

**Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center (ELARC)  
Fiscal Year 2017/18  
Purchase of Services (POS) Data Report  
May 31, 2019**

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## I Background

As of June 27, 2012, the Lanterman Act was amended requiring the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and Regional Centers to annually collaborate in compiling data on Purchase of Services (POS). POS Data Report is based on approved authorizations, actual POS expenditures and the utilization rate of authorized services for all consumers. The data is displayed by consumer age, ethnicity, primary language and diagnosis. Additionally, the data includes the total number of open/active consumers who received POS funding and also consumers that did not have POS expenditures for the reporting fiscal year.

The POS Data Report is to be posted on the Regional Center website by December 31<sup>st</sup>. Regional Centers are required to conduct community meeting(s) no later than March 31<sup>st</sup> to present and discuss the data report with community stakeholders. By May 31<sup>st</sup> Regional Centers are to submit a written report to DDS that addresses the requirements of Welfare & Institutions Code (WIC) Section 4519.5 on attendance, meeting notes, issues identified in the data and recommendations to promote equity and reduce disparities in POS for the various ethnic groups served by each regional center.

## II ELARC Demographics

ELARC serves a highly diverse population.

The top three ethnic groups served by ELARC are: Hispanic, Asian and White. The following figures represent the ethnic breakdown for all consumers served by ELARC in Fiscal Year 2018-19.

	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Consumers</b>	<b>%</b>
(1)	Hispanic	9,391	70.5
(2)	Asian	1,692	12.7
(3)	White	1,293	9.7
(4)	Other	740	5.6
(5)	African-American	197	1.5
	Total Consumers:	13,327	100%

The two predominant ethnicities served by ELARC are Hispanic and Asians. Collectively these two ethnic groups represent 83% of all consumers served by ELARC. Such diverse demographics demands that ELARC's personnel reflect the linguistic and cultural composition of the community it serves. The following statistics profiles a work force that mirrors and

compliments the community it serves as a component of promoting equity and reducing disparities.

**Service Coordinators = 170**

Hispanic	82%
*Asian	15%

\* Cantonese/Mandarin/other Chinese Dialects/Korean/Vietnamese

**Management = 27**

Hispanic	74%
Asian	22%

**All Staff = 282**

Hispanic	82%
Asian	14.0%

**III Attendance**

ELARC hosted three public meetings. In order to maximize attendance ELARC partnered with two prominent and long established parent groups located in ELARC’s service area: Fiesta Educativa and Chinese Parent Association for the Disabled (CPAD). Both organizations represent the two largest ethnic groups served by ELARC: Hispanic (70.7%) and Asian (13.3%). As a host the parent group organizations have the ability to draw from their established membership and additionally to outreach to other parents/consumers to promote attendance and participation with an effective parent-to-parent approach.

Notification of public meetings was promulgated by various methods which included:

- ✓ Posting on ELARC website, Facebook, Twitter
- ✓ Posted flyers at ELARC’s headquarter lobby and at satellite office in Whittier
- ✓ Distributed notices to community partners including:
  - Disability Rights California
  - State Council on Developmental Disabilities, Los Angeles Office
  - Fiesta Educativa
  - Chinese Parent Association

- UVAS, Parent Group
- PICI, Parent Group
- Greater Long Beach/Whittier Autism Society
- Family Resource Center
- Vendor Advisory Committee
- Consumer Advisory Committee

Meeting announcements were translated into Spanish and Chinese for distribution and posting.

The three public meetings were conducted as follows:

(1) March 23, 2019

- Meeting was hosted by the Chinese Parent Association (CPAD) and held at the Asian Youth Center in the City of San Gabriel where the parent group conducts their regularly scheduled meetings.
- Interpretation services were provided: Mandarin, Cantonese and Vietnamese.
- Total Attendance: 25

(2) March 25, 2019

- Meeting was hosted by Fiesta Educativa, an organization offering training and support to Hispanic families throughout the State. Meeting was held at the Mexican American Opportunity Foundation (MAOF).
- Spanish interpretation services were provided.
- Total attendance: 25

(3) March 26, 2019

- Meeting held at ELARC's Main Office in Alhambra
- Interpretation services arranged but not utilized
- Total attendance: 6

Total attendance for the three meetings was 56 participants.

