

Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center (ELARC)

Fiscal Year 2020/21

Purchase of Services (POS) Data Report

May 31, 2022

- I. Background**
- II. ELARC Demographics**
- III. Attendance**
- IV. Meeting Notes & Recommendations**
- V. Community Presentations & Issues Identified**
- VI. Project Updates**
- VII. Plan to Continue to Promote Equity**

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 Reports is to be posted on the Regional Center website by December 31st Regional Centers are required to conduct community meeting(s) no later than March 31st to present and discuss the data report with community stakeholders. By May 31st 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 diverse population. The three predominant 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 2020/21. It is important to note that the numbers below are gathered from the POS Data Report dated December 2021.

	Ethnicity	Consumers	%
(1)	Hispanic	9,983	69.7
(2)	Asian	1,844	12.9
(3)	White	1,341	9.4
(4)	African- American	211	1.5
(5)	Other	936	6.5
	Total Consumers:	14,315	100%

The two predominant ethnicities served by ELARC are Hispanic and Asians. Collectively these two ethnic groups represent about 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 December 2021, profiles a work force that mirrors and compliments the community it serves as a component of promoting

equity and reducing disparities.

Service Coordinators = 188

Hispanic	80%
*Asian	14%

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

Management = 32

Hispanic	75%
Asian	9%

All Staff = 303

Hispanic	81%
Asian	15%

III Attendance

ELARC hosted one virtual public meeting. In order to maximize attendance ELARC personally invited via both phone and email to the following Community Based Organizations (CBOs): Being Built Together, Vietnamese Parents With Disabled Children Association (VPDCA), NorCal Services for Deaf & Hard of Hearing, USC UCEDD at CHLA, CA Hands & Voices, CHLA Parent Navigator Project, California Tribal Families Coalition, Korean American Special Education (KASEC), So'oh-Shinálí Sister Project (SSSP), Chinese Parent Association for the Disabled (CPAD), and Fiesta Educativa. In regards to CPAD and Fiesta Educativa, they represent the two predominant 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:

- ✓ Posting on ELARC website
- ✓ Mass email notifications via E-Notifications system
- ✓ Distributed notices to community partners including:
 - Being Built Together
 - Vietnamese Parents With Disabled Children Association (VPDCA)
 - NorCal Services for Deaf & Hard of Hearing

- USC UCEDD at CHLA
- CA Hands & Voices
- CHLA Parent Navigator Project
- California Tribal Families Coalition
- Korean American Special Education (KASEC)
- So'oh-Shinálí Sister Project (SSSP)
- Chinese Parent Association for the Disabled (CPAD)
- Fiesta Educativa

Meeting announcements were translated into Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese and Korean for distribution and posting. The public meeting was conducted as follows:

- (1) March 30, 2022
 - Meeting was held via zoom
 - Interpretation services were provided: Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Korean and American Sign Language
 - Total Attendance: 69

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 how ELARC can apply lessons learned in the Project more broadly and how would the findings benefit all Consumers served to eliminate existing disparity.
- Inquiry on any data showing a connection with Self-Determination participants and POS disparity.
- Interest expressed in hearing POS Data information details about other ethnic groups i.e. Vietnamese community as brought up by a CBO
- Concern expressed about additional ways to spread notices on workshops as not all families are technology savvy to navigate website and social media.
- 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 of this report. In summary there are three focus areas that promote equity and address disparity based on stakeholder meetings and POS Report Data:

- (1) Reduced Caseload Project/Enhanced Service Coordination
- (2) Outreach
- (3) Ongoing training for Regional Center Staff/Person Centered Practices Coordinators

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

In addition, the Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA) provided a letter to ELARC with Comments on Purchase of Service Annual Report. In that report they included the following recommendations:

- Have the Enhanced Service Coordinators from the Reduce Caseload Project share their experiences.
- Hold focus groups with Asian and Pacific Islander consumers and their families in their native languages.
- Create a checklist for SCs to discuss ELARC services at annual IPPs with low/no POS families
- Create a one-pager of services that briefly describes each one
- Focus less on non-RC resources and more on increasing ELARC services
- Track the progress of low/no POS families like ELARC tracks SDP pilot families.
- Organize a volunteer care of parents who mentor other parents

A meeting was held with Alexander Scarlis, Clients' Rights Advocate, to review the above noted recommendations. We were able to provide information on some of the recommendations specifically those that we have already began to address. With the newly announced Language Access and Cultural Competency Grant and the subsequent Agency Plan, we hope address more recommendations. We value the information provided by OCRA and appreciated the time to engage in a most productive discussion.

