

**South Central Los Angeles Regional Center  
Reduction of Disparities in Purchase of Service  
Regional Center Funding Proposal (Fiscal Year 2016-17)**

**Submitted September 8, 2016**

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## **SCLARC's Disparity Issues**

Issues of disparity in utilization of services and expenditures on services are serious and persistent challenges for all Regional Centers, but are of particular gravity for South Central Los Angeles Regional Center (SCLARC). The agency has a uniquely high population of both Latino and African-American consumers, which multiple reports have shown are adversely affected by disparities in service. Of the almost 13,500 consumers served by SCLARC through both Early Start and Lanterman services, 63 percent are Latino, 28 percent are African-American, 4 percent are White, 4 percent Other, and 1 percent Asian. Of those consumers, 46 percent primarily speak a language other than English, with the majority speaking Spanish.

Overall, SCLARC's disparity data shows that adult consumers in placement have higher expenditures for authorized services regardless of their ethnicity, while those that live at home have much lower expenditure rates. When looking at placement rates by ethnicity, 30 percent of African American consumers reside in residential facilities, compared to only 7 percent for Latinos. As residential placement is a significantly higher cost than living at home, it creates a marked difference in per capita spending for the two ethnic groups. In addition, 44 percent of African American SCLARC consumers are over 22 years of age, while 74 percent of Latinos are under 22 years of age. As children with disabilities typically receive the bulk of their services from the local school district up until age 22, it is easy to see that the differences in the age range of both of SCLARC's major ethnic groups creates a huge difference in the types of services that can be used by each group. Compounding this issue, the 2009 trailer bill language suspended, limited or terminated many of the services most used by school aged children of all ethnicities, including recreational services, socialization, summer camp, and afterschool programs.

SCLARC's disparity issues include a lack of utilization of services by Latino consumers, and a disparity in the expenditures for Latino consumers when they do access services. Only 74 percent of SCLARC's Latino families utilize services authorized, and the per capita spending for Latinos is approximately \$6,000 compared to \$15,000 for African-American consumers, and \$28,000 for White consumers. Additionally, 71 percent of Latino families are not authorized for any services. This data reflects a strong need to implement interventions that will provide our Spanish-speaking consumers and families with increased supports and education in order to access and use services. The 2009 budget cuts, as referenced earlier, adversely affected Latino consumers, as they suspended social and recreational programming. Utilization data from that time shows that over \$2,000,000 in POS funding for swimming was eliminated from SCLARC's budget. Swimming services were most utilized by Latino families, and for many, was the only service they either wanted or needed.

Finally, rate differentials adversely affect SCLARC's disparity data as the agency has some of the lowest median rates when compared to the six other Regional Centers in Los Angeles County. An increase in median rates for vendors would allow equitable access to quality vendors, would increase spending per capita, and would increase the utilization of services by more families as the vendor pool would expand.

### **Target Populations**

According to a recent longitudinal review of disparity in service utilization and expenditures across Regional Centers, "disparities by age, gender, race/ethnicity, and geography have persisted over time in California."<sup>1</sup> Across all Regional Centers, and in other systems which support individuals with disabilities, there are barriers to accessing services, and disparities in service utilization. Barriers to accessing services include ethnicity, along with several other complicating factors such as language, literacy, and poverty. As early as 1990 an ARCA issue paper stated, "poverty creates the need for the family to concentrate its available energy on sheer survival and meeting its basic needs for food and shelter before giving attention to secondary issues such as developmental disabilities."<sup>2</sup> In a study of individuals eligible for Autism-related services, families from different ethnic backgrounds were less likely to use those services than White families.<sup>3</sup>

Much of the research around disparity in access to and utilization of services has demonstrated a need for using different outreach and education strategies when trying to reach underserved ethnic and linguistic groups. Additionally, there appears to be a need for adjusting services offered by Regional Centers in order to address the cultural differences of the individuals served. The target populations for this funding proposal include consumers with no authorized services, consumers who are not using authorized services, Latinos, monolingual Spanish-speakers, extremely low income individuals, and African-Americans. These groups were identified through an analysis of disparity data both for SCLARC as an individual Regional Center and also of data collected statewide.