#### **IV Meeting Notes (Attachment #1) & Plan to Address Disparities (Attachment 2)**

Included are the raw notes taken at each meeting a summary of comments and suggestions have been categorized into three major themes a raised by participants after reviewing the POS data at the community meetings. The raw notes and summary are included as "Attachment 1".

The notes focus on three general themes:

- (1) Vendored services
- (2) Reduced caseload/Purchase of Services (POS) Equity Projects
- (3) Communication/information

The summary notes reflects comments, suggestions and specific questions raised by the audience and the related response to each inquiry. General comments on each of the theme areas included:

**Vendored Services:**

- concerns over the quality of services by providers and the qualifications of staff
- desire for greater employment opportunities for consumers
- need to expand support and services for transition age (adult) consumers
- transition planning meetings to begin at much earlier stage to allow for sufficient exploration and evaluation of potential resources
- desire for material, written information on available services for transition age Consumers
- increase vendor accountability
- inquiry as to the specific standards for determining and authorizing respite services
- can respite services be offered in the community instead of the home-setting

**POS Equity Projects:**

- interest in how families/consumers were selected for the reduced caseload project
- inquiry as to types of services being received by participants in the specialized caseload project
- inquiry as to the low number of cases in project (200) and whether project can be expanded
- interest in pre and post survey questionnaire responses and how ELARC collects responses
- discussion on project efforts to impact new cases entering the regional center system at the initial stage of intake and lessons learned.

**Communication/Information:**

- desire to have access to hard copies of POS guidelines, as families/consumers have limited access to computer and internet

- importance of having service coordinators attend the Individual Educational Plans (IEP) at the public schools
- improve communication and contact between service coordinators and consumers/families
- changes to previous respite cap policy discussed, interest in accessing information on policy change
- inquiry as to length of time it takes to approve regional center funded services
- concerns over length of time in receiving return calls from service coordinators
- intake process option of registering online not effective due to lack of computer access, inquired as to call-in registration and need to improve call back time

ELARC's efforts to address the above issues as raised at the community meetings are addressed in "Attachment 2" using the three general categories:

- (1) Vendored Services
- (2) Reduced Caseload Ratio/POS Equity Projects
- (3) Communication/Information

Additionally, please note the various activities undertaken by ELARC as outlined on Section VI starting on page 10 of this report. In summary there are five focus areas that address disparities based on stakeholder meetings and POS Report Data:

- (1) Reduced caseload ratio project
- (2) Outreach/orientation
- (3) Ongoing training of parents
- (4) Translation issues
- (5) Training Material

Specific details on these five focus areas are included starting on page 10 through 15 of this report.

## **V Community Presentations (Attachment 3: PowerPoint)**

The meeting format for all three community presentations included two components. First a formal panel presentation on specific areas of the POS Data Report, followed by an open

discussion with the audience to obtain their perspective on material presented and related recommendations.

The formal presentation consisted of:

- An overview and background on the process and reasons for compiling POS data.
- Review of ELARC projects to ameliorate POS inequities amongst the various ethnic groups over the last fiscal year.
- An update on ABX2-1 funded projects being implemented by ELARC to reduce POS disparities.
- Audience directed questions/comments to ELARC panel presenters, for formal responses and content of discussion is included under Section “IV Meeting Notes” of this report.
- Some parents opted to offer formal testimonials that were prepared in advance.

Community presentations focused on the per capita differences amongst the three largest ethnic groups in ELARC’s service area: Hispanic, Asian and White. A comparison of the last two fiscal years total annual expenditures and authorization of services results in a miniscule increase for the Hispanic population and a slight decrease for Asian consumers. The White population continues to surpass POS growth at a significantly greater rate than the Asian and Hispanic consumers.