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 predominant 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 all three populations, but it is important to note that the Hispanic population did have the greatest increase in percentage.

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

Ethnicity	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	Difference	% increase
Hispanic	\$17,489	\$21,107	+ \$3,618	21%
Asian	\$19,403	\$21,741	+ \$2,338	12%
White	\$44,839	\$53,244	+ \$8,405	19%

A major factor impacting the above changes in the per capita authorizations for the Hispanic and Asian populations is 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 transportation POS services in FY 20-21 was \$4,351,483. As this significant expenditure cannot be captured for the 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 predominant ethnic groups served by ELARC.

**Total Annual Per Capita Authorizations Comparison by Ethnicity or Race
Over an Eight Year Period**

FY 2011-12 to FY 2020-21

Ethnicity	FY 2011-12	FY 2020-21	% Difference
Hispanic	\$12,922	\$21,107	63%
Asian	\$14,848	\$21,741	46%
White	\$28,639	\$53,244	86%

Despite the above noted increases in POS authorization for the Hispanic and Asian groups, ranging over a nine 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) 2020-2021.

**Total Annual Per Capita Authorizations
Comparison by FY 2020-21**

Ethnicity	Per Capita Authorizations	Difference
White	\$53,244	+ \$32,137*
Asian	\$21,741	- \$31,503**
Hispanic	\$21,107	- \$32,137**

* Compared to Lowest Per Capita Authorization

** Compared to Highest Per Capita 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 2020-21**

Ethnicity	Total Consumers	Living at Home # / %	Residential Placement # / %
Hispanic	9,983	9,266 / 93%	295 / 3%
Asian	1,844	1,708 / 93%	93 / 5%
White	1,341	922 / 69%	213 / 16%

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 Expenditures and Authorized Services
for Consumers Living at Home by Ethnicity or Race
FY 2020-21**

Ethnicity	Consumers	Per Capita Authorized	\$ Difference
White	922	\$18,791	0
Asian	1,708	\$14,718	- \$4,073*
Hispanic	9,266	\$14,419	- \$4,372*

* Compared to White ethnicity Per Capita Authorized Services

The glaring difference in Per Capita Authorized Services for individuals living at home vs all consumers can be contrasted with the tables on page 7 of this report, which includes residential costs. The Per Capita Authorized Services for the White population changes from \$53,244 to \$18,791 a difference of \$34,453. This comparison results in narrowing the POS gap between the White population and Hispanics to \$4,372 and for the Asian population to \$4,073 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% for each respectively, in contrast to 69% 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

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 Equity in Purchase of Service.

(1) Reduced Caseload Project

The Reduced Caseload Project focuses on identifying 200 cases of Hispanic and Asian consumers with the lowest per capita funding, including cases with no Purchase of Service. Cases are assigned to an Enhanced Service Coordinator (ESCs) 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. The Reduced Caseload Project focuses on three main objectives:

1. Provide enhanced case management services that focus on understanding the needs of the whole family.
2. Provide education about the Regional Center system
3. Gain a better understanding of barriers to accessing Regional Center services

