



# North Los Angeles County Regional Center

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June 14, 2019

Brian Winfield, Chief Deputy Director  
Department of Developmental Services  
Regional Center Operations Section  
P.O. Box 944202, MS3-9  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2020

## Re: NLACRC's Purchase of Service (POS) Expenditure Data and Public Stakeholder Meetings for FY 2017/18.

Dear Mr. Winfield:

This letter will serve as NLACRC's report on the POS data compilation for FY 2017/18 and NLACRC's POS Expenditure Data Stakeholder Meetings that were held in March 2019.

### POS DATA REVIEW & ANALYSIS

The POS data was posted on the NLACRC Transparency & Accountability page of our web site ([www.nlacrc.org](http://www.nlacrc.org)) on December 20, 2018. An announcement was placed on the home page of our website with a link to the posted data.

Report Item	Statute
Meeting dates, times, and locations	<b>4519.5(e)</b> Due to the large geographic region that NLACRC serves, it is important to NLACRC to hold meetings in a variety of locations to ensure accessibility of participation. As such, public stakeholder meetings were held on the following dates, times, and locations:  March 7, 2019 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the NLACRC Chatsworth office.  March 14, 2019 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the NLACRC Lancaster office.  March 22, 2019 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. with the Spanish-speaking support group Cultivar y Crecer at the NLACRC Chatsworth office.
Culturally and linguistically appropriate	<b>4519.5(e)</b> The meeting announcement was posted in English



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	<p>and Spanish on the NLACRC website with 30 days advance notice. A postcard was mailed to all consumers/families.</p> <p>NLACRC utilized social media to further promote attendance and participation. Specifically, Facebook posts were created on the English and Spanish pages and email blasts were sent in English and Spanish.</p> <p>The PowerPoint presentation provided at the public meetings was made available in the threshold languages of English and Spanish.</p> <p>NLACRC offered additional language translation services and accommodations if notified in advance of the scheduled meetings. No additional language translation requests were received.</p>
<p><b>Actions to improve public attendance and participation</b></p>	<p><b>4519.5(f)(1)(A)</b>          Meetings were held during weeknights to encourage attendance and participation for those who work during the day. As part of our innovative efforts to increase participation for individuals who have barriers with transportation or who cannot attend the event, NLACRC wanted to ensure a forum was created to receive firsthand feedback. Therefore, this year a feedback survey was created in English and Spanish for individuals who were unable to attend the meetings. The community was notified via email blast of the survey. In addition, NLACRC also provided information and flyers to case management staff to further encourage attendance and participation through routine program planning and to reach out to bilingual Spanish families on their caseloads.</p>
<p><b>Copies of minutes and attendee comments</b></p>	<p><b>4519.5(f)(1)(B)</b>          Meeting minutes and attendee comments are included with this report.</p>
<p><b>Identified disparities in the POS data</b></p>	<p><b>4519.5(f)(1)(C)</b>          The data does reflect some disparities in regard to per capita spending by ethnicity. With that said, it is difficult to know with certainty the reason or basis for these disparities.</p>



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	<p>NLACRC wanted the public to be fully informed of the limitations of the expenditure data. As such, NLACRC highlighted the limitations in Slides 9, 10, 11, and 12; along with providing examples to provide a better understanding.</p> <p>Furthermore, there are some data elements that need to be fully understood that are not captured in the current expenditure data. Specifically, expenditure data does not capture the use of generic, community, or private resources, which in turn, makes it difficult to truly understand the disparities or unmet needs. As such, NLACRC is actively working with an IT consultant to help us examine and analyze our data to increase reliability and validity of limitations.</p> <p>NLACRC is committed to continue to identify and address any disparities in the POS data.</p>
<p><b>Regional centers' recommendations and plans to promote equity and reduce disparities</b></p>	<p><b>4519.5(f)(1)(C)</b>  NLACRC has been actively engaged in promoting equities and addressing disparity-related issues in a variety of projects:</p> <p><b>The Family Empowerment Team in Action (FETA) – partnership with California State University Northridge.</b>  The FETA project is a collaboration between NLACRC and the university that was created to better understand and address disparities for Hispanic/Latin consumers. The project had three main components: 1) utilize social work students or “navigators” to work with families who had an active POS with no utilization or no POS authorized; 2) cultural competency training for vendors and providers; and 3) develop recommendations for NLACRC. This project has been successful in identifying themes and patterns that will be summarized in the final report that will be submitted to the Department.</p>



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## **Parent Mentor Project**

NLACRC was awarded disparity funds to hire a parent or family member of a consumer to become part of NLACRC staff. The goal is for the Parent Mentor to help foster relationships and build trust within our Hispanic/Latino population. This individual will help families navigate the regional center and work with staff to provide consultation and recommendations. In addition, NLACRC will be implementing a Parent Mentor Hotline to allow for our community to navigate NLACRC in a forum that may increase utilization.

