

The ELARC Self Determination Pilot Project 1998-present

ELARC currently manages a Self Determination Project that is separate from the program mandated in Senate Bill 468. This is a closed project that began as a pilot in 1998.

In 1998, the Lanterman Act was amended to reflect California's commitment to examine the Self Determination model by mandating the implementation of pilot projects at select Regional Centers. This was intended to be a two year pilot. ELARC was named in the law to be one of three Regional Centers in the state participating in this pilot program. By law, a local Advisory Committee was jointly appointed by ELARC and Area Board X. The Committee was made up of parents, consumers, and community members. The Committee was charged with the task of reviewing the development and ongoing progress of the local self determination pilot program. The Committee made the final decision regarding the pilot model structure.

The Committee decided that ELARC would identify 32 individuals to participate in the pilot. Efforts were to be made to ensure that the groups were representative of ELARC's ethnic composition and geographic profile. Participants were to be drawn from one of the following four target groups:

- Children age three (3) to fifteen (15) with the diagnosis of autism.
- Children age three (3) to fifteen (15) with high medical needs.
- Adults age twenty-two (22) to thirty-five (35).
- Adults over age thirty-five (35).

In April and May of 1999, information on potential pilot program participation was mailed to all consumers within these above criteria (approximately 2300 individuals.) They were advised to attend an upcoming information session if they had an interest in participation. Additionally, the information sessions were publicized in the ELARC newsletter, lobbies, and flyers were distributed via Service Coordinators. In June of 1999, a series of information sessions were held. All information, both verbal and written, was provided in Mandarin, Cantonese, Spanish and English. After attending the sessions, 162 potential participants indicated an interest. From that pool of 162, 32 individuals were selected to participate, using a random stratified model, in order to allow for both target group and demographic representation. The remaining 130 made up the pilot program waiting list to fill vacancies should they arise.

The Lanterman Act was amended twice to reflect an extension, but no expansion, of the pilot programs. In July of 2005, the Governor approved the implementation of Self Directed Services. At the same time, the Lanterman Act was amended, stating: "Notwithstanding any provision of law, an individual receiving services and supports under the self determination projects established pursuant to Section 4685.5 may elect to continue to receive self determination services within his or her current scope and existing parameters. Participation in a self determination project pursuant to section 4685.5 may only be terminated upon a participant's voluntary election and qualifications to receive services under another delivery system." (WIC 4685.7) At that point, the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) advised the pilot Regional Centers that the Self Determination pilot projects were no longer pilots and would now run as a separate program. Individuals participating in the program will be able to continue participation but there will no longer be placement into the program from traditional services. Should an individual leave the program, no vacancy will be created. The program is closed to growth and the existing waiting list from 1999 would no longer be in effect.