**Per Capita (PC) Authorizations  
For All Ages  
By Fiscal Year (FY)  
Comparison**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>PC FY 2017-'18</b>	<b>PC 2016/'17</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>\$14,565</b>	<b>\$14,432</b>	<b>+ 133</b>
<b>Asian</b>	<b>\$16,280</b>	<b>\$16,559</b>	<b>- 279</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>\$38,477</b>	<b>\$38,167</b>	<b>+ 310</b>

A major factor impacting the above changes in the per capita authorizations for Hispanic and Asian population is a shift from regional center funded services to Medi-Cal funding which began in FY 2015-'16 and continues to present time. Since this change in funding policy ELARC has transferred approximately 350+ cases to Medi-Cal funding for behavioral services resulting in approximately a \$3.5 million POS funding transfer to Medi-Cal. The populations affected by this change is first Hispanics and secondly the Asian population. The final result is a reduction to the average POS costs for these ethnic groups which is ultimately reflected in the above table

comparing per capita authorizations from FY 2016-'17 to FY 2017-'18. California's Medi-Cal Managed Care health plans (MCP's) assumed the responsibility for providing and funding behavioral health treatment ((BHT) services for children and adolescents diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in FY 2015-'16. Since then the criteria for Medi-Cal funded Behavioral Treatment (BHT) has been expanded to include children under 21, who do not have autism. Ultimately, this funding transfer from regional center to Medi-Cal, has once again impacted the POS expenditure averages in our "POS Data" analysis

There are other external factors such as the utilization of residential placement as a service option which significantly impacts the POS average authorizations for the various ethnic groups. This critical factor will be addressed in more detail in another section of this report.

An additional point to consider is that "contracted services" such as transportation and supported employment group services are not captured as part of the POS expenditure data. For ELARC the total payments made for contracted POS services in FY 17-'18 was \$4,420,474. As this significant expenditure cannot be captured based on individual consumers and their ethnic background, it is uncertain what impact and difference it would have on the average per capita POS expenditures.

The next table illustrates a comparison of the per capita growth, since the inception of the POS data report in Fiscal Year 2011-'12. These figures exhibit an overall growth in authorizations for ELARC's Hispanic and Asian population over a seven-year period, Fiscal Year 2011-'12 to 2017-'18. Overall the per capita cost comparison shows a consistent increase in POS authorizations over a seven year span for all ages in the three primary ethnic groups served by ELARC.

### **Capita Authorization Comparison**

#### **Over a Seven Year Period**

#### **Fiscal Year (FY) 2011-'12 to FY 2017-'18**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>FY 2011-'12</b>	<b>FY 2017-'18</b>	<b>% Difference</b>
<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>\$12,922</b>	<b>\$14,565</b>	<b>12.7%</b>
<b>Asian</b>	<b>\$14,848</b>	<b>\$16,280</b>	<b>9.64%</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>\$28,639</b>	<b>\$38,477</b>	<b>34.24%</b>

Despite the above noted modest increases in POS authorization for the Hispanic and Asian groups, ranging over a seven year span, the White population continues to have an appreciable gain in the per capita funding over other ethnic groups.



The following table displays the differences in the per capita authorizations for Fiscal Year 2017-'18.

**Per Capita (PC) Authorizations Comparison  
Fiscal Year (FY) 2017-'18**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>PCA</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>\$38,477</b>	<b>+ \$23,912*</b>
<b>Asian</b>	<b>\$16,280</b>	<b>- \$22,197**</b>
<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>\$14,565</b>	<b>- \$23,821**</b>

\* Compared to Lowest PC authorization

\*\* Compared to Highest PC Authorization

The primary contributing factor for this sizeable authorization variation in the above table is the continuing higher utilization of residential services by the White ethnic group. Residential services, in its various categories, constitutes the most costly of all regional center funded services. The end-result is a substantial disparity in the per capita authorization averages among the three ethnic groups as noted in the above figures. The following statistics reflect the residential placement trends for ELARC.