## **Partnerships with CBO projects**

NLACRC has a strong community partnership with community based organizations. Partners include the Autism Society of Los Angeles, Integrated Community Collaborative (ICC), Learning Rights Law Center, and Pathpoint.

In fact, NLACRC is pleased to announce the newly created “NLACRC Disparity Committee” or (“Increased Access to Regional Center Services Committee”). This monthly committee will be comprised of the following individuals who are stakeholders in our disparity-related efforts:

1. NLACRC Case Management Leadership
2. NLACRC Parent Mentor (in recruiting phase)
3. NLACRC Public Information Department
4. NLACRC Legislative Educators
5. Family Focus Resource Center
6. Family Empowerment Team in Action (FETA)
7. Integrated Community Collaborative/Intregadoras (ICC)

In addition, NLACRC is launching “Cafecito Entre Nos” (coffee amongst us) to create a welcoming forum for Bilingual parents and family members to have coffee with NLACRC leadership and with the Intregadoras (parent perspective). See attached



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flyer.

## **Legislative Advocacy Empowerment & Training**

NLACRC believes that high caseloads contribute to disparities in our communities of color and therefore providing advocacy education and empowerment is one strategy to address disparities. The goal is for NLACRC to increase community engagement, which in turn, will result in our community getting more involved, more empowered, which naturally will result in legislative advocacy.

NLACRC has a philosophy that our community needs to be informed and actively involved in legislative activities, both locally and statewide. Earlier this year, NLACRC offered two Legislative Academies, one held in English and one held in Spanish, to provide training to community members on legislative advocacy and the importance of meeting with elected representatives to let them know about the challenges our system faces and to ask for their support. Guest speakers at the academies included Assemblymember Christy Smith and Assemblymember Luz Rivas, which demonstrates the partnerships NLACRC has fostered within our legislative community.

## **Cultural competency training and outreach to underserved populations**

The Family Empowerment Team in Action (FETA) project has created the following trainings on YouTube for vendors and providers:

- Cultural Competency & Cultural Humility
- Understanding Your Own Attitudes and Bias
- Cultural Competence Strategies

The trainings were created in YouTube format so the training can continue after completion of the project.



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## **NLACRC website and social media platforms**

NLACRC utilizes our website and social media platforms to reach a wide range of audience. In addition to the English and Spanish Facebook pages that were mentioned earlier; NLACRC is in the process of expanding its social media platforms to include YouTube and Twitter to reach a wider audience. Earlier this year, NLACRC has increased efforts to track and monitor metrics of social media usage and preferences, which has been utilized to tailor our platforms for our community.

## **Commonly Coordinated Services Brochure**

NLACRC became aware of the need to develop brochures of our commonly coordinated services, for both our community and for our new staff. These brochures provide information about the most commonly coordinated services for School Age, Transition, and Adult consumers. They were published in both English and Spanish earlier this year.

These brochures are distributed in a variety of settings:

- At initial and routine program planning meetings
- At New Consumer and Parent Orientations
- At public events and forums
- To new consumers and family members of the regional center
- Family Focus Resource Center

In fact, these brochures have been made available electronically on our website.

Please note, NLACRC is under development of a newly created “Family Service Guide” that will be made available by Fall 2019. This guide will provide information regarding services available through the regional center, services and contact information for generic resources, advocacy



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assistance, and contact information for NLACRC, DDS and OCRA.

## **Festival Educacional**

Festival Educacional is an annual event that was created and geared towards our Spanish-speaking community. The purpose of this festival is allow a forum that is conducted in Spanish on regional center services, resources, and presentations on culturally-relevant topics, such as, immigration and housing resources. In addition, there is a resource fair component to foster relationships with generic resources.

On Saturday January 26, 2019, NLACRC had the largest turnout of participation with an estimated 150 community members in attendance.

In addition, surveys were created in English and Spanish that were aimed to collect feedback about regional center services and topics.

The community provided feedback with a specific request for NLACRC to hold more frequent events conducted in Spanish, similar to Festival Educacional. The results from the survey also highlighted some important themes, including requests for:

- Increase parent education topics
- How to plan for child's future
- Workshops in Autism
- Knowing the rights for service delivery
- Knowing what services are available
- How to talk about sexual health with children

This feedback will be incorporated in our newly created NLACRC Disparity Committee for review.



