



**FISCAL YEAR 2015/2016 POS EXPENDITURE DATA REPORTS
REQUIRED BY WELFARE & INSTITUTIONS CODE SECTION 4519.5
Report for the Department of Developmental Services
May 2017**

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, 2016, 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 15/16 were \$18.9 million or 8.4% 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 during the month of March, 2017. In an effort to increase attendance, TCRC partnered with State Council on Development Disabilities – Central Coast and local family resource centers. Representatives from these agencies were present at tables along with TCRC’s Federal Programs Assistant Director representing the Self Determination Program, Autism Coordinator, and service coordination staff. A representative from the Office of Clients’ Rights Advocacy participated in two of the community meetings. In addition, TCRC held three smaller community meetings, one during the daytime and two in the evening, in March, 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 2015/2016 – PowerPoint Presentation [refer to Attachment A]*

- *Purchase of Services Expenditure and Demographic Data Reports – Fiscal Year 2015-2016* [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 over 13,000 persons served, family members, legal guardians and/or conservators
- Meetings announcement posted on the TCRC website February 21, 2017
- 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.

Three main public meetings were held at TCRC's offices on:

- March 23 in San Luis Obispo
- March 29 in Oxnard
- March 30 in Santa Maria

TCRC also hosted three smaller community meetings on:

- March 3 in Lompoc at Alpha Resource Center's support group
- March 27 in Santa Paula at ARC Heritage Village
- March 28 in Paso Robles at Canyon Creek Apartments

These six meetings were scheduled at various times to allow for daytime and evening participation with the intent to maximize attendance.

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:

- Access to Services/Geographic
- Clear Communication / Information of Services and Process to Receive Services
- Collaboration
- Community Activities/ Socialization
- Cultural Differences
- Housing
- Legal/Immigration

- Outreach
- Preferred Method of Communication
- SC Relationships with Individual Served/Family/ Development of Trust
- SC Training
- Self Advocacy
- Services & Resource Development / Expansion
- TCRC - Provider Communication
- Transitions ES-Children-Transition-Adult
- Transportation

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 2015/16 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.
- 54% 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.

- TCRC has hired a Bilingual/Bicultural Multicultural Specialist
- TCRC is partnering with Family Resource Centers and Promotores Network in each county for the Promotora Project
- Identify barriers to equitable access to services and supports
- Develop recommendations to help reduce variances in service expenditures
- Increase awareness about role of culture in understanding and meeting the needs of individuals and their families
- 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 study will be funded by DDS and 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.
- Implementation of the following new and continuing objectives:

New and Continuing Objectives

1. Review ways in which we can customize our communication to ensure clear understandable language and plain language. This includes but is not limited to information shared as part of the intake, orientation and individual program planning processes.
2. Continue to develop our TCRC website to ensure user friendly, easy to access, understandable language and content with accessible menu of services, brochures, links to TCRC Welcome Video etc.
3. Develop internal training on proactive communication methods/styles and active listening, with a focus on methods to gather and share information in a culturally relevant manner related to services and supports and an emphasis on building trust and rapport with families and those we serve.
4. Person Centered Planning Facilitation course and content to ensure meeting the needs of those we serve and it's understandable; SC's need to start from an understanding of who the person is, their wants and needs then services, vs. starting from a service perspective.
5. TCRC Community Development department will review our Cultural competence training to provide input. Expectations of (new and current) vendors to assist them in building greater cultural competence services.
6. Implement Promotora model and maximize the use of Promotoras.

7. Increase availability of FRC's through Promotora project to enhance responsiveness to individual and family needs.
8. Develop FRC referrals form for adults and for those receiving the Promotora service; and encourage consistent referrals across all age groups.
9. Familiarize individuals new to our system about available resources, services, supports and next steps:
 - (A) Look at the Intake process and explore if further conversations and resources can be provided to families and individuals given the data.
 - (B) Work with the FRC to navigate the system and understand what the FRC have available.
10. Continue to develop services and resources for outlying areas.
11. Review our current outreach methods and explore organized approaches to develop by attending community events and places that TCRC can attend that has meaning to the community (i.e., community events, coffee socials).
12. Continue to explore options to communicate POS Expenditure data and information in a more understandable manner.