**Residence Type Comparison  
By Ethnicity  
Fiscal Year 2016-'17**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Total Consumers</b>	<b>Living with Family # 1%</b>	<b>Residential Placement #</b>
<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>9,391</b>	<b>8,653/92%</b>	<b>738</b>
<b>Asian</b>	<b>1,692</b>	<b>1,566/93%</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>1,293</b>	<b>865/67%</b>	<b>428</b>

Clearly, the above differences in the utilization of residential services has a vast impact on the per capita funding for the three ethnic groups. Therefore, it is essential to offset residential costs to reach a more precise POS comparison for ELARC consumers of all ages that are living at home. The following table isolates residential costs and compares POS funding for consumers, of all ages who are living at home.

**Per Capita Authorization (PCA)  
For All Ages Living at Home  
By Ethnicity  
Fiscal Year 2017 – ‘18**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Consumers</b>	<b>PCA</b>	<b>\$ Difference</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>865</b>	<b>\$15,458</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Asian</b>	<b>1,566</b>	<b>\$11,764</b>	<b>- \$3,694*</b>
<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>8,653</b>	<b>\$10,362</b>	<b>- \$5,096*</b>

\* Compared to “White” PCA

The glaring difference in PCA for individuals living at home can be contrasted with the tables on page 8 of this report, which includes residential costs. The PCA for the White population changes from \$38,477 to \$15,458, a difference of \$23,019. This comparison results in narrowing the POS gap between the White population and Hispanics to \$5,096 and for the Asian population to \$3,694 as compared to astronomical gap noted on the table on page 8 which does not factor out residential expenses.

This comparative analysis yields a more reliable comparison of the per capita authorization averages. There is an overwhelming percentage of Hispanics and Asian consumers that are living with their families, at a rate of 92% and 93% respectively, in contrast to 67% of the White population. With this comparison, which again removes residential costs, the stark gap in POS expenditures substantially narrows.

Admittedly, despite the POS expenditure adjustment for residential costs there remains a POS expenditure variance for Hispanic and Asian consumers living at home, as shown by above table, but dramatically reducing the range of funding differences. It is these levels of discrepancies in funding which will be the intense focus of ELARC efforts, through its various projects, to curtail the gap in POS funding for individuals living at home.

The following section of this report highlights specific efforts and activities being undertaken by ELARC and related general recommendations to achieve funding parity amongst the various ethnic groups.

## **VI Current Projects & Recommendations**

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2016-’17 Assembly Bill (AB) X2-1 went into effect authorizing the allocation of \$11 million towards the funding of local projects which would promote equity and reduce disparities. ELARC has participated in all of the three funding cycles to date. These projects have proven to be valuable tools in ELARC’s effort to understand the barriers causing disparity and how to promote funding parity. The goal, over the long-term, is that these activities will

yield valuable information which can result in far-reaching outcomes in the reduction of purchase of services (POS) disparities.

The following projects highlight ELARC's efforts in promoting POS parity.