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## **How many meetings did the regional center conduct?**

Two public meetings were held in Chatsworth, including a presentation at the Cultivar y Crecer support group; and one public meeting in the Antelope Valley.

## **Were meetings held in several languages and/or were translators available?**

The meetings were held in both English with Spanish interpretation provided. NLACRC did not receive any requests for interpretation in other languages or other special accommodations.

## **Were meeting materials provided in several languages?**

Meeting materials were provided in our threshold languages of English and Spanish.

## **What date(s) and time(s) did the regional center conduct the meeting(s)?**

Public meetings were conducted on the following dates, times, and locations:

- March 7, 2019 in Chatsworth from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM
- March 14, 2019 in Lancaster from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM
- March 22, 2019 in Chatsworth for Cultivar y Crecer from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM

## **How were meetings scheduled to accommodate community participation?**

Meetings were scheduled on weeknights to accommodate increased community participation. Two public meetings were held and one meeting was held with the Spanish-speaking support group, Cultivar y Crecer.

## **How did the regional center ensure that all voices were heard, regardless of race, national origin, income, etc.?**

NLACRC promoted the event in a variety of platforms that included the NLACRC website, Facebook, "News You Can Use" email notifications, email blasts, and hard copies of flyers. The innovative approach of sending out a survey to our community for those who could not attend was an attempt to ensure all voices were heard. Also, our Commonly Coordinated Services Brochures encourages feedback and questions. Lastly, we developed "Cafecito Entre Nos" (coffee amongst us) to be a welcoming and more culturally-sensitive venue to increase participation for all voices to heard, regardless of race, national origin, income, etc.

## **What was reported to be valuable or important to the community being addressed?**

The community has provided feedback and some individuals are seeking increased follow up and response from their Service Coordinator (themes related to high caseloads), more information on Behavioral Health Treatment and request for NLACRC to maintain Behavioral Health services; more information on what services are offered at NLACRC and through community/generic resources.



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## **How were the cultural and linguistic needs of the communities taken into account?**

The cultural and linguistic needs of the communities were taken into account by providing Spanish language interpretation at the public stakeholder meetings and having the PowerPoint available in Spanish. The presentation was also provided at the Cultivar y Crecer Spanish-speaking support group meeting. In addition, NLACRC was mindful and strategic about using language that was less complex and less technical, as feedback was received that complex terms and language may prevent some from fully participating. As such, NLACRC included a variety of examples on any content that may be more complex to understand.

## **How did the regional center communicate the goal or purpose of the meeting?**

As stated above, this year we focused on making the purpose of the meeting easier to understand by modifying the content on the advertisement to be less technical on the flyer that was mailed and sent via email blast with the hopes of drawing more people to attend the meetings. Feedback was received that some members of the community may not fully understand the technical terms to reference the event. There was increased attendance at the meeting held at NLACRC Chatsworth and attendance was about the same at NLACRC Lancaster. The attendance for the Cultivar y Crecer group decreased from last year. The facilitator that works with this group suggested that next year she will call group members to encourage them to attend.

## **Was the meeting conducted in a format that allowed attendees to feel comfortable and interact with each other (e.g., small group conversations)?**

The meeting was conducted in a theater style setting which is how we typically conduct public meetings. We did not conduct our meetings in a small group format, however it is something that we will consider for future meetings. In addition, NLACRC partnered with our Family Focus Resource Center (FFRC) to be in attendance and have a resource table in the back part of the room, to foster and engage one-to-one interactions, whereas some members may feel more comfortable engaging individually or with other parents.

## **What did attendees perceive as the purpose of the meeting?**

It appeared that the attendees had a basic understanding of the purpose of the meeting. Next year, we will look into offering a brief survey to see if attendees perceive the intended purpose of the meeting. At Cultivar y Crecer, the audience was asked about the clarity of the advertisement of the meetings and the feedback was positive and no changes were recommended.

## **What, if anything, did the regional center do differently this year to improve public attendance and participation?**

We worked on making the purpose of the meeting more easily understood by



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changing the wording of the flyers that were distributed to promote the meeting. We publicized the meeting in several different ways including a mailing, Facebook posts (8 in English and 8 in Spanish, starting in January), and email blasts as we find this to be an effective way to promote our events. A feedback survey was made available for anyone who wanted to submit written comments. We received four completed surveys.