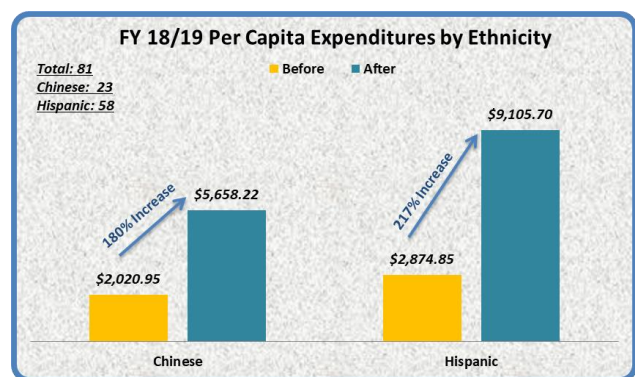
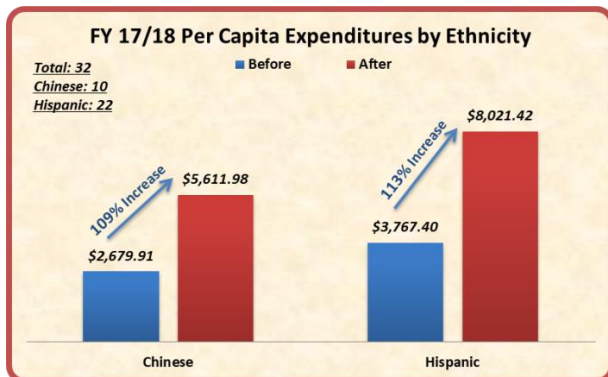
Objective 1- The assistance has included conducting a comprehensive assessment of the needs of not only the individual served, but of the whole family. This has led to helping families with generic services outside of the Regional Center such as IEPs, Medi-Cal, Supplemental Security Income (or SSI), In-Home Supportive Services (or IHSS), ACCESS Transportation, CalFresh to name a few. We noticed for a lot of families it was hard to consider our services when sometimes these were going to provide families with more immediate relief or because they had longer application processes and we needed to get that process started right away.

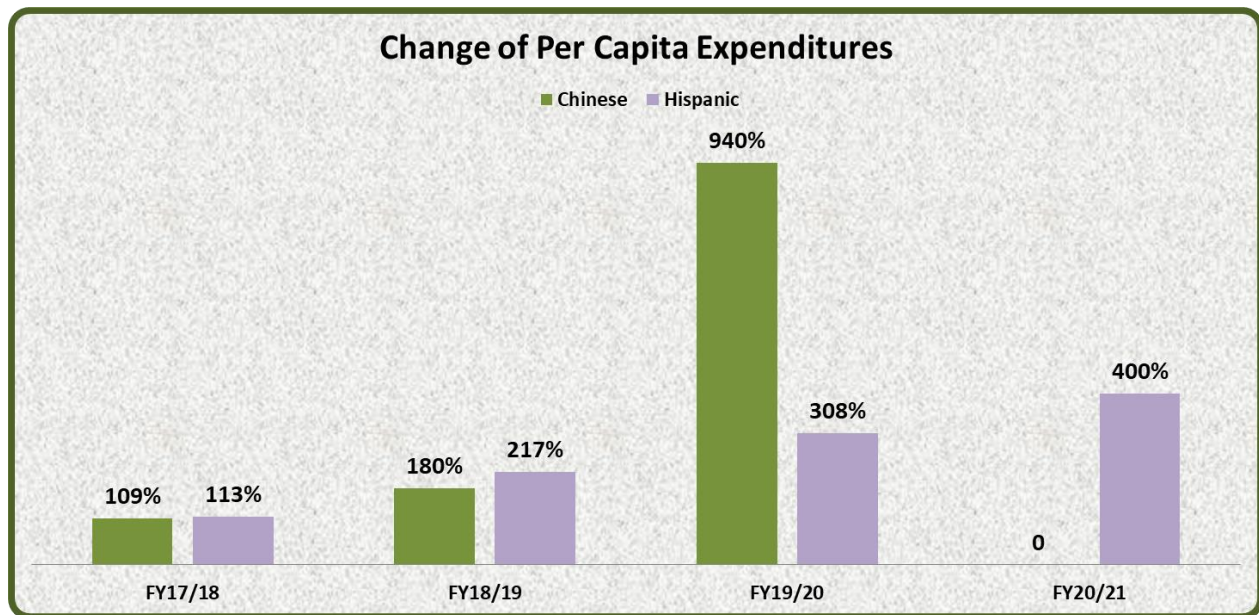
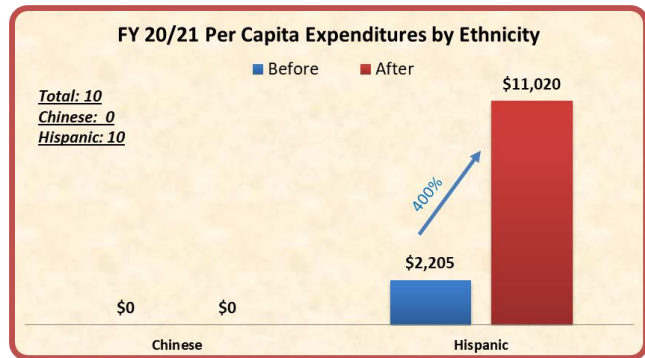
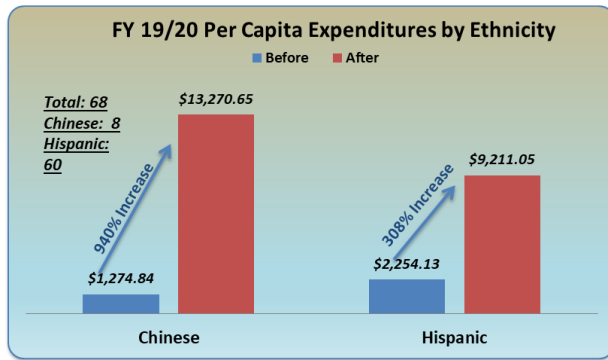
Objective 2 is accomplished through a curriculum that we developed that encompasses 5 topics: "Understanding the Regional Center", "Understanding the Role of a Service Coordinator", "Understanding the Diagnosis", "Understanding the IPP", and "Understanding How to Access

