

Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center (ELARC)

Fiscal Year 2014-'15

Purchase of Services (POS) Data

Community Meetings Report

May 31, 2016

- I. Background**

- II. ELARC Demographics**

- III. Attendance**

- IV. Meeting Notes**

- V. Issues Identified in Data & Recommendations**

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 (POS) authorization, utilization and expenditures for each regional center. The data is analyzed by consumer age, ethnicity, primary language, diagnosis, insurance related expenditures and by residence type. Additionally, the report includes data on consumers with no purchase of services expenditures. The full report must be posted on each regional center website by December 31st each year.

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 reflects a highly diverse population. The following represents the ethnic breakdown of ELARC consumers:

(1) Hispanic	71.0%
(2) Asian	12.5%
(3) White	10.3%
(4) African-American	1.5%
(5) Other	4.7%

The Hispanic and Asian families account for 83.5% of the total population served by ELARC.

III Attendance

ELARC hosted four public meetings. Two of the meetings were conducted in partnership with two long-standing parent organizations in ELARC's service area: Fiesta Educativa and the Chinese Parent Association for the Disabled (CPAD). The two parent groups represent the two largest ethnicities served by ELARC: Hispanic (71%) and Asian (12.5%) consumers and families.

The four public meetings were conducted as follows:

- (1) March 12, 2016: Meeting hosted in partnership with Chinese Parent Association for the Disabled (CPAD). Interpreter services were available in two Chinese dialects: Mandarin and Cantonese.

Attendance: 13

- (2) March 14, 2016: Meeting hosted in partnership with Fiesta Educativa Parent Group. Interpreter services were available in Spanish.

Attendance: 20

- (3) March 23, 2016: A morning session was held at ELARC offices. Interpreter services were available.

Attendance: 5

- (4) March 23, 2016: An evening session was held at Palm Park in the City of Whittier to accommodate consumer/families served by our Whittier satellite office. Interpreter services were available.

Attendance: 5

Notices regarding the ELARC POS Data and the related public meetings was distributed as follows:

1. ELARC 2014/15 Fiscal Year Annual Expenditures Report posted on ELARC website and Facebook page on December 30, 2016.
2. Posted information at ELARC Main Lobby and satellite Whittier office on December 30, 2015
3. E-mailed notices with link to data on December 30, 2015 to following organizations:
 - Clients Rights Advocate, Disability Rights California
 - State Council on Developmental Disabilities, Los Angeles Office
 - Fiesta Educativa
 - Chinese Parent Association for the Disabled (CPAD)
 - UVAS Spanish-speaking parent Group
 - Partners in Community Inclusion (PICI): Parent Group

→ Greater Long Beach/Whittier Autism Society

→ Family Resource Center

4. Emailed notice with link to data on December 30, 2015 to the following groups:

→ Vendor Advisory Committee

→ Consumer Advisory Committee

Meeting announcements were translated into Spanish and Chinese and posted on ELARC's website on January 7, 2016. Flyers were distributed to organizations listed in item #3 and #4 above for assistance with distribution.

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:

- ELARC demographics for all ages by: ethnicity, age, diagnosis and language.
- Review of POS expenditures, \$163,502,718, by categories.
- Review of total annual expenditures and authorized services by ethnicity.
- Per capita authorization (PCA) and utilization comparison over last four fiscal years.
- "Annual Statement of Services Provided" correspondence to individual consumers and the significance to the POS Report.
- Analysis of consumers by ethnicity and residence type.
- Per capita comparison by ethnicity for consumers "living at home" and "out-of-home".

Presentation focused on the per capita differences amongst the three largest ethnic groups: Hispanic, Asian and the White population. A comparison of the last two fiscal years per capita averages indicates a minor increase for all three groups. The Hispanic and White population

per capita growth percentage was identical. The Asian per capita increase had a larger percentage growth over the other two ethnic groups. The table below illustrates the increase differences over the last two fiscal years.