- **What was/were the outcome(s)?**
  - Attendance at the public meeting held in Chatsworth was greater this year compared to last year.
  - Attendance at the public meeting held in Lancaster was about the same.
  - Attendance at the Cultivar y Crecer meeting decreased this year.
- **How many attendees were expected? How many attended?**
  - 50 RSVPs were received for the Chatsworth meeting. 44 people attended.
  - 28 RSVPs were received for the Lancaster meeting. 16 people attended.
  - Attendance at Cultivar y Crecer varies but it was lower than usual for this meeting. 5 people attended.
- **What concerns were expressed in the past from your community?**

The concerns that generated the most dialogue last year included the following:

  - Caseload ratios for service coordinators.
  - Questions about the FETA program – how many families participating, how are you measuring success, how are you tracking families.
  - Why aren't Hispanics receiving the same types of services as Whites?
- **How was this used to guide new actions/strategies in increasing attendance and participation?**
- *Strategies for Caseload Ratios:*
  - NLACRC has developed internal tracking measures for caseload compositions of each service coordinator which are used by management to closely review the number of consumer served per caseload. Another measure was extensive recruitment efforts of Consumer Services Coordinators earlier this year which has helped reduce



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caseload size; along with the implementation of OD and Floater Specialist positions to help serve consumers and families on uncovered caseloads.

- **FETA Program:**
  - NLACRC submits quarterly progress reports to the Department
  - CSUN's Research Department has been involved in tracking quantitative and qualitative measures. The final report will be submitted to the Department at the end of the project.
- **Disparities by Ethnicity/Race**
  - NLACRC is actively trying to understand the reasons and basis for disparities that exist in our community. By addressing the limitations of our data by working with an IT Consultant, NLACRC is hopeful to have more accurate indicators that can be supported quantitatively.

## **Did the regional center include/collaborate with partner agencies or community partners?**

NLACRC has been actively collaborating with our community based organizations, such as, the Integrated Community Collaborative (ICC) to improve outreach to our Hispanic/Latino community. In fact, NLACRC offered a Regional Center Orientation with Leadership to all community based organizations in December 2018. We also have invited ICC to be present at our New Consumer and Parent Orientations. Additionally, the newly created NLACRC Disparity Committee was specifically created to collaborate with stakeholders, agencies, and community partners.

## **What outreach efforts were considered and utilized?**

Outreach efforts included a mailing sent to all consumers and families to notify them about the meetings, meeting announcements posted on Facebook, and several email blasts that were sent.

## **What action(s) were successful? What actions were unsuccessful in relation to outreach?**

We find in general that a combination of mailings, social media promotion and email blasts seem to work well in general for promoting our events. The facilitator who works with Cultivar y Crecer suggested that next year she will make phone calls to encourage group members to attend this important meeting.

## **Was a copy of meeting minutes and attendee comments submitted with the report?**

Yes.



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## **What did attendees express as the challenges that they face?**

The most common challenges that attendees expressed and that we often hear are consumers and families not having access to information about services, and not feeling supported.

## **Does the data indicate a need to reduce disparities in purchase of services?**

While data, on the surface, demonstrates disparities in certain areas, the limitations of the data (as explained in the PowerPoint on Slides 9, 10, 11, and 12) makes it difficult to know the root cause of the disparities. The Center is working with a consultant to help us examine and analyze our data in order to better understand the limitations that exist.

## **If so, briefly describe the type of disparities that were discussed (e.g. by race/ethnicity, residence, age, etc.)**

We discussed where disparities may appear to exist more predominantly in our community is for our adult consumers (Slide 21). Individuals who identify as White receive more POS than other groups but this may also be due to cultural differences where some non-White cultures prefer to have their adult children live at home, therefore less money is spent on residential services for these groups. The area where more research may be required is for expenses by ethnicity/race for ages 3-21 (Slide 20) as a greater variance appears to exist here.

## **In developing the recommendations and plan to address disparity,**

- **What processes and resources were used to engage a variety of stakeholders?**

We have been working in collaboration with the ICC to improve our outreach and communication with the Spanish-speaking community. They participated at our Festival Educativo resource fair and spoke to many families. They are also partnering with us to offer the “Cafecito Entre Nos” a community coffee type of activity, to generate dialogue with our Spanish-speaking families. Also, NLACRC works collaboratively with our Family Focus Resource Center.

- **What venues were utilized to gather information (i.e., public meetings, support groups, board meetings)?**

Venues that were utilized to gather information included two public meetings held at the NLACRC offices and a support group meeting.

- **What information was obtained through those processes and resources?**

At the Cultivar y Crecer meeting, there was a suggestion to consider holding the meeting at a different venue such as a school that is more



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accessible to the Spanish-speaking community.

