



May 19, 2023

Ernie Cruz, Deputy Director
Department of Developmental Services
Community Services Division
Office of Community Operations

Re: Expenditure and Demographic Data and Public Meetings per W&I Code §4519.5 and DDS/Regional Center Contract for Fiscal Year 2021-2022

Dear Mr. Cruz:

In December, 2022, Harbor Regional Center (HRC) posted reports entitled, *Purchase of Services Expenditure and Demographic Data, Fiscal Year 2021-2022* labeled as “2021-2022” and *datos demográficos y de gastos de adquisición de servicios año fiscal 2021-2022* labeled as “2021-2022 Español” on HRC’s website pursuant to Welfare and Institution (W&I) Code §4519.5, as well as HRC’s contract with DDS. This report includes data related to purchase of service authorization, utilization, and expenditures, with respect to age, race and ethnicity, language, living arrangement and disability.

In accordance with Welfare and Institution (W&I) Code §4519.5(e), Harbor Regional Center scheduled two Purchase of Service (POS) Expenditure and Demographics Data public meetings for March 28, 2023 and March 30, 2023 at 6:00 pm. The meetings were scheduled to occur virtually on the Zoom platform as interactive meetings with HRC’s community. Both meetings were scheduled for the evening to allow working individuals and families an opportunity to participate.

Harbor Regional Center created one single flyer to include information in both English and Spanish to serve as a singular point of information and access for all. Spanish is the largest threshold language for HRC’s catchment area, and thus one meeting was to be presented entirely in Spanish. In addition, anyone requiring interpretation in any additional language was also encouraged to indicate their preference during the meeting registration process to allow HRC to secure the appropriate interpreter for the public meetings.

On January 13, 2023, the meeting dates, flyer, and registration information was posted and continuously maintained on Harbor Regional Center’s website. In addition, HRC created an additional “feature” post to spotlight the public meeting on HRC’s Website Homepage for ease of recognition. On January 30, 2023, notice was provided via electronic mail to Jamie Van Dusen, Regional Center Liaison with the Department of Developmental Services, Office of Community Operations.

At the public HRC Board of Trustees Meeting on January 17, 2023, HRC announced the scheduled Purchase of Services Expenditure and Demographics Data meetings scheduled to occur in March. The meeting dates, times, and meeting registration details was shared with Board of Trustee members, and the information was projected on screen for all meeting attendees. In addition, this information was available to the public through the Board Packet, posted on HRC’s website.

HRC provided and continuously maintained additional public notices in English and Spanish, on social media, through the Harbor Regional Center electronic newsletters, and shared with individual stakeholders as follows:

- POS Meeting Specific Electronic Mail Blast (Eblast) on January 18, 2023 to 18,499 English and Spanish subscribers.
- Electronic newsletter (e-newsletter) on January 31, 2023 to 23,702 English and 929 Spanish subscribers.
- Electronic newsletter (e-newsletter) on February 28, 2023 to 23,668 English and 928 Spanish subscribers.
- Social Media posts in English and Spanish on January 30, 2023 to Facebook (2.2K Followers) and Instagram (1.2K followers). The posts were “pinned” to HRC’s feature page on Facebook and Instagram’s grid to allow users to see the information/opportunity as a priority.
- Social Media posts in English and Spanish on January 31, 2023 on Twitter (509 Followers).
- Electronic newsletter (e-newsletter) on March 15, 2023 to 23,651 English and 928 Spanish subscribers.
- A reminder of the scheduled POS meetings was provided at the public meeting of the Board of Trustees on March 21, 2023.
- Meeting flyer was shared and reviewed with Spanish-speaking support group, Unidad y Fuerza, to 18 participants on March 22, 2023.

The two public meetings were held as scheduled on the virtual platform, Zoom. The March 28, 2023 meeting was presented in Spanish, however, English and American Sign Language interpretation was provided, along with live transcription/Closed Captioning. During the March 30, 2023 English meeting, simultaneous Spanish, American Sign Language, and Japanese interpretation was provided, along with live transcription/Closed Captioning.

Harbor Regional Center’s presentation entitled, *Annual Purchase of Service Meeting | Reunión Annual de Compra de Servicios*, was developed using simplified terminology (plain language), limited text on each slide, simple visuals, colorful graphs, many photographs, along with Spanish language on the same slides/presentation. This was to ensure that individuals served by HRC, along with families, and community participants were able to see the data visually, in a manner in which it would be easier to follow and understand. On slides where data was analyzed and shared, graphs were limited to one on each slide.