Services and Supports”. Under each of these 5 areas, there are a number of topics that the ESCs must cover with the family.

Lastly, Objective 3 is to Gain a better understanding of barriers to accessing Regional Center services. We want to dive in deeper to see what obstacles families face that might prevent them from accessing our services. The barriers included in the questionnaire include Poverty, Education, Language or Literacy, Social Norms and Attitudes, Community Access, Transportation, and Community Conditions or Characteristics.

Ultimately, the three objectives work cohesively to achieve the main goal of reducing Purchase of Service Disparities. The following graphs quantifies the changes in POS expenditures for the four 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. In FY 2020-21, there were no Asian consumers that transitioned out of the project since we saw these participants be more in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. For our Hispanic consumers, we also saw a smaller number for the same reason that it was a time where a lot of consumers and their families relied on additional support. However, with the participants that exited out of the project, we saw a 400% increase in POS expenditures. It is evident that the smaller caseload allows Service Coordinators to build a more trusting relationship with consumers and their families eventually leading to an increase of POS expenditures.





Worthy of noting is that the enhanced caseload ratio project in FY 2018-19 one of the Asian consumers required residential placement and was thus transitioned from the project. These graph figures 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

The ABX 2-1 funds are also being used for funding two “Person Centered Practice Coordinators” (PCPCs) that also carry a reduce caseload of 1:20 consumers, but also focus on outreach in the community. They have collaborated, worked and presented at different school districts, such as San Gabriel Unified School District (SGUSD), Alhambra Unified School District (AUSD), Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), and Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD), all of which have students in our Regional Center Catchment area along with some Community Based Organizations (CBOs). These presentations have focused on not only providing additional information on Regional Center events and resources in order to create more visibility and

awareness on services and supports that we offer, but also build a relationship for future collaboration. For instance, the PCPCs continue to do outreach to the community to provide information about the Self –Determination program. This outreach effort is being accomplished first-hand in English, Spanish and Cantonese, but also utilizing interpreters when needed for other languages.