As previously discussed, SCLARC's disparity data shows that Latino consumers have the highest rates of both those with no authorized services, and of those who do not use authorized services. When looking at per capita spending by language, Spanish-speaking consumers have a per capita spending of roughly \$6,000 compared to over \$12,000 for English-speaking consumers, regardless of their ethnicity. Even though data is improved for African-Americans, 18 percent still do not have an authorized service, and 20 percent do not use services authorized. When looking overall at SCLARC's disparity data, there is clearly a need to target both Latinos

and African-Americans, however there appears to be a demonstrated need for focused support specifically targeted towards Spanish-speaking Latinos.

In multiple stakeholder town hall meetings held over the past few years to discuss disparity information, SCLARC has received input from our consumers and their families about the barriers that often prevent access to service. In some cases our families do not want services in their homes, where many behavioral services are provided, due to concerns regarding immigration and other sorts of privacy issues. Additionally, we have historically understood that many other socio-economic barriers exist throughout our area that prevent our families from accessing services including inadequate transportation, language barriers, educational barriers and many others. As many of our consumer's households are headed by single parents, they can be limited in their ability to use authorized services, as parents simply are not available to participate in their child's services due to work schedules or increased responsibilities in caring for other children or family members.

### **Summary of Public Forum**

SCLARC's public forum was held on Thursday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the agency's main offices. The event was attended by 5 vendors, 8 SCLARC staff, and 8 parents.

The strategies to address disparity discussed at this forum were the following:

- Cultural sensitivity training for staff and vendors
- Funding of a Disparity Research Project
- Translation Coordinator
- Expanded Navigator Program
- Early Childhood Outreach & Screening Program
- Development of New Service Providers
- Online Parent Portal
- Marketing & Advertising
- Outreach Van
- Connections Satellite Office

Attendees were invited to provide public comment during the meeting, and staff distributed a survey to gather additional feedback from members of the public. Overall, public comment was positive as to the proposals presented. The only verbal input received was from vendors, who agreed that parents need additional support in understanding what services are available and support in accessing those services. Many vendors, after hearing about the proposal to fund a parent portal requested that SCLARC also investigate the possibility of implementing a vendor portal, which was discussed with vendors over 3 years ago. After the public forum, SCLARC

received 8 surveys from a local parent community group, Healthy African American Families. Upon reviewing all survey responses, there was a wide variety as far as which proposals should be of highest priority. Comments from the surveys were largely in support of improving communication between staff and consumers, system navigation support, development of new programs, and outreach efforts.

Due to time constraints, SCLARC was only able to present five of the proposals listed above during the Department of Developmental Services Disparity Stakeholder Meeting held on August 26<sup>th</sup>. However, many of the parents who gave public comment were from SCLARC's service area, and made suggestions to improve access to and use of services that are in line with SCLARC's proposals to address disparities. The most frequently mentioned idea brought forth was providing additional support to families in navigating the different systems of care for individuals with developmental disabilities, similar to SCLARC's proposal to expand the Navigator Program. In addition, there was a need expressed for better communication between Regional Center staff and families. SCLARC believes that our disparity funding requests will address these concerns, particularly through the Navigator Program, the implementation of Cultural Sensitivity Trainings, the Connections Satellite Office, Outreach Van, and Parent Portal. Several parent in attendance expressed a need for Regional Centers to reach children who "fall through the cracks," which SCLARC believes can be addressed through the Early Childhood Outreach & Screening Program, informational marketing campaign, and the outreach van.

### **Proposals to Reduce Service Disparities**

SCLARC will address disparities in access and utilization of services through implementation of nine projects listed below.

1. Expanded Navigator Program
2. Early Childhood Outreach & Screening Program
3. Outreach Van
4. Connections Satellite Office
5. Translation Coordinator
6. Develop New Service Providers
7. Cultural Awareness & Sensitivity Training
8. Informational Marketing Campaign
9. Parent Portal

Together, these projects seek to reach underserved populations, increase consumer access to and utilization of services, and improve communication between our staff and our consumers and community.

