

Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center (ELARC)
Fiscal Year 2019/20
Purchase of Services (POS) Data Report
August 31, 2021

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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.

Due to COVID-19 the Department of Developmental Services issued a waiver to limit the risk of exposure. The requirement of WIC section 4519.5(e) that regional centers hold public meetings within three months of compiling purchase of service disparities data with the Department, and the requirements of WIC section 4519.5(f) and the Department's contracts with regional centers' requiring submission of a report to the Department regarding the meetings and recommendations by May 31, 2021 were waived. Regional centers shall hold their public meetings by June 30, 2021 and submit associated reports that address 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 to the Department by August 31, 2021.

II ELARC Demographics

ELARC serves a 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 2019/20. It is important to note that the numbers below are gathered from the POS Data Report dated December 2020. There are slight differences in the numbers reported in the Power Point for the community meeting as those numbers were gathered in May 2021 in preparation for the June 01, 2021 meeting.

	Ethnicity	Consumers	%
(1)	Hispanic	9,799	70.0
(2)	Asian	1,815	13.0
(3)	White	1,322	9.4
(4)	African- American	193	1.4
(5)	Other	853	6.1
	Total Consumers:	14,004	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 demand that ELARC’s personnel reflect the linguistic and cultural composition of the community it serves. The following statistics, gathered in May 2021, profiles a work force that mirrors and compliments the community it serves as a component of promoting equity and reducing disparities.

Service Coordinators = 181

Hispanic	80%
*Asian	13%

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

Management = 31

Hispanic	74%
Asian	10%

All Staff = 292

Hispanic	82%
Asian	13%

III Attendance

ELARC hosted one virtual public meeting. 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%) and Asian (13%). Both 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:

- T Posting on ELARC website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
- T Distributed notices to community partners including:
 - Disability Rights California

- State Council on Developmental Disabilities, Los Angeles Office
- Fiesta Educativa
- Chinese Parent Association for the Disabled (CPAD)
- PICI, Parent Group
- Easter Los Angeles Family Resource Center
- Vendor Advisory Committee
- Consumer Advisory Committee

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

The public meeting was conducted as follows:

(1) June 01, 2021

- Meeting was held via zoom
- Interpretation services were provided: Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese & Vietnamese
- Total Attendance: 62

IV Meeting Notes (Attachment #1) & Plan to promote equity and reduce disparity

Included are the raw notes taken at the meeting; a summary of comments and suggestions have been categorized into one major theme as raised by participants. The raw notes are included as "Attachment 1". The notes focus on one general theme:

(1) POS Data Report questions/ Reduced Caseload Project inquiries

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

- Inquiry about when the Reduced Caseload Project started and the criteria for choosing current and future participants.
- Inquiry about how ELARC can apply lessons learned in the Project more broadly and how would the findings benefit all Consumers served to eliminate existing disparity.
- Interest expressed in hearing POS Data information details about other ethnic groups i.e. African-Americans & Native Americans, besides the Hispanic, Asian and White groups reported on.
- Recommendation that ELARC should focus on POS Data expenditures from 3-22 age

group.

- Concern expressed about communication with the Spanish speaking community. It was noted that fliers are not always translated and information sessions that are done virtually do not always offer translation in the preferred language. Verbal translation is also not always reliable. It was also expressed that ELARC's website is not necessarily parent friendly.
- Concerns noted about what to do when assigned Service Coordinator is not responsive to needs of the Consumer.

Additionally, please note the various activities undertaken by ELARC as outlined on Section VI starting on page 9 of this report. In summary there are five focus areas that promote equity and address disparity based on stakeholder meetings and POS Report Data:

- (1) Reduced Caseload Project
- (2) Outreach
- (3) Ongoing training of parents
- (4) Translation Support
- (5) Training Material

Specific details on these five focus areas are included starting on page 9 through 13 of this report.

V Community Presentations (Attachment 2: Flyer; Attachment 3: PowerPoint)

The format for the community meeting included a formal panel presentation on specific areas of the POS Data Report and included presentations by two Enhanced Service Coordinators (ESCs). The ESC presentations were included in response to feedback received from community members who expressed interest in gaining a better understanding about the ESC's experience working in the Reduced Caseload Project. The presentation encouraged open discussion with the audience to obtain their perspective on material presented and their recommendations.

The formal presentation consisted of:

- An overview and background on the process and reasons for compiling POS data.
- Review of ELARC projects as funded by ABX2-1 to ameliorate POS disparities amongst the various ethnic groups over the last fiscal year.
- Audience directed questions/comments to ELARC panel presenters, formal responses and content of discussion is included under Section "IV Meeting Notes" of this report.

The community presentation 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 authorized services results in an increase for both the Hispanic and Asian population. The White population continues to surpass POS growth at a significantly greater rate than the Asian and Hispanic population.

