



EASTERN LOS ANGELES REGIONAL CENTER

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Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center (ELARC)

Fiscal Year 2013-'14

Purchase of Services (POS) Data

Community Meetings Report

August 31, 2015

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- II. ELARC Demographics
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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 relating to purchase of services authorization, utilization and expenditure by each regional center with respect to consumer age, race or ethnicity, primary language and diagnosis. The data, including the number and percent of consumers who are eligible for regional center services but are not receiving purchased services, must be posted by each regional center on its website by December 31.

Within three months (March 31st) of compiling the POS data each regional center shall conduct community meetings with stakeholders to present and discuss the previous fiscal year POS expenditures. By August 31st each regional center will post a report that addresses the requirements of Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Section 4519.5: attendance, meeting notes, issues identified in the data and recommendations to promote equity and reduce disparities in POS.

II. ELARC Demographics

ELARC's demographics reflect a highly diverse population. The following represents the ethnic breakdown of ELARC consumers:

(1) Hispanic	70.4%
(2) Asian	12.8%
(3) White	11.0%
(4) Multi-Ethnic	3.3%
(5) African-American	1.5%
(6) Other	1.0%

The Hispanic and Asian families account for 83.2% of the total population served by ELARC.

III Attendance

In order to enhance attendance from previous year, ELARC opted to increase the number of sessions offered to the community from two to four. ELARC partnered with two long standing parent groups: Fiesta Educativa and the Chinese Parent Association for the Disabled (CPAD). Each group represents the two largest ethnic populations served by ELARC: Hispanic and Asian consumers/families.

The following sessions were conducted:

(1) February 25, 2015

Location: Alhambra, ELARC

Attendance: 8

(2) February 25, 2015

Location: Whittier

Attendance: 4

(3) March 7, 2015

Location: Los Angeles/Fiesta Educativa

Attendance: 47

(4) March 21, 2015

Location: San Gabriel/Chinese Parent Assoc. for Disabled (CPAD)

Attendance: 36

The two sessions in March were hosted by Fiesta Educativa, an organization serving predominately a Hispanic population and CPAD whose sole membership represents Asian families. Each group hosts frequent informational meetings for their respective community in their native language. ELARC coordinated with each organization to host a dedicated session on ELARC's POS Data Report.

The approach to scheduling with these two parent groups proved to be highly successful. The goal to generate interest and increase attendance resulted in an overwhelming increase in attendance.

In comparing current year attendance figures with previous year meetings the results are staggering.

The following attendance figures compares the two fiscal years:

- ✓ Fiscal Year 2012-'13

Total Attendance = 15

- ✓ Fiscal Year 2013-'14

Total Attendance = 103

The end result is that an additional 88 individuals attended the meeting compared to previous fiscal year, which represents an astounding 586.66% increase in attendance.

IV Meeting Notes

The meeting format, for all four sessions, was divided into two primary phases. The first phase focused on a power-point presentation which offered an overview of the POS expenditure data. The second phase allowed for a more informal approach to the presentation. In an effort to engage the audience a set of six questions were introduced seeking the audiences' perspective on the POS variance.

Phase 1:

The power-point presentation included a review of the following data:

- ✓ Per Capita Authorization and Utilization: a comparison over the last two fiscal years was presented. There continues to be a significant expenditure differential among the three largest ELARC ethnic groups. The following table was used to illustrate these differences.

**Fiscal Year 2013-14
Per Capita Authorization (PCA) & Utilization (U) Comparison**

Ethnicity	PCA	U
Hispanic	\$13,358	82.6%
Asian	\$14,318	82.7%
White	\$31,202	89.3%

Fiscal Year 2012-13

Per Capita Authorization (PCA) & Utilization (U) Comparison

Ethnicity	PCA	U
Hispanic	\$13,215	82.2%
Asian	\$14,859	81%
White	29,309	89.1%

As noted in the above figures the appreciable growth in POS continues to be with the White ethnic group, which represents an increase in POS of \$1893 between the two fiscal years. The Hispanic population experienced a very modest \$143 increase to their PCA and the Asian families PCA decreased by -\$541. The utilization rate resulted in a very small increase across the three ethnic groups. In comparing the utilization rates for the two fiscal years, the following figures show a slight growth: Hispanics + .40%, Asians + 1.7%, and White families utilization rate grew by + .20%.

In addition the following items were discussed as part of the power-point presentation:

- ✓ ELARC demographics were reviewed, specifically by ethnicity, age groups, diagnosis and language.
 - ✓ Review of insurance related expenditures by ethnicity.
 - ✓ Analysis of ELARC consumers by residence type and ethnicity.
- Discussion centered on out-of-home placement as the most costly of service option in POS. A review of placement trends by the three largest ethnic groups is crucial in understanding POS variances. The following figures were reviewed with the audience.

Ethnicity	Living with Family	Out-of-Home Placement	Independent Living
Hispanic	90.3%	5.1%	3.3%
Asian	92.3%	5.8%	1.4%
White	61.9%	22.6%	13.2%

The above table denotes a substantially higher use of placement options by the White ethnic group. There is a direct correlation to the per capita authorizations (PCA) figures and the selection of residential services. Clearly, residential placement is the main component that creates the wide per capita gap amongst ethnic groups.