## **Expanded Navigator Program - \$453,300**

Parents often report they are overwhelmed by the various systems of care that serve children with disabilities which can include Regional Center, school districts, CCS, medical insurance, SSI, IHSS, and much more. Already dealing with their child's special needs, and possibly their own challenges such as immigration status, illiteracy, inability to meet basic needs, or lack of English proficiency, SCLARC families are not as successful in accessing available benefits that could support and uplift them and their child. SCLARC proposes funding to launch a three year expanded navigator program that includes navigation specialists, a team of navigators and ongoing third party program evaluation.

### *Target Population*

Consumers and families without authorized services, newly eligible consumers and families, and consumers and families in transitional periods (i.e. Early Start to Lanterman services, school transitions, and transition to adult services).

### *Program Description*

Over the past three years, the SCLARC Family Resource Center has provided navigation activities such as assisting families with applying for and accessing various services and providing orientation trainings to Early Start families. However, with only three staff members, and funding which limits their focus to children birth to three, they are not able to meet the demand for navigation support from families caring for a school aged child. Funding will allow SCLARC to hire two Navigation Specialists and five Navigators to supplement the work of the Service Coordinators, improve family and staff knowledge of generic resources, and personal assistance to families in requesting services. The navigator team will also develop and facilitate ongoing trainings and provide individual consultation to consumers, families, and staff.

These positions will require advanced knowledge of regional center services, major systems of care, and generic resources that can benefit consumers, families, and staff. Staff will require strong interpersonal and empathy skills and demonstrated experience in advocacy and parent mentoring, in order to support families in building their capacity to advocate for services. SCLARC will make a concerted effort to identify local parents to fill the positions. This program will be flexible by providing support during non-traditional service hours (evenings and weekends) to accommodate working families and single parent households. Services may also be provided in one or more community partner locations or through SCLARC's Connections Satellite Office.

The Navigation Specialists will be the first point of contact for all SCLARC consumers and families who request navigation support. The Specialists will conduct an intake to assess the consumer's needs and make a referral to the appropriate navigator or internal resource, such as our mental health consultant, program managers, or other specialist staff. They will coordinate and facilitate trainings for consumers, families and staff on topics such as accessing generic resources, transitioning to Lanterman services, transitioning to adult services, workshops for newly eligible consumers, and other topics based on identified need. The Specialists will also oversee and support the Navigators in delivering services to the staff and families.

The Navigators will offer families and consumers intensive support and follow up from intake and throughout their regional center experience. They will offer individual appointments with families over the phone or in person to discuss and provide assistance with various matters, including eligibility outcomes, psychological reports, consumer transitions, available SCLARC services, and generic resources in the community. The Navigators will also work with consumers and families to apply for needed services through their medical insurance provider, and enroll in benefit programs such as WIC, Cal Fresh, Medi-Cal, IHSS, SSI, and others. In the absence of an adequate generic resource, Navigators will coordinate with Service Coordinators and consumers to explore appropriate regional center services. Additionally, they will assist the Navigation Specialists with facilitating workshops and trainings.

### *Implementation*

SCLARC will host focus groups with families who currently do not have authorized services and families that with consumers that are currently in transitional periods in an effort to evaluate how the program can be further tailored to meet their needs. Additionally, SCLARC will release a job announcement for two Navigator Specialists and five Navigators. At least one Navigation Specialist and three Navigator positions will require fluency in English and Spanish. The total cost of the Navigation Specialist positions will be \$150,800, which includes two salary positions of \$58,000 plus 30 percent benefits. The estimated cost of each Navigator position is \$58,500, which includes a salary of \$45,000 plus 30 percent benefits, totaling \$292,500 for all five positions. The estimated cost of the program evaluation will be approximately \$10,000 per year. The total annual cost of the Expanded Navigation Program is \$453,300.

*Outcome 1:* Increased parent knowledge and understanding of systems of support for children with developmental disabilities.

*Outcome 2:* Increased consumer and family capacity in acquiring needed support services from various systems of care.

*Outcome 3:* Decrease in disparities of service utilization as consumers and families receive education and support on available services and how to access such services.

*Outcome 4:* Increase in SCLARC Service Coordinator knowledge of generic resources available to consumers.

