

RESULTS OF THE PUBLIC FORUMS ON REGIONAL CENTER PURCHASE OF SERVICE DISPARITIES:
FISCAL YEAR 2016-2017

Outreach

San Andreas Regional Center (SARC) published its disparity data on its website (<http://www.sanandreasregional.org/pos-data-analysis-fy>) before the end of calendar year 2017. A link to the data was provided through its website and social media including facebook, instagram, and twitter. The information was also on our website. Community stakeholders and partners, including the Family Resource Centers, Disability Rights California, and the State Council on Developmental Disabilities were also informed and encouraged to advertise and share this information. A flyer (which included text in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Tagalog) was mailed and posted on our website and social media sites to inform the community of the public meeting dates and times. This information continued to be shared with the community through all outlets described until after the public forum dates had passed.

Public Forums

San Andreas held public forums regarding its analysis of the Purchase of Service Disparity data for Fiscal Year 2016-2017. These forums were held from 6:00 to 8:00pm allowing 45 minutes for the presentation of the data and the rest of the time to conduct question and answer group sessions. These presentations took place in the evening at:

- Monterey County – March 7th at The Steinbeck Center in Salinas
- Santa Clara County – March 14th at the Camden Community Center in San Jose
- Both public forums meetings were broadcasted live on the Agency's Facebook social media site

Regional center staff members fluent in each threshold language for each county were present to provide translation for community members. Translators used wireless headphones to simultaneously translate. Based on the County's specific language needs and the previous years' community feedback, a separate presentation was simultaneously offered at the Salinas, CA location for Spanish-speaking attendees and simultaneous Vietnamese, Chinese and Spanish language translation were offered at the San Jose, CA presentation.

A visual breakdown of the data was projected via a PowerPoint (attached) where slides were displayed while the information was presented. The power point provided a graph representation of the data that offered a comparison of how clients from different age groups, ethnics groups and language needs accessed and utilized regional center funded services. Ten

discussion questions were presented to small separated by language needs and led by regional center staff which were used to encourage discussion and idea sharing.

Attendance (this does not include regional center staff) was taken via sign-in sheet:

- March 7th: Salinas, CA, 10 staff, 15 community members
- March 14th: San Jose, CA 12 Staff, 50 community members

Engagement

Attendees were allowed an opportunity to ask questions of the presenter after the presentation in a question-and-answer manner. Attendees were also encouraged and provided the opportunity to participate in group discussion and feedback session which took place after the initial presentation of the data. The questions for the feedback session were prepared in advance; however, individuals were able to ask their own follow-up questions as well. Questions included a focus on how families felt their culture or language needs were respected by their regional center service coordinator and vendored service providers as well as questions about how clients and families prepare for their individual program plan meetings and gather information regarding services. They were asked if they were aware of regional center-created materials, if these materials were made available to them in their primary language, if they utilized our website or social media presence, and if materials explaining their rights were provided to them as required in their primary language. Participants were questioned regarding their knowledge about and comfort around the issues of self-advocacy. Feedback was sought regarding our public outreach and other processes and how to increase the participation from individuals with primary language needs in one of the SARC's threshold languages.

Feedback

As in previous years some attendees expressed surprise at the levels of disparity shown in the data and the lack of change in the data presented. A common theme was a need for more information in a timely manner prior to individual program plan meetings. Another common theme was that while service coordinators were generally rated as culturally sensitive and respectful, community members served consistently felt that their worker should better understand how cultural ideas can create barriers to services for clients. Attendees also shared staff did not have enough time and availability to devote sufficient attention to their specific needs; this lack was universally blamed, by the community, on high caseloads.

Families also raised concerns about the information available from both DDS and the regional center regarding the intake process, what developmental disabilities are, and what services are available both from the regional centers and from other community sources. Participants

suggested centralized source of information would help families to prepare for IPP's and other meetings. Parents also requested more follow-up from the regional center to make sure needs were met after the meeting and that information presented was understood. Attendees shared a need to help clients and parents better understand the transition from Early Start services into Lanterman services as well as transitions from one age group to another, (e.g. school-age to transition age to adult age services).

As in previous years, the availability and quality of services in areas outside of the San Jose – Sunnyvale – Santa Clara metropolitan area, especially in South Monterey County, was of noted concern. The ability of service providers to meet linguistic and cultural needs remains of particular concern. There is currently a shortage of respite providers in the entire SARC catchment area especially in South Monterey County. The most commonly received feedback was regarding caseloads, participants shared concerns and frustrations about how large caseloads hinder service coordinators from having adequate time to provide clients and families with the support and time they need to best understand regional center services and supports.

