



**FISCAL YEAR 2014/2015 POS EXPENDITURE DATA REPORTS
REQUIRED BY WELFARE & INSTITUTIONS CODE SECTION 4519.5
Report for the Department of Developmental Services
May 2016**

Introduction

Section 4519.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code requires that all regional centers compile and report data related to purchase of service authorization, utilization, and expenditures across identified demographic groups of people served, categorized by age, race or ethnicity, primary language, disability, and residence type. Tri-Counties Regional Center (“TCRC”) has collaborated with the Department of Developmental Services (“DDS”) to prepare this data and has posted it on its website in accordance with the regulations. TCRC utilized data reports downloaded from DDS and a standard report format utilized by all regional centers. TCRC posted its reports by December 31, 2015, under the Transparency section of its website.

Attached to the reports is a summary of limitations to the data. We have encouraged viewers to keep these limitations in mind when reviewing the data. These limitations include exclusion of expenditures paid for by generic agencies, late billings and services paid for under contract such as transportation, crisis support and supported employment. TCRC’s contract expenditures for Fiscal Year 14/15 were \$17.6 million or 8.2% of total POS expenditures. In addition, due to the data compilation methods, regional center caseload will not match the summation of the data, and total client count will not match the summation of clients with multiple diagnoses.

A. Actions to Improve Public Attendance and Participation

TCRC conducted three main community stakeholder meetings in the early evening during the month of March, 2016. In an effort to increase attendance, TCRC partnered with State Council on Development Disabilities – Central Coast, Clients’ Rights Advocates and local family resource centers. Representatives from these agencies were present at information tables along with TCRC’s Clinical Director, Federal Programs Assistant Director representing the Self Determination Program and service coordination staff. In addition, TCRC held three smaller community meetings, one during the daytime and two in the evening, in the months of April and May, which had primarily all Spanish speaking attendees.

At all of the meetings, TCRC offered a meal and refreshments, Spanish translation, and child care if requested. TCRC staff presented the POS expenditure data through a variety of PowerPoint slides. Two documents were provided to participants:

- *Purchase of Services Expenditure Data for Fiscal Year 2014/2015* – PowerPoint Presentation [refer to Attachment A]

- *Purchase of Services Expenditure and Demographic Data Reports – Fiscal Year 2014-2015* [refer to Attachment B]

After presentation of the data, discussions were conducted with a main facilitator or in smaller groups with table facilitators. Comments from these discussions were recorded.

TCRC created public meeting notices and materials that were easy to read and understand. The meetings were announced through several avenues:

- Postcards in English and Spanish sent to approximately 13,000 stakeholders
- Meetings announcement posted on the TCRC website February 8, 2016
- Meetings announced at the Vendor Advisory Committee and TCADD Board meetings
- Information sent to Family Resource Centers then distributed in all three counties
- Information provided to all TCRC staff
- Meeting notices in English and Spanish were placed in TCRC office lobbies.

TCRC's three main public meetings were held on:

- March 22 in Santa Barbara
- March 24 in Oxnard
- March 30 in San Luis Obispo

TCRC also hosted three smaller community meetings on:

- April 15 in Lompoc
- April 27 in Paso Robles
- May 2 in Santa Paula

B. Meeting Minutes and Attendee Comments

Minutes – Minutes from the three main meetings are attached [refer to Attachment C].

Public Comments

Comments from the attendees are attached [refer to Attachment D]. The following were common themes that TCRC staff derived from the comments:

- Age (school-age, transition and adult differences)
- Communications about services may be inadequate
- Economic, social, or geographical inequalities
- Education levels vary
- General cultural differences
- Immigration issues for undocumented people
- Language hurdles
- Miscellaneous/Other

C. Observations Identified by the Data

Data Summary

- POS spending variances exist.
- Expenditure data do not answer questions why variances exist.
- We do not know why variances exist without looking at additional information.
- We do not know if the variances indicate disparity.
- POS spending variances do not mean that people's needs are not being met.
- People's needs are different and identified through the person centered IPP process which honors personal choice.

The POS expenditures data for FY 2014/15 does not give a clear indication of a need to reduce disparities in POS spending among persons in TCRC's catchment area. However, TCRC is committed to promote equity and reduce disparities to the extent possible by continuing the following actions:

TCRC's Commitments

- Person centered thinking practices:
 - TCRC is person centered in all we do;
 - TCRC is committed to a person centered planning process for individualized services; and
 - TCRC is committed to meeting the needs of those it serves regardless of age, ethnicity, language, diagnosis or residence by refining our person centered practices to ensure cultural relevance.
- Linguistic and Cultural competence training for the Board and posting the training on TCRC's website.
- Cultural competence training provided to all staff.
- 50% or more of service coordinators are Spanish bi-lingual.
- Cultural competence is part of performance development for TCRC staff.
- Contractual requirement for service providers to have staff who speak the language for people they support.
- Family Resource Centers in all TCRC office areas offer a variety of Spanish language support and resources.
- Persons and families receive culturally and linguistically competent information about the IPP and IFSP, and:
 - Translation of print materials
 - Language convertible website
 - Funding of translator services
 - Family support groups in Spanish
 - Bi-lingual/bi-cultural Benefits Specialist focuses on Spanish speaking families
 - TCRC gathers feedback in an annual satisfaction survey which shows that we are providing information that is ethnically relevant to cultural value systems.

Next Steps & Recommendations

- More information and research is needed.
- Systemwide qualitative studies will be conducted by ARCA to determine:
 - Why the variances exist?

- If the variances indicate disparity?
 - What informed actions need to be taken?
- Continue to evaluate our PCT processes to improve services, with focus on Spanish translation and training.
- Culturally competent services and supports is a focus area in TCRC's 2016-2018 Strategic Performance Plan and may include such activities as using more plain language in communications, broadening outreach efforts, expanding family orientations, and ventering more service providers who are culturally competent and have Spanish speaking staff.
- Implement recommendations and plans per new regulations effective in FY 16/17 to promote equity and reduce disparities.