’s ‘Hispanic’ community, 78% of persons served by RCRC are under the age of 21 years old. This suggests that many needed services are provided by generic resources, such as school districts, county services such as IHSS and or funded through managed care organizations (behavioral support service providers), instead of through RCRC. RCRC is the “payer of last resort”. This larger population of ‘Hispanic’ youth, with costs covered by school and other generics, would result in a decrease in the total per person expenditure of RCRC’s ‘Hispanic’ community. Upon review of the per person expenditure rate, when

matched by age and residence, the difference of 3-21 years is significantly less. The difference is \$640, which is lower than the aforementioned amount of \$19,148.

The 'Native American' community shows a cumulative disparity of \$10,490 compared to 'whites' when looking at the total undifferentiated number. Analysis of the data of the total expenditures by ethnicity reveals that for RCRC's 'Native American' community, 65% of persons served by RCRC are under the age of 21 years old and similarly more likely served by generic resources first. Upon review of the per person expenditure rate, matched by age and residence, the difference of 3-21 years is \$2452. This is lower than the aforementioned amount of \$10,490, although still a substantial difference.

In comparison, approximately 80% of the RCRC clients with 'white' ethnicity are **over** the age of 21. This larger older population is less likely to have expenses covered by generics such as schools, so RCRC as "payor of last resort" is more likely utilized. Additionally, this larger older population is more likely to utilize living arrangements that cost more, such as SLS/ILS or residential, as opposed to youth who may be more likely to live at home. The reduced availability of generics/school expense cover and the increased living cost of RCRC adults leads to an overall higher per person expenditure in this group. Further discussion of this can be found below, with "Client Information Based on Ethnicity and Residence".

Client Info: No POS/Utilization Rate:

Analysis of the No POS data, of RCRC's three largest population groups based on ethnicity, shows that the lowest rate of No POS is with RCRC's 'Hispanic' community. This means RCRC's 'Hispanic' community receives the highest rate of POS authorizations comparatively. The 'Native American' community has the highest rate of No POS at 25.8%, indicating the 'Native American' community receives the lowest rate of POS authorizations comparatively. The data shows an increase in utilization across all groups listed based on ethnicity compared with the year prior. This would be in keeping with COVID regulations being lifted and an overall "opening back up" of the community. Based on ethnicity, the greatest utilization rate was white at 54.3%, with 'Native American' and Hispanic at 50.7% and 43.8% respectively.

Client Information Based on Primary Language:

The largest RCRC population based on language is English. Based on primary language, Spanish has the lowest rate of No POS, with the highest percentage of POS authorizations. The greatest per person expenditure based on language is English. The greatest increase in utilization compared with the year prior based on language is Spanish.

Client Information Based on Residence:

The majority of RCRC clients live at home. About a quarter of RCRC clients receive ILS (Independent Living Services) or SLS (Supported Living Services). The expenditure rates for RCRC clients living in ILS/SLS or residential are \$69,766 and \$115,097 respectively. This amount is substantially higher than the per person expenditure of RCRC clients residing at home with a per person expenditure rate of \$12,623.

RCRC aims 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 valued alternatives to congregate living arrangements, and are often more expensive than staff operated, segregated settings. Adult clients are more likely to utilize the more expensive living arrangements such as SLS/ILS and residential, as opposed to youth who are more likely to be living at home, leading to an increase in per person expenditure in the population older than 21 years old.

Client Information Based on Ethnicity & Residence:

As previously mentioned, approximately 80% of RCRC clients who are over age 21 are 'white'. Based on ethnicity, the subpopulation that uses SLS/ILS and residential residence the most is 'white'. Given the substantial difference in cost of these residence types, this influences the overall per person expenditure rates of the RCRC client. ILS/SLS & residential residence are the more costly options for residence compared with residing at home (\$69,766 and \$115,097 versus \$12,623 respectively). 17.3% of RCRC clients with ethnicity of 'white' reside in ILS/SLS, compared to 1.1% and 1.2% of RCRC clients with 'Hispanic' and 'Native American' ethnicity respectively. The most expensive residence is residential, with 1.6% of RCRC clients with ethnicity of 'white' residing in residential, and no RCRC clients with 'Hispanic' and 'Native American' ethnicity residing in residential (0.0% and 0.0% respectively). This is a contributing factor to the difference observed of the expenditure between the client population groups based on ethnicity.

Residence No POS/Utilization:

In comparison to the year prior, there is a decrease in No POS of RCRC clients residing at home, indicating an increase in POS authorizations for RCRC clients living at home. All other categories of residence show a decrease in POS authorizations. Utilization has decreased the most in institutions. RCRC has a board policy against placement in institutional settings unless court ordered to do so.

Client Info: Based on Eligibility Diagnosis:

There has been an increased rate of eligibility diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Category 5. There has been an increase in per person expenditure across all eligibility diagnoses except Category 5. Compared to the year prior, utilization rate has increased the greatest in RCRC clients with the diagnosis of ASD.

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

Through analysis of the data and public meeting input, the importance of RCRC continuing to improve service access and equity was recognized. RCRC has been and continues to take steps to implement and 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. RCRC continues to collect and analyze community and client satisfaction, and culturally respectful and accessible 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 to help build the workforce capacity of bi-lingual, bi- cultural staff, through the Service Access and Equity grant.
3. RCRC provides incentives for staff referrals and stipends to hire more bi-lingual/bi-cultural staff.
4. RCRC Bilingual Staff Listening Sessions are held to identify needs to better serve non-English speaking clients and support the intake process.
5. Supporting the location of RCRC staff and service providers in underserved and remote communities, including travel reimbursement and regular presence in our rural communities. (Due to the rural nature of the RCRC service area, it is often difficult for individuals and families to access Regional Center Services).
6. 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.
7. Working with community leaders with the Spanish speaking, Native American, Hmong and Lao communities.
8. 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.
9. Legislative advocacy, including advocating fair rates for vendor staff, to try to improve access and services available in the community (staffing difficulties have delayed and sometimes prevented services)
10. 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.
11. 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 American' and 'Latin' communities.
12. Training provided to RCRC staff and the Vendor community in culturally appropriate practices and services, including: Cultural Competence training provided to all RCRC staff, and Implicit Bias training provided to vendors and all RCRC staff.
13. Trainings provided for clients including: Monthly online trainings hosted and conducted in Spanish, based on community identified needs.
14. Parent support groups, to build leadership and empowerment of community members, including parent groups in Hoopa and extending to the coast, through the Brighter Futures Grant.
15. Continuing to provide services to uphold RCRC's commitment to support individuals to reside in their community.
16. Increasing language accessibility and cultural competency through the Language Access & Cultural Competency Grant, including increasing translation of documents into languages other than English, contracting non-RCRC staff to interpret community meetings, holding regular

community listening sessions, collecting community surveys for ongoing input from the community, and providing outreach to the RCRC multicultural 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