**Total Annual Expenditures
and Authorized Services by
Ethnicity or Race
By Fiscal Year (FY)
Comparison**

Ethnicity	PC FY 2019-20	PC FY 2018-19	Difference
Hispanic	\$17,489	\$15,270	+ 2,219
Asian	\$19,403	\$17,284	+ 2,119
White	\$44,839	\$40,474	+ 4,365

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. The populations affected by this change is first Hispanics and secondly the Asian population. California’s Medi-Cal Managed Care health plans (MCPs) 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 19-20 was \$6,145,657.78. 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 for the three ethnicities.

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 an eight year period, Fiscal Year 2011-12 to 2019-20. Overall the per capita cost comparison shows a consistent increase in POS authorizations over an eight year span for all ages in the three primary ethnic groups served by ELARC.

**Total Annual Per Capita
Authorizations Comparison by
Ethnicity Over an Eight Year
Period
FY 2011-12 to FY 2019-20**

Ethnicity	FY 2011-12	FY 2019-20	% Difference
Hispanic	\$12,922	\$17,489	35.34%
Asian	\$14,848	\$19,403	30.68%
White	\$28,639	\$44,839	56.57%

Despite the above noted increases in POS authorization for the Hispanic and Asian groups, ranging over an eight 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 (FY) 2019-20.

**Total Annual Per Capita Authorizations
Comparison by FY 2019-20**

Ethnicity	PCA	Difference
White	\$44,839	+ \$27,350*
Asian	\$19,403	- \$25,436**
Hispanic	\$17,489	- \$27,350**

* 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, constitute the most costly of all regional center funded services. The end-result is a substantial disparity in the annual 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
FY 2019-20**

Ethnicity	Total Consumers	Living with Family # /%	Residential Placement #
Hispanic	9,799	9,085/93%	299
Asian	1,815	1,686/93%	90
White	1,322	899/68%	224

Clearly, the above differences in the utilization of residential services have 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.

**Total Annual Per Capita
Authorizations for All Ages
Residency Type: Home
By Ethnicity
FY 2019-20**

Ethnicity	Consumers	PCA	\$ Difference
White	899	\$16,848	0
Asian	1,686	\$13,858	- \$2,990*
Hispanic	9,085	\$12,060	- \$4,788*

* Compared to "White" PCA

The glaring difference in PCA for individuals living at home can be contrasted with the tables on page 7 of this report, which includes residential costs. The PCA for the White population

changes from \$44,839 to \$16,848 a difference of \$27,991. This comparison results in narrowing the POS gap between the White population and Hispanics to \$4,788 and for the Asian population to \$2,990 as compared to astronomical gap noted on the table on page 7 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 93% and 93% respectively, in contrast to 68% 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 equity 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 four 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 Service (POS) disparities.

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

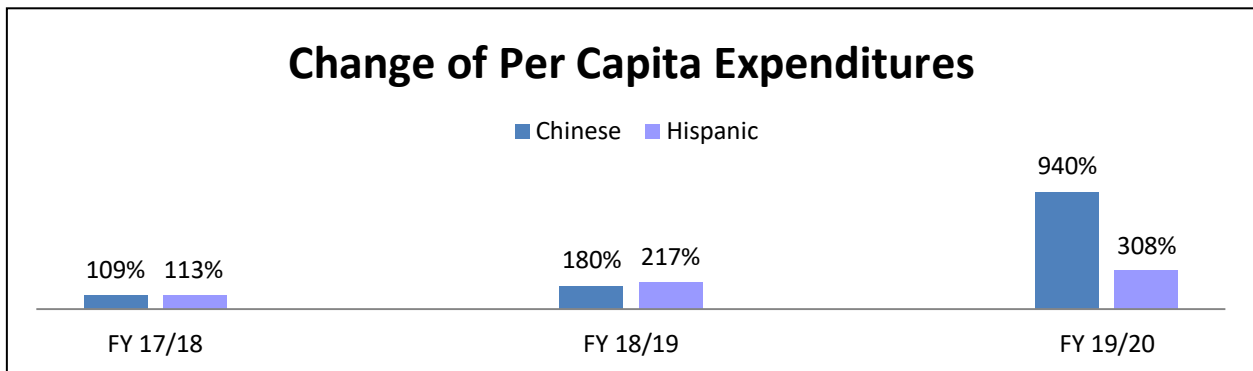
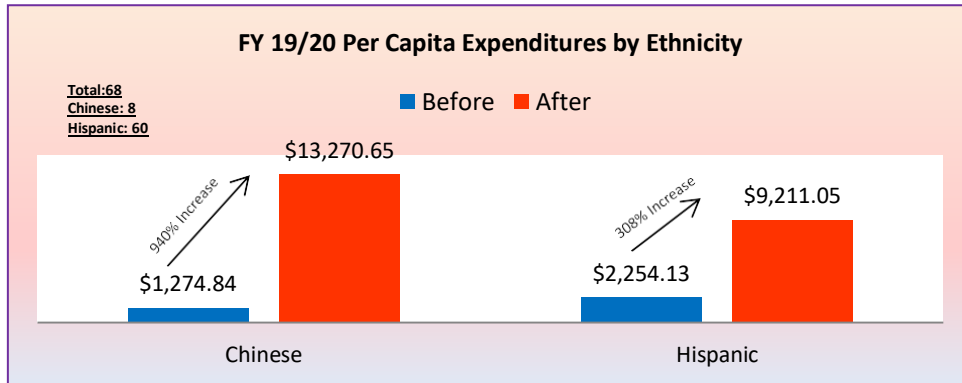
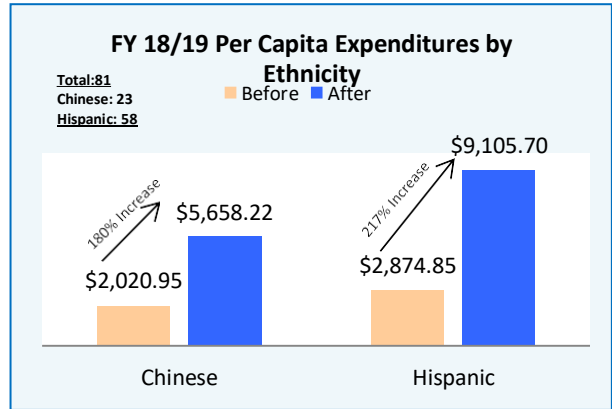
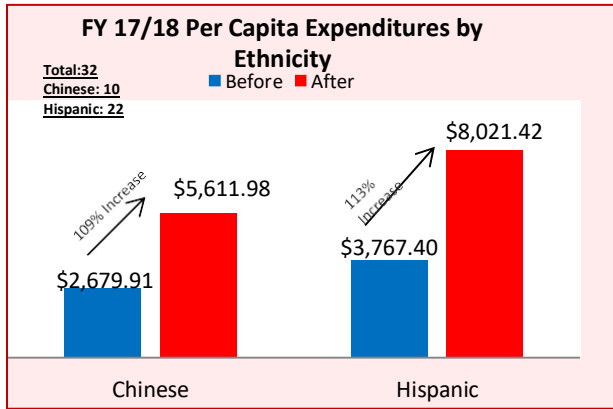
(1) Reduced Caseload Project