(1) **Reduced Caseload Ratio**

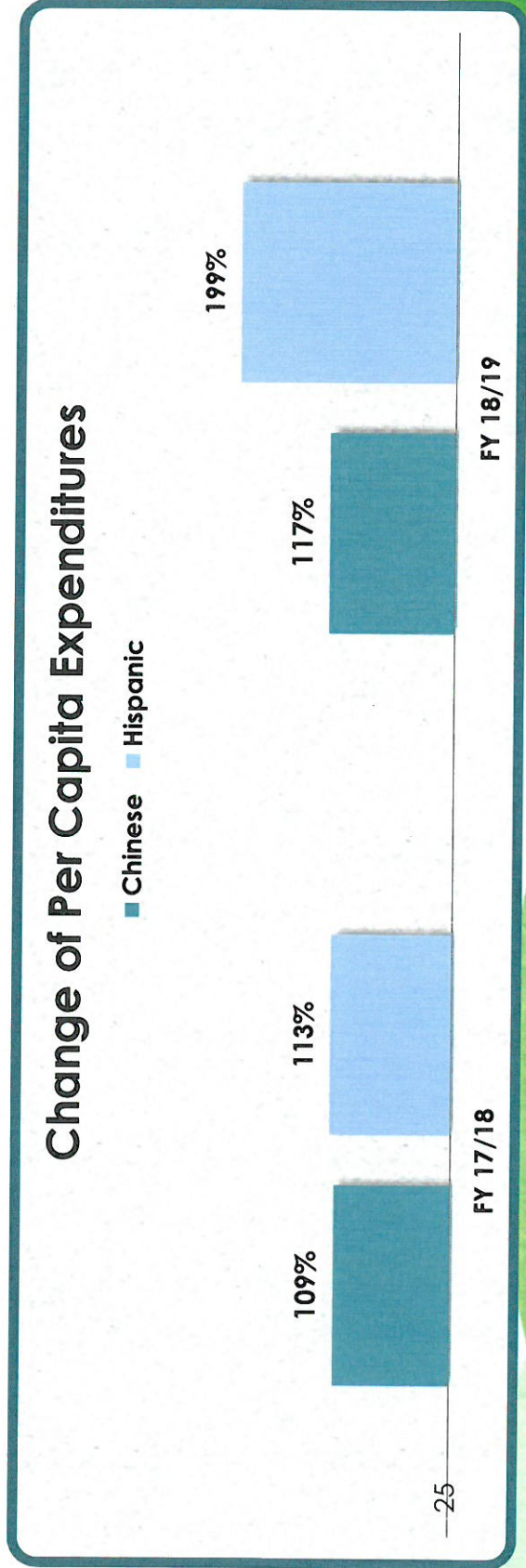
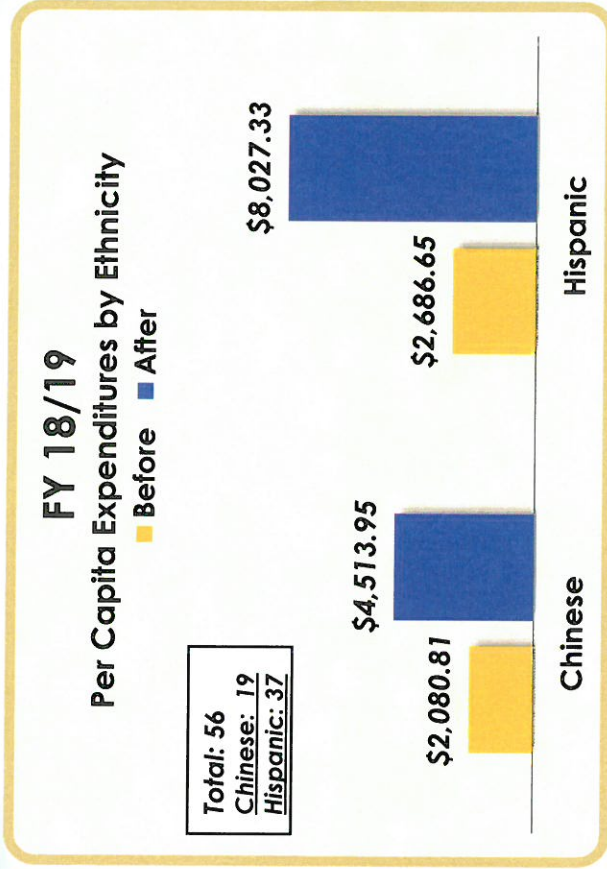
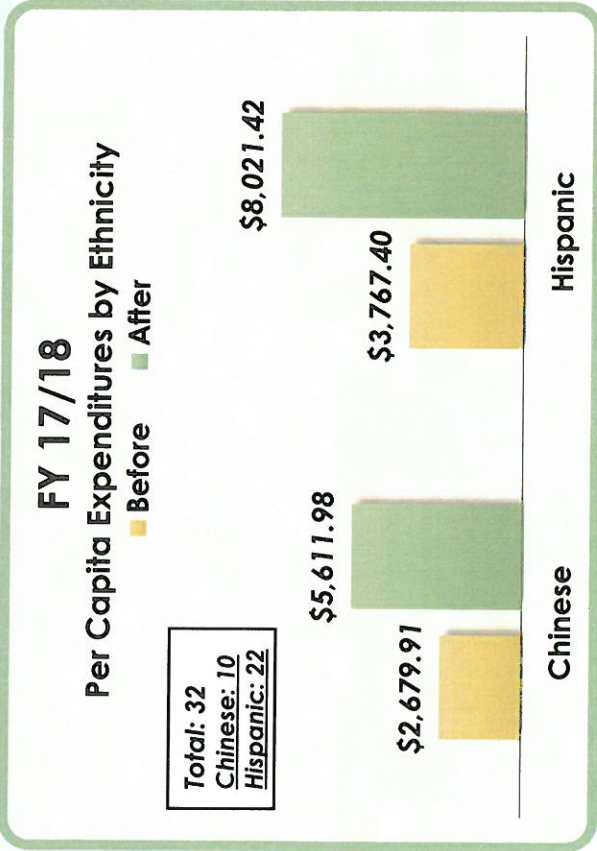
Identify 200 cases of Hispanic and Asian consumers with the lowest per capita funding, including cases with no purchase of services. Cases are assigned to a service coordinator at a substantially reduced caseload ratio of 1:40, current mandated average is 1:66, in order to allow for a concentrated approach to supporting consumers/families. Additionally two 'Person-Centered Practices Coordinator' (PCPC) positions (Hispanic and Asian) have been established to provide intense guidance and training not only to the specialized caseload of 200 but to extend their support to service coordinators throughout the agency with caseloads in the lower per capita averages. Moreover, the focus of their activities has been extended to newly registered consumers (Hispanic and Asian) to assist in the transition from intake to ongoing service coordination. This is achieved through individual and group training meant to assist new consumers/families on how to navigate a complex system and prepare for the initial Individual Program Plan (IPP) meeting. The goal is that through these preliminary interventions families will develop a solid foundation to guide them in the initial IPP and subsequent IPP's.