- **How did input from the community help guide/develop new or ongoing strategies?**

Based on the community's input, we will place more focus on helping consumers and families have a better understanding about services available to them, and looking at ways to help them feel more supported.

- **What proposed strategies and/or plan will be implemented to meet the communities' expressed needs?**

We will be publishing a Family Guide this year with more information about services and resources. We are also working on updating the packets that we provide to our new families to ensure that they are receiving useful information.

We are expanding our social media platforms to include YouTube and Twitter. This will allow us to post and share more educational videos, information, and resources to a wider and more diverse audience.

## **How were strategies communicated to the community?**

Many of the strategies mentioned above were discussed as part of the PowerPoint presentations at the POS meetings. NLACRC did communicate and present of our efforts to address disparities and Community Coffees that are held throughout the community.

## **Did the meeting allow an opportunity for attendees to respond to proposals and/or strategies to reduce disparity?**

Yes, during the PowerPoint we review the proposed strategies and attendees have an opportunity to provide feedback. We also made a survey available for those who wanted to submit written comments if they were unable to attend the meeting or if they had something to say after the meetings had taken place.

## **How have the plans and recommendations from the prior annual report been implemented and what have been the outcomes?**

- **Continue FETA**  
FETA has developed cultural competency training for vendors and is developing a report to summarize the outcomes of the project.
- **Social Media**  
We have continued our social media efforts increasing English page followers to nearly 4,000 and Spanish followers to 1,000 since the last report. We are in the process of adding YouTube and Twitter.



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- **Legislative Advocacy**  
Our Community and Legislative Educator consultants have increased scheduled visits with legislators, and they will continue to provide legislative advocacy training to consumers, family members and providers, and organize special events such as Town Halls and Candidates' Forums. In January and February 2019, two Legislative Academies were held and as a result, some of those who were trained traveled to Sacramento to testify at budget hearings. In FY 2019-20, the consultants will work with our service coordinators to provide them with legislative advocacy training and offer additional trainings to the community.
- **Community Coffees**  
Deputy Director, Ruth Janka, has participated in several "Community Coffees" in the community at both public and vendor sites. In addition, we are adding our first "Cafecito Entre Nos" (coffee amongst us) specific to the Spanish-speaking community on June 1, 2019.
- **Commonly Coordinated Services Brochures**  
These informational brochures for School Age, Transition and Adult consumers and families were completed in English and Spanish and were made available at the meetings. The Family Guide will be completed by fall 2019.
- **Community Based Organizations**  
A training was offered to the CBOs earlier this year to provide them with information about NLACRC.
- **In-Home Respite Care Analysis**  
In January 2019, the cap for Respite was lifted. As such, NLACRC redesigned the Respite Assessment Tool that has been made public on our NLACRC website. Innovation in NLACRC's Respite Assessment includes a cultural competency component and individualized schedule. Due to cultural reasons, some Hispanic/Latino families do not feel comfortable utilizing respite; therefore, NLACRC is committed to educating our community that parent conversion respite is an option where the family can refer a family friend or member to be hired by a vendored service provider to be the direct care professional, which is often noted as more culturally appropriate. Some families have provided feedback that they felt more comfortable accessing social recreation programs in the community over respite.



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- **Valley Industry and Commerce Association**  
Our leadership met with the director of VICA in 2018 and in 2019 our staff have been attending the various VICA meetings to become more involved in community and legislative advocacy efforts.
- **Regional Center “Concierge”**  
NLACRC applied for disparity funding for a Parent Mentor which was approved. We are in the process of recruitment for this position.

## ABOUT THE PUBLIC STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

The meetings that were held in Chatsworth and Lancaster were conducted by Executive Director, George Stevens and Deputy Director, Ruth Janka. The meeting with Cultivar y Crecer was conducted by Director of Finance, Kim Rolfes and Consumer Services Director, Dr. Jesse Weller. The POS expenditure data and information were presented using a PowerPoint presentation. All attendees received a hard copy of the presentation, which was available in English or Spanish.

A total of 65 individuals attended the three meetings which included consumers, parents, vendors, and at least one representative from the Office of Clients’ Rights Advocacy, the Statewide Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Department of Developmental Services, the Family Focus Resource Center and the ICC.

## QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

These are the questions and comments raised by those in attendance at the meetings held on 3/7/19 at NLACRC Chatsworth, 3/14/19 at NLACRC Lancaster, and 3/22/19 at the Cultivar y Crecer Support Group meeting held at NLACRC Chatsworth.