Per Capita (PC) Authorizations

By Fiscal Year (FY)

Ethnicity	PC FY '13-'14	PC FY '14-'15	Difference	% Growth
Hispanic	\$13,359	\$13,739	+ \$380	2.84%
Asian	\$14,318	\$14,933	+ \$615	4.30%
White	\$31,202	\$32,088	+ \$886	2.84%

Nevertheless, from the inception of the POS Report in Fiscal Year 2011-'12 the per capita average expenditure has been significantly higher for ELARC's White population. Despite the modest aforementioned gains by the other ethnic groups there remains a wide gap between the highest and lower per capita averages. The following table demonstrates this difference starting with the highest per capita group and comparing expenditures to the other two ethnic groups.

Per Capita (PC) Authorizations

Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-'15

Ethnicity	PCA	Difference
White	\$32,088	+\$18,349
Asian	\$14,933	-\$17,155
Hispanic	\$13,739	-\$18,349

The main contributing factor for this sizeable cost differential is higher utilization of residential services by the "White" ethnic group. Residential services, in its various forms, constitutes the most costly of all Regional Center funded services. The result is an extensive differential on the per capita averages among the three ethnic groups as noted in the above table. The following statistics substantiate the placement trends for ELARC and the resulting broad variances in the per capita averages.

Comparison of Residence Type by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Total # Consumers	Living with Family # / %	Residential Placement # / %
Hispanic	8,525	7,826 / 91.8%	287 / 3.4%
Asian	1,497	1,379 / 92.1%	79 / 5.3%
White	1,244	802 / 84.5%	241 / 19.4%

Analyzing POS expenditures by separating consumers that are “living at home” significantly narrows the per capita variances. The following figures dramatically illustrates this point.

Per Capita (PC) Services

Living at Home

Ethnicity	Per Capita	Difference
White	\$14,164	+ \$1,957
Asian	\$10,342	- \$2,000
Hispanic	\$12,207	- \$3,822

The differences on the per capita expenditures is staggering as compared to the table on page 4 of this report which accounts for all POS expenditures.

Phase 2:

The second half of the meeting moved from data presentation and discussion to a question and answer format. This segment of the meeting was intended to obtain the perspective of participants on why there is a POS cost variance between the different ethnic groups, what causes these differences, and how can the system narrow this gap to promote equity.

A panel of ELARC Management Staff was present to field questions and interact with the audience. The question and answer format was particularly effective at the two parent group sponsored meetings with Fiesta Educative and CPAD.

The audience in both parent groups (Fiesta Educativa/CPAD) opted to not use ELARC’s pre-established set of questions in the “Power-Point” presentation. Participants with both of these groups developed their personal approach to posing questions/comments to the panel presentors. The specifics are noted in the enclosed meeting notes. The following are highlights of issues raised.

- Desire to understand the process for funding services and whether limits exist.
- High level of interest in Self-Determination, how it works and whether it will address disparity issues.
- Wanting to understand the vast array of services and the differences on utilization from Hispanic to White population.
- Need for reference material that can clarify types of services available.
- Importance to use visuals and plain language with monolingual families.
- How to navigate the regional center system, education, health, benefits, etc.
- Regional Center is a complex system, an obstacle course which is difficult to navigate and can lead to cost differences.
- Increase educational training opportunities for families.
- Need to be sensitive to new immigrants that lack the support of an extended family.
- Strengthen link from Early Start to CAPD, parent group, so parent support can be established in early stages of connecting with Regional Center.
- Differences of roles between Regional Center and education need to be clarified.
- Important to assess unique service needs for Hispanics/Asian ethnic groups and to reinstate funding of social recreational services, camps, and to increase the cap on respite hours.