HRC’s bilingual Manager of Diversity and Inclusion, Erika Segovia, and HRC’s bilingual Community Outreach Specialist, Edgar Marroquin presented at both meetings. Demographic and purchase of services expenditure information from Fiscal Year 2021-2022 was shared at each meeting; along with demographic information about HRC’s employees; information about HRC’s current initiatives in support of cultural diversity; and a short presentation from a community-based partner, Learning Rights Law Center. In addition, HRC shared future plans on how HRC is working to address disparity, including activities within HRC’s Language Accessibility and Cultural Competency (LACC) Plan. This presentation was projected on the screen throughout the virtual meeting so that participants could follow along. The presentation was posted for viewing/download on HRC’s website on March 21, 2023, and the presentation file was shared with participants via the chat function during both meetings. This year, HRC designated “questions/preguntas” periods throughout the meetings, after sharing data and information, to allow for the public’s input and opportunities to discuss or clarify any questions that participants may have had. The chat feature was also enabled to allow for those who wish to share their questions, suggestions, and input, as well as foster opportunities for community interaction and dialogue.

On March 28, 2023, there were 86 participants in attendance, including 54 individuals served/parents/community members; two (2) representatives from Disability Rights California; three (3) representatives from DDS; two (2) language interpreters; and HRC staff. On March 30, 2023, there were 92 participants in attendance including 45 individuals served/parents/community members; two (2) call-

in participants; one (1) representative from State Council on Developmental Disabilities; two (2) representatives from Disability Rights California; four (4) representatives from DDS; three (3) language interpreters; five (5) community partners/service providers; and HRC staff and a member of HRC Board of Trustees.

Harbor Regional Center reviewed expenditures by ethnicity, language, living arrangement, and age. A review of the data suggests that there were reductions in disparity, growth in expenditure utilization, but disparities still exist, especially when looking at data for individuals who reside in an out of home setting versus those receiving in home services and supports. The data also suggests that in FY 21-22, 73% of individuals are receiving purchased services compared to 27% of individuals who do not have purchase of services. This percentage is consistent between ethnicities. Further review of utilization of purchased services based on language suggests that individuals who speak Cantonese and communicate using American Sign Language utilized purchase of services at 84% and 82% respectively, while those who speak Mandarin and Spanish had the largest percentage of non-utilized services (the service is available, but not being used) with 31% and 32%.

Several HRC clients and families, service providers, community partners, and community members, including those who do not reside or receive services within the HRC catchment area submitted comments throughout both presentations. One comment was submitted by email following the public meetings.

Recommendations:

HRC remains committed to meeting the needs of *all* individuals served regardless of age, ethnicity, language preference, or diagnosis. As such, in the past year, Harbor Regional Center's Board of Trustees further adopted Diversity, Equity and Inclusion as a guiding value; reaffirming HRC's commitment to ongoing collaboration and open dialogue with our diverse community to address and ensure service access and equity.

The update of HRC's service policy related to personal assistance services was further implemented and has shown to be widely accessed and utilized by many individuals and families. There was a 76% increase in expenditures in personal assistance alone, which allowed individuals who reside at home with family to receive needed supports. In recognition that there is still more improvement to be made, HRC will continue to review, update, and develop service policies to address child care needs for parents and caregivers, supported adult activities, and independent living services.

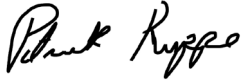
This past year, any information that HRC has produced, published and shared in English, was also provided and shared in Spanish, using a variety of communication platforms, such as electronic mail, electronic newsletters, bi-annual newsletters, social media, and HRC's website. Through HRC's Language Accessibility and Cultural Competency (LACC) Plan, HRC will continue evaluate and establish a process to review and update our library of publications in order to continually assist individuals with specific linguistic needs to increase access to information. In addition, HRC will continue to learn from our diverse community on their current needs and the challenges they may be facing when trying to access services. With feedback and input from our community, HRC will expand linguistic and cultural practices by developing and sharing information and resources in Korean, Japanese, Khmer/Cambodian, and Tagalog, which are among languages that are growing within HRC's service area.

HRC will continue to strengthen our partnerships with local entities, community-based organizations,

parent-led/peer-led groups, and other service delivery systems in order to establish connections with individuals and families who are not yet connected to the regional center, or with those who have little to no Purchase of Service utilization. The feedback and suggestions HRC receives from focus groups or listening sessions will be used to inform HRC service policies and procedures, development of information and resources, as well as resource development efforts.

We hope this information is helpful to you.

Sincerely,



Patrick Ruppe
Executive Director

Enclosures: Annual POS Expenditure FY 21-22 Presentation
Annual POS Expenditure Meeting Flyer
Announcement - Board of Trustees Meeting
Website Notice and Announcement
Attendee Reports from Meetings
Public Comments/Chat from Meetings
Email Comment submission