Questions or Comments	Response
Why can’t vendors raise their rates?	Vendors are unable to raise their rates unilaterally. It has to be approved by regional center or Department of Developmental Services. But there’s a rate freeze so regional centers can’t raise the rates.
But a newer agency can have a higher rate?	True, but many providers had rates before the rate freezes. Newer vendors are funded at the median rate. A brand new provider may be paid less because of the median rates. This leads to disparity and separation from people having access to services.
With regards to self-determination, how will you have an equivalency when you have different prices for different services?	We look at the last 12 months of your expenditures and that’s your budget. For those individuals who have no POS and are



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	<p>in the program, DDS will give us data to determine an average to cost for a budget. We have not yet received a formula for this.</p>
<p>Since the prices were frozen, is there any evidence that suggests that providers are going out of business?</p>	<p>Yes, it's staggering to see how many services are saying they can't make it. We've had to patch together services for consumers or move them to other programs. Some people are not receiving the most ideal services. As we move towards more community based services, we need more autonomy to set rates for services that people really need. The solution is with the legislature. They are the ones that set rates and who froze rates. We need legislative change. Providers are also not able to offset costs to provide local minimum wage.</p>
<p>I'm a single parent of an adult son who lives at home. I have a concern about the lack of support for family members who live at home. The regional center should include family members who live at home. It's lonely for parents who live at home with their children.</p>	<p>Refer to case management for follow up.</p>
<p>For school age consumers, the POS numbers are going down instead of up. Working with Hispanic families, we know that there are some who get a lot and some who get nothing. This data seems very misleading. I'd like to see more data on how much money is really spent on Whites v. Hispanic families.</p>	<p>There are individuals who have more service needs due to the gravity of their disability. We spend more money on these people. We need to look at the differences and how it's segmented. This data doesn't do that. We still can't tell why people don't use services that have been authorized. The FETA team has gone out and spoken to families and they are working on a report. The data is not reflective of the issues that exist.</p>
<p>You also have a grant to help people?</p>	<p>That's the FETA grant. A report is being developed about the FETA project.</p>
<p>What is Category 5?</p>	<p>Category 5 is a person that requires services and treatment similar to a person with an intellectual disability who can be found eligible to receive regional center services. This is from the mid-1970s.</p>
<p>Do you buy services in bulk, like Costco?</p>	<p>No, services are purchased individually.</p>
<p>For FETA, you're not working with special education students?</p>	<p>They are MSW students.</p>



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<p>I have seen many young kids who do not have special education services. How can we reach those families?</p>	<p>We have hired a bilingual special education advocate to work with our community. Families are struggling to get the FAPE that they are promised.</p>
<p>Has there been a change in the CSC's role of working with families?</p>	<p>We've tried very hard this year to bring down caseloads. We hope that by doing this, CSCs will become more engaged with their families. We're funded for about 66% of what it takes to hire CSCs. It's impossible to get caseloads down enough where they can support families. It's a service where a relationship is needed. We're down to the low 80s now. We hope to receive the 8% across the board increase so that we can bring caseloads down further.</p>
<p>OCRA partners with regional centers every year to provide trainings. This year we're focusing on Special Education. We also collaborate with FFRCs to offer workshops. We need to do a due process training for regional centers. You should file a 4731 complaint or file for due process. You should exercise your rights. You have 14 days for a service coordinator to give you a decision.</p>	
<p>Who should we go to if we don't hear back from a service coordinator?</p>	<p>You can contact the service coordinator's supervisor or contact Officer of the Day.</p>
<p>Why is there a difference between the "Other" category for LA County and for NLACRC and what does the category represent?</p>	<p>Other represents American Indian, multicultural, unidentified, declined to state, Alaska. We have a very small population who identify themselves as "Other." This might be related to people who identify themselves as multiethnic. Sometimes multicultural families may not feel like they fit neatly into one category so they check "Other."</p>
<p>How do we know what is authorized for a consumer such as for equipment, horseback riding therapy, etc.?</p>	<p>Any authorized service is reflected in an annual statement that is mailed to the individual. The primary way to know is in the IPP. It lists any service regional center has authorized. If it's not in the IPP, regional center wouldn't have the authority to purchase it.</p>
<p>What about if it goes through Medi-Cal?</p>	<p>Those services can be reflected in the IPP</p>