*Evaluation*

SCLARC will contract a third party evaluator such as Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, to assess the effectiveness of the program and provide recommendations for improvement. Each navigator will be required to keep a log of each service provided which will include consumer name, UCI number, and type of service provided. All navigator trainings will have a sign in sheet to track number and type of participants. Additionally, consumers and families will be encouraged to provide feedback on their satisfaction with the program and ways the program can improve.

*Budget Summary*

<b>Line Item</b>	<b>Requested</b>	<b>SCLARC Match</b>
Navigation Specialists (2 FTE, \$58,000 each)	\$116,000	
Navigators (5 FTE, \$45,000 each)	\$225,000	
Staff Benefits (30% of salaries)	\$102,300	
Program Evaluation	\$10,000	
Parent Navigator		\$50,000
<b>Totals:</b>	\$453,300	\$50,000

**Early Childhood Outreach & Screening Program - \$144,300**

In an effort to increase outreach to underserved young children who are at risk for developmental delays or disabilities, SCLARC proposes to use dedicated outreach staff through an Early Childhood Outreach & Screening Program. Currently, SCLARC receives funding from First 5 Los Angeles to conduct outreach, parent education, and early developmental screening; however it only partially funds program staff. No funding is provided for the program’s Care Coordinator, who oversees the day to day activities of the program and who coordinates referrals of children to intervention services. Additionally, First 5 has already indicated that, as their strategic goals have changed, they will not continue funding for any of their current grantees who provide direct services.

*Target Population*

Once funded, this program will target primarily Latino and African-American children, birth to five, who may be at risk for developmental delays or disabilities. According to statistics from the

Centers for Disease Control, Latino and African-American children are typically diagnosed with Autism much later than their White counterparts, between the ages of four and five, which many professionals consider too late as the benefits of early intervention cannot be fully realized.<sup>4</sup> A study released by the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine shows that although 12 to 16 percent of children in the United States have at least one developmental delay, as many as one-half of affected children will not be identified by the time they enter kindergarten.<sup>5</sup> If developmental delays are detected too late, opportunities for early intervention may be lost. Additionally, when children are properly screened and connected with early intervention services, they are more likely to have better long term outcomes, and will be less likely to require more expensive and intensive treatments later in life. In order to address these disparities in diagnosis and access to intervention services, SCLARC requests funding for an Early Childhood Outreach & Screening Program.

### *Program Description*

The current program consists of three staff members who conduct screenings, all funded by First 5 Los Angeles, and the Care Coordinator, whose salary is not covered by the grant. It has been in operation for two years, and it is our goal to continue the program of long term. The Care Coordinator conducts presentations in the community on early child developmental milestones, conducts developmental screenings on children at several community partner locations throughout South and Southeast Los Angeles, and coordinates the referral of children to needed intervention services. This staff member is also a certified trainer on several early childhood screening tools, and can train both staff and community partners to conduct developmental screenings. With funding through DDS, SCLARC can leverage the current funding provided by First 5 LA for early developmental screening staff that are supervised by the Care Coordinator. Funding for those positions will end in June of 2018, and it is expected that, should funding through ABX2 1 continue to be available in future fiscal years, SCLARC will seek full support for this program.

Along with the Care Coordinator and screening staff, a dedicated Outreach Service Coordinator (OSC) will only work with families of children found eligible who are referred through the program. This OSC will focus on educating families who are new to the Regional Center system on the types of services available and how they are accessed, leading to increased utilization of services. Together, this team will ensure that underserved children are screened for developmental concerns, connected to intervention services, and provided with a seamless transition into the Regional Center system.

Since its inception two years ago, the current program has screened 1,928 children ages birth to five. Of those children screened, 486 were confirmed to have been found eligible for Early Start services once referred by the program for a full assessment. A total of 83 percent of the children screened in the last fiscal year were Latino; 10 percent were African-American, and 47 percent of the families screened were primarily Spanish-speaking. The program's reach to underserved populations, specifically Latinos and Spanish-speakers has been incredibly successful, and funding to continue this work is vital in ensuring that young children, who would not otherwise be connected with Regional Centers, receive early intervention services.