The PCPCs also host “Community Connection” Meetings, which are public meetings geared to create a space where more in-depth information can be given on topics that affect our consumers and families. For instance, these were the meetings held in 2021 that revolved around topics that could have an influence on Purchase of Service Expenditures.

1. 3/18/2021 – COVID-19 Vaccine Information Session
2. 4/22/2021 – COVID-19 Updates and Resources
2. 5/27/2021 – ELARC Reopening Plan
3. 8/17/2021 – COVID Vaccine Access & Equity (two sessions: 10a and 6p)
4. 12/1/2021 – Social Recreation Services (two sessions: 10a and 6p)

It is noted that some meetings had two different sessions. The evening 6pm session were meetings held in Spanish as they are our predominant spoken language group outside of English. However, it is important to note that at all our English sessions, we also provided default interpretation in Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese and Vietnamese. All these meetings were held via zoom to account for COVID-19 safety guidelines.

(3) Ongoing Training for Regional Center Staff:

Additionally, the Person Centered Practices Coordinators (PCPCs) are on the path to be Person Centered Certified (PCT) Certified Trainers. The PCPCs shadow SCs that have completed our New Staff training component on “Person Centered Thinking Training”. They provide feedback to SCs after the IPP on tools used during the IPP meeting and provide feedback and tools to have a more Person Centered approach.

In addition, the PCPCs have presented at Unit Meetings within ELARC. It is important to us that our Service Coordination staff understands the information contained in the POS Data Report and how that information applies to the daily work that they do. The Unit Meeting presentations have been informative for staff and have elicited productive conversations about ways in which they can positively affect Purchase of Service for the Individuals and families that they serve.

VII Plan to Continue to Promote Equity

ELARC is committed to improving service access for all individuals served. ELARC has implemented an array of projects over the years to promote equity. Most notably, we implemented the Reduced Caseload Project in 2017 which, due to its success, is a program that is now being modeled and replicated across all 21 Regional Centers. For this reason, funding for the Reduced

Caseload Project through the Service Access and Equity Grant Program has ended and the Project will transition to “Enhanced Service Coordination” which was established by the Department in the Budget Act for Fiscal Year 2021/22. Enhanced Service Coordination will continue to be an integral part of our Agency’s Plan to promote equity in POS. Latino and Asian (Cantonese and Mandarin speaking) Individuals and their families will continue to be the Racial/Ethnic groups served in the upcoming Fiscal Year, however, as we move forward the targeted groups may vary.

ELARC’s plan to promote equity will be largely guided by information contained in the Purchase of Service Data Report. An annual assessment will be conducted and information gathered will inform the Agency Plan related to which Racial/Ethnic, Language, Age, etc. groups will be targeted for intervention. The intent is to benefit as many individuals and families as possible. It is important to note that efforts may also extend to underserved communities not noted on the Data Report.

Other groups not served through Enhanced Service Coordination will be targeted for intervention in a variety of ways. Part of the Agency Plan for the upcoming Fiscal Year (2022/23), will include the exploration of the implementation of two funding initiatives. The first is funding to improve Language Access and Cultural Competency and the second is funding for Coordinated Family Support Services. As noted, both of these initiatives will augment our current work, i.e. Enhanced Service Coordination, while also allowing implementation of new efforts and strategies.

The intent of Coordinated Family Support Services will be to target adult individuals served who are residing in the family home and will focus on life-planning and end-of-life planning. The Primary purpose of the Language Access and Cultural initiative is to improve the individual served and their families’ “experience and to facilitate more consistent access to information and services for multi-lingual, monolingual, and diverse cultural groups.” For its implementation we will be developing an Agency Plan and it will include activities such as, but not limited to, specialized orientations for individuals and families transitioning from the Early Start and Intake & Assessment Departments to Lanterman Services, streamlining interpretation and translation services, conducting small group/focus listening sessions to gather input, updating Agency website, continued outreach and collaboration with Community Based Organizations and conducting regular and periodic needs assessments to determine language and culture profiles of individuals and families served.

Progress on the Agency Plan will be reported during next year’s Purchase of Service Data Report Community Meeting.