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	but the funding source would be listed as Medi-Cal. A service like behavioral services is funded by Medi-Cal. An IPP may have that service needed to achieve a goal and Medi-Cal or private insurance is the funding source.
Why are the expenditures so different between diagnoses?	It depends upon the severity of the impact. For example with cerebral palsy, individuals are very physically impacted and they may require nursing or 24-hour care and assistance, durable medical equipment, those kinds of supports.
Is it possible for an individual to be counted twice?	Yes, that's a limitation of the data.
I would assume that in general the best scenario would be to live at home and have a network and yet for Hispanic families, most keep their children at home but even in this category (per person expenses by ethnicity or race for residence type) they're still trending lower than the other groups. What's the contributing factor?	The feedback we have heard from the Hispanic community is that some families prefer to only have family members care for an individual so they'll decline respite services. For families who don't have relatives who they can't refer to conversion agencies, some families decline respite services.
In your response to this information, are you helping families addressing those basic needs so that regional center can help them?	Yes, that's the FETA Project's role.
Does the Per Person Expenses by Ethnicity or Race for Residence Type: Residential include independent living?	No, it does not.
Regarding the goal for the Parent Mentor to foster relationships and build trust within out Hispanic/Latino population that seems limiting. Is that the only population that the project is targeting or is it that the other groups don't need help?	One of the premises based on the data is that communities of color are underserved. For this project, we are focusing on communities of color.
Is the assumption that other communities of color don't need assistance?	This serves as a starting point for other such programs. Children's Hospital began using a parent navigator with the same concept. They found that parents or family members may feel more comfortable talking to a family member who has experience with our system and through that kind of relationship; the



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<p>Comment – a parent said she asked for a service and was told regional center couldn't fund it. She said when they told me they wouldn't fund it I quit asking for service.</p>	<p>navigator can help build that bridge. There may be things we can't fund but that doesn't mean we can't assist you with other needs.</p>
<p>How do you distinguish what this person will do versus the Family Focus Resource Center?</p>	<p>This project will have a hotline for people to call and receive support. The mentor will get information about what some of the challenges are, collect that data and work in conjunction with the FFRC, FFRC and service coordinators. They will split their time between the 3 valleys.</p>
<p>Some regional centers have a multicultural specialist. Do you have one?</p>	<p>We have a position open for a diversity and cultural manager. We had someone but she left and we're still trying to recruit for that position.</p>
<p>I like the idea that you're hiring a parent mentor. We need more programs in Spanish. There are a lot of people who can benefit from the services but people get discouraged. Once they are turned down they give up. What is this system for? We're not being helped. How can we approach the social workers? Some make people feel very small and that is not good.</p>	<p>That's where cultural competency is very important. We need to look at how to approach an issue in a way that is respectful. People should not feel that they are not important.</p>
<p>My son is 40 but I still get confused about what regional center will fund versus what a generic service will fund. There's not enough explanation from the caseworker that it's a generic service and where to go to get the service. When you're talking IHSS and Medi-Cal and you have to go to multiple agencies that can be very daunting.</p>	<p>A generic resource is any service that is the legal responsibility of a legal entity that receives public funds such as school districts, Medi-Cal, IHSS. Generic resources must be pursued first. If the individual has a need above and beyond what a generic resource can provide, a regional center can supplement what the generic resource provides.</p>
<p>How much support can service coordinators give to encourage these generic resources to be more cooperative?</p>	<p>We call it advocacy assistance. Service coordinators can provide advocacy assistance. High caseloads have made it more challenging for them to engage in advocacy assistance because of the time intensity that is associated with it. Service coordinators may have to seek help from the</p>



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	<p>FFRC especially if it's advocacy related to special education, or they can connect a family with the Clients' Rights Advocate who is well versed in many areas. If a service coordinator declines to provide advocacy assistance and if you disagree, you have a right to file a notice. It's a service just like any others.</p>
<p>You said you're growing at about 460 intakes per month. If you were to look in your catchment area, what percentage should be in your system who are not?</p>	<p>For Early Start, there were statistics on live births in our area but many of them occur outside of our catchment area. Dr. De Antonio and Dr. Swaine do a great job of outreaching to our physicians. We get people coming into the system who have been referred. Some people have logistic problems getting to evaluations. These are the people we have to reach out to in order to make sure every referral is evaluated. That's where you can help us to make sure we reach out to all families. It's important for them to participate in the evaluations.</p>
<p>What are IHSS services?</p>	<p>In-Home Supportive Services is similar to personal assistance and you can secure it through Medi-Cal. It's offered through the county and if you meet certain criteria, you qualify for a certain number of hours to help with things like getting dressed, bathing, basic support.</p>
<p>On page 17, it's showing that the authorized spending for people who speak English was \$18,000 but Spanish it's only \$12,000. Does that mean people who speak English receive more services? Is it maybe because there are more Hispanics than Whites and that's why spending is lower for Hispanics?</p>	<p>We want to look more closely to have a better understanding about the disparities in spending. We're putting together tools that will allow us to look at our data more closely to identify patterns and trends. It could be things happening within the family like work, trying to pay bills, and immigration issues, that can impact purchasing services. We hope that by next year we'll have more information to share with you about what's driving the differences.</p>
<p>Do you help people pay for living in an apartment? The service coordinator said that there's only a group home or licensed home.</p>	<p>We help with supported living services but we don't pay rent. We can speak to you about your situation after the meeting.</p>