### *Implementation*

As the Care Coordinator position is currently filled with a full time staff person, implementation of this Program can begin immediately. After notification of a funding award, SCLARC would immediately release a job announcement for the Outreach Service Coordinator position, including transfer forms for any current employees interested in the position. SCLARC has relationships with 49 community agencies including libraries, community centers, and early childhood education programs which have agreed to host program staff to conduct outreach and early screening activities. It is estimated that the total program cost will be \$144,300, which includes a salary of \$59,000 and 30 percent benefits for the Outreach and Referral Care Coordinator, and \$52,000 plus 30 percent benefits for the Outreach Service Coordinator.

*Outcome 1:* Program will decrease disparity by increasing the number of children who are found eligible for SCLARC services, and by increasing utilization of services by those children.

*Outcome 2:* Increase access to Regional Center services for underserved children, particularly Latino and African-American children, aged birth to five, leading to an increased utilization of SCLARC services by Latino children, who are currently not accessing services at the same rates as other ethnicities.

*Outcome 3:* Program will improve the outcomes of children with developmental delays or disabilities by reducing the length of time before they are assessed and receive intervention services.

*Outcome 4:* Will increase knowledge of parents on services available through Regional Center, and how to request available services.

*Evaluation Plan*

The program maintains copies, either paper or scanned images, of all screening and referral packets of children served. Additionally, staff collects data on demographics of the child, their parents, screening results, agencies referred to, and outcome results for referrals made (i.e. child found eligible for Early Start). The program has monthly, quarterly and annual goals, and compiles data annually to look at trends in types of children screened and areas for improvement or growth. Finally, SCLARC will work with Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, a training and technical assistance partner on the currently funded grant, to complete a program evaluation on this expanded program, as well as to make recommendations for future improvements.

*Budget Summary*

<b>Line Item</b>	<b>Requested</b>	<b>First 5 Grant</b>
Outreach and Referral Care Coordinator	\$59,000	
Outreach Service Coordinator	\$52,000	
Staff Benefits (30% of salaries)	\$33,300	
Screening Staff (3 FTE)		\$115,440
Staff Mileage, training, supplies		\$12,326
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>\$144,300</b>	<b>\$127,766</b>

**Outreach Van - \$83,700**

SCLARC proposes to purchase and convert a van into a mobile outreach and screening unit to be used at a variety of community locations to increase visibility within the local community, increase access for underserved populations to SCLARC screening and assessment services, and increase utilization of services for those families for whom travel is a barrier in accessing approved services.

*Target Population*

The majority of families served by SCLARC are low income. Many must rely on public transportation in order to visit doctors, specialists, or to visit Regional Center during the intake process. As a result, many children in the local community do not receive early screening for developmental concerns, nor are they connected with the necessary early intervention services available to them. Many families state that transportation is a barrier for them in accessing services, either in attending the initial intake evaluations, psychological appointments during eligibility, or in attending therapy evaluations an ongoing approved therapy services. In many cases, families simply do not connect with SCLARC, or choose to not access all services available to them. Mobile services reach new and underserved populations by bringing needed services closer to the consumers.

SCLARC believes a mobile unit will support the agency to further raise awareness regarding Autism and other developmental delays throughout South Los Angeles communities and, more importantly, address serious gaps in services to bring about more successful outcomes. The target population for this project is families and young children who have not yet made a successful connection with early intervention services, either through assessment, or through utilization of approved services, such as therapy. The proposed grant would provide parents with a clean, quiet, confidential and conveniently accessible location to complete screenings, assessments, and therapy evaluations with early childhood specialists. The SCLARC staff operating the mobile screening unit would facilitate the connection to the regional center or other necessary referrals and provide the family with support throughout the evaluation process.

### *Program Description*

The van will be used for general outreach, community events, and for mobile assessments including Early Start intake and therapy evaluations. SCLARC will make use of an existing partner network of community agencies in seeking locations in which to implement the use of the van as an outreach tool. In the past year, SCLARC staff provided developmental screening outreach activities at 49 community partner locations including early childhood education programs, libraries, and community resource centers. On average, staff participates in 40 community resource and health fairs in on an annual basis. Should SCLARC receive funding for a van, staff will be able to provide confidential on the spot screening and assessment services in the local community, increasing the number of children who are connected to Regional Center services. Working with an already existing group of vendors who provide occupational, speech and physical therapy services, and our center-based infant development providers, SCLARC will bring mobile therapy sessions to locations which are easily accessible for families, increasing utilization of already approved services, for those families with transportation challenges.