V Issues Identified in Data & Recommendations

The POS Annual Expenditures Report shows a continued pronounced gap in funding amongst the three primary ethnic groups ranging from a high per capita average annual expenditure of \$31,202 to a low of \$13,358. These figures are highlighted on page 4 of this report. The gap narrows when the per capita costs are analyzed for consumers only “living at home”, changing the higher per capita average to \$14,164 to a low of \$10,342. The cost driver for these variances is the use of residential services as outlined in the previous section of this report. Nevertheless, efforts must be exerted to continually minimize the expenditure gap and to promote equity and reduce costs differentials in POS.

In summary the issues identified in the POS Data Report indicates:

- ✓ A broad separation in the per capita average expenditures for the three predominant ELARC ethnic groups: Hispanic/Asian/White.
- ✓ A higher utilization of residential services by “White” ethnic population.
- ✓ A considerable narrowing of the per capita averages when residential costs are excluded.

The recommendations and comments from meeting participants stressed the need for enhanced communication and outreach to families. They emphasized the importance and value of frequently communicating with families, in their native language, on the fundamentals of a complex system as a means of promoting equity and reducing wide cost variances.

ELARC’s plan of action to promote communication and outreach includes the following activities, some which have been accomplished and others yet to be rescheduled in the future.

- ✓ Development of “Service Fact Sheets” created and translated into Spanish and Chinese. General service categories described includes:
 - Day Programs
 - Employment
 - Living Options
 - Respite
 - Social & Behavioral Supports
 - Transportation
 - Housing Report
- ✓ Training Sessions in Spanish/Chinese
 - “ELARC U” a series of four sessions presenting an overview of the regional center system. The course is scheduled in September 2016 to be presented in Spanish. Course has been offered in Chinese and English in the past. Course repeats on a periodic basis.
 - ELARC sponsored parent group “Partners in Community Inclusion” (PICI). A series of five meetings are conducted with emphasis on community inclusion and transition planning. Current session is scheduled for 2016 and being offered in Spanish. The course repeats on a periodic basis and is offered in Chinese and English.

- A collaborative agreement has been established with Fiesta Educativa and CPAD parent groups to conduct presentations on Self-Determination (SD). An overview on SD was presented on May 21, 2016 to CPAD parent group. Two sessions are scheduled with Fiesta Educativa for this year.
 - Presentation to Fiesta Educativa on September 2015 by ELARC Management staff answering pre-established questions submitted by families.
- ✓ To collaborate with San Gabriel Pomona Regional Center (SGPRC) on the development of regional center information in Chinese. ELARC and SGPRC have parents attending the same parent group, (CPAD), who share in the request for material to be translated into their native language.
- ✓ Annual Statement of Services Provided: Regional Centers issue an annual statement that outlines the services and supports purchased for each consumer. The statement identifies all specific services purchased and the related expenditures. ELARC staff is using this document to discuss at the time of the Individual Program Plan (IPP) in order to compare individual cost data to the POS Data Report. The intent is to educate families about the purpose of this report and to determine if there are any gaps in services to be addressed.

Recommendation:

- (1) The value of an independent research study on the POS variances needs to be endorsed and funded. We are currently on the fourth year of completing the Annual POS Expenditure Report. The next step calls for a comprehensive research analysis that can validate the core issues and offer meaningful recommendations and solutions.

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ATTACHMENTS

1. Power Point Presentation
2. Meeting Notices
3. Meeting Notes
4. Material
 - A. Service Fact Sheets (English/Spanish/Chinese)
 - ✓ Day Programs
 - ✓ Employment
 - ✓ Living Options
 - ✓ Respite
 - ✓ Social & Behavioral Supports
 - ✓ Transportation
 - B. Housing Report (English/Spanish/Chinese)
 - C. Training Sessions
 - ✓ ELARC U (Spanish)
 - ✓ Partners in Community Inclusion (PICI) (Spanish)
 - ✓ Chinese Parent Association (CPAD) Housing Presentation (Chinese)
 - ✓ Fiesta Educativa Presentation (Spanish)
 - D. Self-Determination (Chinese)