The following page displays various graphs showing the number of consumers that have graduated from the reduced caseload project in Fiscal Year (FY) 2017-'18 and 2018-'19 and the related changes in per capita expenditures pre and post project participation.

The graph on page 12 quantifies the changes in POS expenditures for two fiscal years. In FY 2017-'18, thirty-two (32) consumers graduated from the enhanced service coordination project (1:40 ratio) with astonishing results: Hispanic POS expenditures increased by 113% and 109% for Asian participants. In FY 2018-'19 the pattern of growth is not only sustained but it surpasses the previous year gains. In FY 2018-'19 Hispanic POS expenditures grew by a staggering 199% and 117% for Asian participants. It is evident that the smaller caseload addressed many of the points families have raised at the community meetings such as:

- Intense assistance from a service coordinator to "navigate a complex" system.
- Guidance and support on the use of available generic resources that can augment regional center funded services.
- The ability to meet with greater frequency to establish trust and confidence.
- In-depth discussions and explanations on the array of multiple services offered by the regional center system.
- Allowing for a more intense IPP process with thorough explanation of service options.
- The use and application of person-centered practices that are sensitive to cultural values and differences.

# Enhanced Service Coordination



Worthy of noting is that the enhanced caseload ratio project in FY 2018-'19 one of the cases from the Asian group required residential placement and was thus transitioned from the project. The graph figures on page 12 do not reflect this change because it skews the results, but it serves to illustrate the position noted in a previous section of this report which is that residential costs must be isolated to obtain a true measure of the POS variances among the various ethnic groups. The telling result in FY 2018-'19 is that as a result of this singular placement the per capita expenditure increase for the Asian caseload increased by 311% versus the 117% increase when the residential costs are included.

## **(2) Outreach/Orientation**

Partnership with two prominent parent run organizations, Fiesta Educativa and Chinese Parent Association (CPAD) to provide basic orientations in languages other than English to newly eligible families/consumers. The intent is to increase awareness and understanding of regional center services and to have families establish an on-going and culturally sensitive link of support in their local community.

Additionally, ELARC partnered with the Chinatown Service Center and Proyecto Pastoral to train their staff on regional center services so their case managers and system navigators can accurately describe the mission and the work of the regional centers and refer families for services. ELARC staff participated in approximately three community education events per month.