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<p>Is it because there are more Hispanics than Whites and that's why there are spending differences (in reference to Per Person Expenses by Ethnicity or Race for Residence Type: Home, slide 25)</p>	<p>We want to look more closely to have a better understanding about the disparities in spending. We're putting together tools that will allow us to look at our data more closely to identify patterns and trends. It could be things happening within the family like work, trying to pay bills, immigration issues that can impact purchasing of services. We don't know yet, but we have some ideas but how we can obtain more information. We hope that by next year we'll have more information to share with you about what's driving the differences.</p>
<p>The experience I've had is that I wish the service coordinators would tell me what services were available because I've had to investigate on my own. And when I asked for certain services, they didn't give them to me. My son is 20 years old and he has two or three services.</p>	<p>The expectation is for our service coordinators to be responsive and helpful and if they don't know the answer, they should find out and get back to you. We provide trainings for our staff such as quarterly trainings on different topics. We can always do better. Our intent is to get families the answers that they are looking for and to provide you with the support you need to help you.</p>
<p>It's also a problem when you look for behavioral services. My son has services with Molina. One time they had me on hold for 4 hours. It was better when regional center was offering services. Is regional center no longer providing them?</p>	<p>We used to be the largest provider of behavioral services and were proud of it, but the laws have changed. If there's a barrier to reaching behavioral services, talk to your service coordinator and ask for help.</p>
<p>The school districts don't want to give. We have to fight to get services.</p>	<p>The Learning Rights Law Center assists families with navigating school districts.</p>
<p>The presenter asked the question "Why don't more people come to these meetings?"</p>	<p>Attendees' responses: The location of the regional center is not accessible. Maybe we can hold meetings at schools. It's a more centralized place.</p> <p>The information was very informative. The graphics in the presentation are very easy to understand.</p>

## FEEDBACK SURVEY

At this year's stakeholders meeting, we made a feedback survey available for people to



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submit written comments in the event that they did not feel comfortable speaking at the public meeting, or were not able to attend the meetings. We received four responses, 2 from consumers and 2 from parents. We are providing their responses to the questions below.

**1. What services does regional center provide that you are unable to access?**

Advocacy services, quality supports, driving service to regional center events, programs for adult disabled people.

**2. What services or supports would you like to see offered at the regional center that currently are not provided?**

More accuracy, more knowledgeable service coordinators, more attempts at obtaining accurate information. My experience has been that the service coordinator's first response is "No." Music therapy, animal assisted therapy. Self-advocacy group like they have at Westside Regional Center. Programs for adult disabled people.

**3. What ideas do you have to improve public and underserved community attendance and participation at public meetings and with their local/state legislators?**

Local/state legislators need to embrace these communities and engage in their local community events such as parks and recreation weekend activities that parents take time to participate in for their children. Provide more information via modern technology (TVs at Metro stations, banks, etc.) Early intervention and peer council, parent/teacher communication. The earlier you start, the easier it is. Meeting at place where adults could get together for dinner.

**4. What ideas do you have to increase the number of people using regional center services?**

Greater effort in providing awareness utilizing vehicles such as collaboration with City parks and rec, YMCA, boys and girls club, AVTA, after school programs, school districts. Educate local school administration of regional center services.

**5. What legislative changes would you like to see in order to allow more people to access and use regional center services?**

The Antelope Valley requires more resources, so providing funding for vendor services that are largely needed in the AV. I think that regional center services are so important that every state should have access, and I think the federal government should help funding. I do believe that these services should be offered to all legal and eligible people. The regional centers need more social/case workers to better manage caseloads.

**Copies of the following documents are enclosed with this report:**

- Flyer to announce NLACRC's POS Expenditure Data Stakeholder Meetings



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- Sign-in sheets from the two stakeholder meetings and the Cultivar y Crecer parent support group meeting
- PowerPoint presentation distributed at the stakeholder meetings
- Feedback Survey that was made available at the stakeholder meetings and via email blast
- Meeting minutes

## Questions?

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (818) 756-6200 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

George Stevens  
Executive Director

cc: Debra Newman, Board President, NLACRC  
Association of Regional Center Agencies