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 an Enhanced 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 Coordinators (PCPCs)/Enhanced Service Coordinator 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. The goal is that through these interventions Service Coordinators will increase their competency in

utilizing person centered practices during their Individual Program Planning (IPP) meetings. 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, 2018-19 and 2019-20, and the related changes in per capita expenditures pre and post project participation.

The graph on page 11 quantifies the changes in POS expenditures for three fiscal years. In FY 2017-18 thirty-two (32) consumers graduated from the Reduced Caseload 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 180% and 217% for Asian participants. Once again in FY 2019-20 we continue to see a pattern of growth surpassing the previous year. In FY 2019-20 the Asian Population POS expenditures grew by a staggering 940% and 308% for Hispanic participants. It is evident that the smaller caseload addresses 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 is sensitive to cultural values and differences.



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 11 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 180% increase when the residential costs are excluded.

(2) Outreach

ELARC continues their Partnership with two prominent parent run organizations, Fiesta Educativa and Chinese Parent Association (CPAD) in order to provide families with resources and to have families establish an on-going and culturally sensitive link of support in their local community.

Additionally, the Cultural Specialist and the Person Centered Practices Coordinators (PCPCs) have worked with the community to identify community based resources within the neighborhoods served by ELARC. These resources are shared with the Service Coordination body so that they may share with Consumers/families. Additionally, they meet with all of the Community Based Organizations (CBOs) that receive Access & Equity Grant funding from the Department. The intent is to establish collaborative relationships and share information and resources that can be utilized to better serve the individuals served.

(3) Ongoing Training of Parents:

The ABX 2-1 funds are also being used for funding two “Person Centered Practice Coordinators” (PCPCs) who have worked with families during the eligibility process offering extensive support to families (Hispanic/Asian) as they transition to a Service Coordinator and prepare for the initial IPP meeting. Of additional benefit is that the PCPCs 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 PCPCs have also provided presentations on their work at the Southern California Gathering of Person Centered Practices.

ELARC has hosted a vast number of training sessions covering an array of topics for the Hispanic and Asian community. This past year as we all grappled with the COVID 19 pandemic no in person trainings were held. The following list highlights the varied training opportunities that have been 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 curriculum has been

translated into languages other than English.

- 2018/2019: Spanish language URC presented in Fall 2018 and the English/Chinese language URC held in Winter 2018/2019.
- The Person Centered Practices Coordinators have started to do outreach to the community to provide information about the Self –Determination program. This outreach effort is being accomplished in English, 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. The “word bank” continues to be updated with new commonly used terms. In addition, a translation committee of volunteer parents has been established to peruse translated material and offer feedback on accuracy of translation prior to its release. ELARC also translated selected materials specific to ELARC community as well worked with other Regional Centers to develop and translate easy-to-understand, informative publications in multiple languages.

(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. In addition ELARC also held training on Genetic resources such as IHSS and Medi-Cal by subject matter experts.

Recommendations

- (1) With the restoration of suspended services, namely social recreation and camp, it is anticipated the POS expenditures may increase for the Hispanic and Asian population. The policy change which suspended the funding of recreational services and which went into effect in 2009 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