Phase II:

At the two February sessions attendance was significantly lower than the two March sessions. Present in the morning session were parents representing Fiesta Educativa, who advised ELARC they were working with Dr. Barbara Wheeler, an Associate Director with USC-VCEDD (USC University Center for Excellence in Developmental Services) as part of the UCEDD leadership programs to review ELARC POS data and prepare for the upcoming March meetings. ELARC was informed at this session that Dr. Wheeler was conducting focus groups with Fiesta Educativa and CPAD organizations to develop their own unique set of questions to present to the regional center presenters at the March meetings. Allowing for flexibility the focus of discussion shifted from ELARC set of questions to the parent groups planning process, the approach to the meeting format and the expectations of the regional center role in these sessions.

The March 7th meeting with Fiesta Educativa had 47 participants. ELARC was presented, in advance of the meeting, with the questions developed by the Fiesta Educativa focus group. There were a set of five general questions discussed with the Fiesta Educativa focus groups, and all responses were shared with ELARC. At the meeting on March 7th Fiesta Educativa opted for a more formal approach by having a select number of parents individually address the ELARC panel with their specific question. The panel of five ELARC staff included: Gloria Wong, Executive Director, Felipe Hernandez, Chief of Consumer Services, and three consumer services supervisors: Belinda Salinas, Carmen Castro-Luna and Carmen Vasquez. The meeting went over the scheduled end time due to high level of interaction between the audience and ELARC presenters. Written input was submitted by parents on case specific matters, all of which were directed to the case management supervisor for direct follow-up with families.

The March 21st meeting with CPAD was also well attended with 36 participants. CPAD also worked with Dr. Wheeler in preparation for the March presentation. CPAD did not submit questions in advance. Parents at the event would take turns in posing questions to the panel of five ELARC presenters: Gloria Wong, Executive Director, Felipe Hernandez, Chief of Consumer Services; Elizabeth Harrell, Supervisor, Information and Training, and two consumer services supervisors: Elizabeth Ornelas and Lilia Ortega.

The meeting also went over the scheduled end-time due to the numerous questions and interaction between audience and panel members. There were some case specific inquiries all of which were directed to the assigned case supervisor for follow-up.

Feedback from both parent groups centered on the need for more information and a better understanding of service options. Other topics raised included:

- (1) Vendors
 - ✓ concerns over quality assurance
 - ✓ need for better trained staff
- (2) Services
 - ✓ need for more training programs for parents
 - ✓ learn more about community living options
 - ✓ need for after school programs
 - ✓ reinstate social recreational services as an option
 - ✓ increase in-home respite hours
 - ✓ more information on mental health services
 - ✓ to understand service options and description
 - ✓ assistance with future planning for consumers
 - ✓ need for counseling support for families and siblings

IV. Issues Identified in Data and Recommendations

The POS Annual Expenditures and Per Capita Authorization shows a pronounced gap in funding amongst the three primary ethnic groups. The following table exemplifies these differences.

Total Annual Expenditures & Per Capita Authorization (PCA)

Ethnicity	PCA	Difference	Utilization
White	\$31,202	+ \$17,844	89.3%
Hispanic	\$13,358	- \$17,844	82.6%
Asian	\$14,318	-\$16,884	82.7%

The largest PCA is between the White and Hispanic ethnic groups, a difference in funding of \$17,844. The Asian group has a slightly less differential in funding than the Hispanic families, as noted above. The primary contributing factor to the substantial cost differential is attributable to the use of residential services by the three ethnic groups. The most costly of all regional center funded services is reflected in the section of the POS Data report entitled "Total Annual Expenditures and Services by Residence". This report contrasts consumers living at home with those residing outside the family home. The distinction between these two categories is striking as the following table points out.

Residence Type by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Living with Family	Out-of-Home
Hispanic	90.3%	5.1%
Asian	92.3%	5.8%
White	61.9%	22.6%

The above percentages is what is impacting a \$17,844 differential between the White ethnic group and the Hispanic and Asian families. The data clearly suggests that cultural values influence the decisions made by families on the types of services they select. Divergent views on the types of supports needed will create expenditure variances by ethnicity. A consideration for potentially minimizing the funding gap would be to reinstate services that in Fiscal Year 2009-'10 regional centers were prohibited from purchasing, (i.e.) non-medical therapy programs, camps and social recreation services. Additionally consideration should be given to reversing the stringent limits that were placed on respite services in that same fiscal year. These changes largely affected the Hispanic and Asian ethnic groups who used these services as a means of keeping consumers in the home with families.

In an effort to enhance our communication and training opportunities for ELARC's Hispanic and Asian families we are launching the following training calendar. The goal is to determine if intense information and training can potentially impact the POS differential.

Plan of Action:

- 1) ELARC has scheduled two sessions entitled "29 questions" a reference to the number of questions developed by a parent group.
 - ✓ August 22, 2015: A presentation to CPAD was conducted.
 - ✓ September 25, 2015: A presentation by ELARC to Fiesta Educativa is scheduled.
- 2) "ELARC U" a training series launched by ELARC parents/staff. It is a four part series which includes: an overview of the regional center system, the internal working of our system, developing the IPP and identifying supports and how to become an effective partner.

A Spanish version of ELARC U has been scheduled to run from September 4, 2015 to December 4, 2015.

Additional Recommendations:

- 1) Conduct an independent research study on the POS variances. Seven past studies have been conducted between 1990-2007. Since the last report in 2007 the changes to the Lanterman Act have been extensive as such it warrants an in-depth analysis of these vast variations and how it has impacted the various ethnic groups.
- 2) A modification to future Purchase of Services (POS) Report data by isolating residential costs from the overall total POS expenditures in order to better compare the cost variances amongst the various ethnic groups.