We also asked for attendees to share requests for topics for our planned monthly “webinar/digital workshops” SARC plans to make available to the community. Requested topics included more information on eligibility requirements, parent/family member trainings, socialization programs and opportunities for clients, transitions between age groups (e.g. school-age to adult), sex education, services and resources, conservatorship and more transparency from the regional center (e.g. the purchase of service process),.

Ongoing and Planned Actions to Reduce Disparities

- We have created and staffed a Cultural Diversity Specialist position to provide outreach to the community, to work with community based organizations who have partnered with SARC to complete community outreach in all catchment areas counties, provide and create culturally-specific training to regional center and vendor staff
- The Cultural Diversity Specialist participates in regular teleconferences with the Department of Developmental Services as scheduled by the Department
- The Cultural Diversity Specialist continues to meet regularly with counterparts from neighboring regional centers to share and develop practices for addressing issues of disparities
- San Andreas launched a “Prometora” style community Outreach Project in partnership with five community based organizations who contracted with San Andreas to take a lead role with community outreach throughout all five counties served through the San Andreas catchment area.

SARC partnered with 5 community based organizations with an existing and strong presence in the target communities through SARC's catchment area. These

agencies/CBO's were purposely selected to assist in effectively completing community outreach and in providing one to one mentorship supports to clients, because of their continuing presence and strong rapport with community members. These agencies completed the following to assist with community outreach:

1. Parents Helping Parents
 - a. Completed 17 community events with a total of 3643 attendees
 - b. Spoke with well over 1000 individuals who had questions about the regional center
 - c. Referred 22 individuals to regional center; 6 individuals began the intake process
 - d. 1:1 mentorship: Provided services to 21 families
 2. Friends of Children with Special Needs
 - a. Completed 15 community events with approximately 2000 attendees
 - b. Spoke with 117 individuals who had questions about the regional center
 - c. Referred 30 individuals to regional center; 4 individuals went intake
 - d. 1:1 mentorship: Provided services to 21 families
 3. Special Kids Crusade
 - a. Completed 16 community events with approximately 1727 attendees
 - b. Spoke with 605 individuals with questions about the regional center
 - c. Referred 17 individuals to regional center; at least 5 applied for services
 - d. 1:1 mentorship: Provided services to 26 families
 4. Special Parents Information Network
 - a. Completed 10 community events with approximately 278 attendees
 - b. Spoke with 51 individuals with questions about the regional center
 - c. Referred 2 individuals to regional center; 0 have gone through intake
 - d. 1:1 mentorship: Provided services to 13 families
 5. Ujima Adult and Family Services
 - a. Completed 10 community events with well over 1000 attendees at the events
 - b. Spoke with 100 individuals with questions about the regional center
 - c. Referred 3 individuals to regional center; 2 applied for services
 - d. 1:1 mentorship: Provided services to 8 families
- For the upcoming fiscal year the Department of Developmental Services contracted directly with community based organizations for continued community outreach and to address issues of disparity
 - San Andreas has continued to hire new service coordinators, with an emphasis on bilingual staff
 - Continue to sponsor and hold Spanish, Vietnamese and Chinese-language specific conferences in Santa Clara and Monterey counties annually. Later in 2018, SARC will also host conferences for the Filipino and African American communities.
 - Regional center staff appear on Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese-language radio
 - Drop-in "coffee socials" occur on a regular basis at each office

- Participates in a Disparity Task Force with SCDD and other stakeholders
- Outreach to community stakeholders, with an emphasis on Latino, Asian and African-American groups
- Developed and made “Welcome Binders” available to eligible individuals
- Annual self-determination conference
- Annual community festivals at adaptive parks in Santa Clara, Monterey, and Santa Cruz counties
- Continued development of digital workshops
- Partnered with Premiere Services to expedite the respite program and offer support to new families by walking them through the process
- SARC staff participated in a Vietnamese talk show to promote services
- SARC will participate in “Comunidad del Valle” a talk show on KNTV where services and program will be discussed
- SARC partnered with the First 5 Monterey to offer 2 sessions on childhood development

San Andreas Regional Center (SARC) will continue to partner and work in collaboration with community based organization within the SARC catchment area to address issues of disparity and to continue to identify best practices for working with all of the diverse populations we serve. SARC remains committed to working towards ensuring all eligible individuals and their families understand the regional center services and supports available to them and how to access these services.