Beyond these efforts, the Cultural Specialist and the Person Centered Practices Coordinators (PCPC's) have worked with the community to identify nearly fifty community based resources within the neighborhoods served by ELARC.

- This information is being compiled into an electronic report to which service coordinators have access. The resources will be GPS mapped so Service Coordinators can access it on personal iPads during home visits which will become printable listing that parents can access on website.
- These sites are being provided with information regarding regional center services to share with those they serve.

## **(3) Ongoing Training of Parents:**

The ABX 2-1 funds are also being used for funding two "Person Centered Practice Coordinators" (PCPC's) who work with families during the eligibility process offering extensive support to families (Hispanic/Asian) as they transition to a new service coordinator and prepare for the initial IPP meeting. Of additional benefit is that the PCPC's have adopted Person Centered Practices (PCP) tools and forms that have been translated into Spanish and Chinese and customized to make them more culturally relevant. Furthermore the two PCPC's have also provided presentations on their work at the Southern California Gathering of Person Centered Practices.

ELARC hosted a vast number of training sessions covering an array of topics for the Hispanic and Asian community. The following list highlights the varied training opportunities offered by ELARC to its community.

- “Understanding Regional Center” (URC), curriculum focuses on providing families with an overview of the regional center system, from the foundation of the Lanterman Act, through understanding diagnosis, person centered planning, services and supports, and how to work in partnership with your service coordinator. The course is offered in four sessions. The curriculum has been translated into languages other than English.
- 2018/1019: Spanish language URC presented in Fall 2018 and the English/Chinese language URC held in Winter 2018/2019.
- URC is held as the “gateway” to Partners in Community Inclusion (PICI).
- PICI is a series for parents to develop a vision for their child and the needed tools and supports for inclusion in their communities.
  - ✓ Spanish sessions held in 2018.
  - ✓ English/Chinese sessions held in 2018. .
- The Person Centered Practices Coordinators have been shadowing the PICI trainer with the intent of offering PICI trainings in languages other than English in the future. The PCPCs have also provided person centered practices orientations to parents in Spanish and English.
- ELARC contracted with Fiesta Educativa and the Chinese Parents Association for the Disabled (CPAD) to provide parent orientation sessions to ELARC families in their native languages. ELARC also partnered with these organizations and our Family Resource Center to provide orientations for parents of children under 3.
- Self-Determination Program (SDP) informational sessions offered with interpretation in Spanish and Cantonese.

#### **(4) Translation:**

In partnership with the Cultural Specialist, the PCPCs have worked with parent groups to develop a “word bank” of translated common regional center terms to provide to professional translation agencies to insure, understandability, consistency, and quality in translation services. In addition, a review committee of volunteer parents has been established to peruse translated material and offer feedback on accuracy of translation prior to its release.

## **(5) Training Material**

Expand the variety of accurate, understandable and useful tools for families and individuals to better comprehend the regional center and services offered. Access to information about services will reduce barriers. The plan is to develop and translate selected materials specific to the ELARC community, as well as working collaboratively with regional centers on the development of easy-to-understand, informative publications in multiple languages. Topics being explored includes information on services available by age, generic resources and information on transitions.

## **Recommendations**

- (1) Restoration of suspended services, namely social recreation and camp. These reductions went into effect as a temporary measure to contend with budgetary challenges dating back to 2009. This policy change has disproportionately affected Hispanic and Asian consumers at ELARC. These are critical support services for a population that utilizes residential services at very low levels.
- (2) Reinstate start-up fund grants for the development of new models of service delivery that are responsive to linguistic and cultural needs.
- (3) Reassess the current format of the fiscal year "POS Data" report in an effort to streamline its content and create a more "user friendly" display for families/consumers. Additionally, the report should clearly distinguish between overall POS average expenditures and POS averages for consumers living at home with their families, which for ELARC is the vast majority of its constituency.
- (4) Effort to account for services received by consumers through another source of funding which serves to supplement regional center services.
  - Shift in funding from regional center to another entity (i.e.) medical Behavioral Health Treatment (BHT)
  - Contracted services paid by regional centers which are not consumer specific and is not captured in "POS Data" report
  - Generic services

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