### *Implementation*

In order to implement this initiative, SCLARC would purchase a 14 to 17 seat passenger van, pay for renovations and additions to the van including a generator, external electricity outlet, custom wrapping with SCLARC program information, installation of a fold down table, staff seating, benches for family seating, television and storage. It is estimated that the total costs for purchase and renovation of the van will be approximately \$75,000. In order to ensure maximum use of the van for all activities described above, removable items will be purchased for use in the van including a laptop, portable printer/scanner, Wi-Fi internet connection, and toys to be used with children during screenings and assessments. Equipment is estimated at \$2,500, with additional costs of around 8 percent for gas and insurance, for a total project cost of \$83,700.

Staff who will use the van will be approved in advance through the Human Resources department, and shall submit a copy of their current driver’s license and insurance card. Human Resources will verify the employee has a good driving record with the Department of Motor Vehicles, and in accordance with SCLARC’s driving policy. Planned trips will be requested in advance through the Outreach Committee chair, the Director of Community Services and Family Supports. Employees will make use of a vehicle safety checklist every time they check out or check in the vehicle for trips, and will be issued gas cards when refills are required. As only approved staff may operate the van, such staff will accompany others, such as screeners, Intake Service Coordinators, or therapists, out on mobile visits to community locations.

*Outcome 1:* Increased access for underserved populations to SCLARC services.

*Outcome 2:* Increased utilization of services by families who cannot travel to needed assessments and services.

*Outcome 3:* Increased community awareness of Regional Center eligibility criteria and services in underserved areas, particularly in neighborhoods with a high concentration of Latino and African-American families.

*Outcome 4:* Increased opportunity for parent education and awareness of developmental milestones and recognizing red flags for Autism and other developmental delays.

*Evaluation Plan*

Use of the mobile screening unit will be tracked using a sign in sheet for all events, which will collect demographic information on individuals who seek information or services from staff using the van. Additional data will be collected on those children who participate in developmental screening, assessments, or therapy evaluations. Data collected will be analyzed to confirm that the target population was reached through this program, and to evaluate the prevalence of children with a need for intervention services that were identified through use of the mobile unit.

*Budget Summary*

<b>Line Item</b>	<b>Requested</b>
Purchase and customization of van	\$75,000
Equipment	\$2,500
Insurance, gas (8%)	\$6,200
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>\$83,700</b>

## **Connections Satellite Office - \$104,000**

### *Target Population*

Consumers and families living in SCLARC's Southeast service area who do not have authorized services, or who do not utilize authorized services.

### *Program Description*

SCLARC's service area covers all of South Los Angeles and surrounding communities in Southeast Los Angeles County. SCLARC's main offices are located near the northernmost border of the service area, meaning that some consumers and their families have to travel more than 20 miles, often on public transportation, to visit the Legacy Plaza site. While our intake and service coordination staff often make accommodations for families who live far away by scheduling visits in the home, that environment may not be appropriate for assessment or for confidential discussions. Both Early Start and Lanterman intake staff report that families "no show," or do not show up for scheduled appointments such as intakes, psychologicals, or therapy evaluations, with many parents reporting transportation as an issue.

SCLARC proposes to rent a location in the southern part of the agency service area serving as an outreach center for new cases, and an outpost for current consumers. This location is especially important since the majority of monolingual Spanish speaking families reside in the southeastern portion of our service area. This location would provide office space for assessment and diagnosis, as well as for Service Coordinators to meet with families living in the area. Meetings held at the site could include IPPs, IFSPs, assessments, therapy evaluations, parent support and educational groups. The site, with a proposed size of at least 6,000 square feet, would also feature a large multipurpose room in which to host parent education, annual town hall forums, and playgroups for children. This space would also be made available to any of our ten independently run parent support groups functioning in surrounding Southeastern communities. These groups face ongoing challenges with finding safe, clean, and affordable meeting space for their meetings.

### *Implementation*

We are in the process of submitting a proposal to a local entity who may be interested in underwriting the cost of leasing or purchasing a property which could serve as SCLARC's satellite location. Future funding by this entity may serve as a supplement to DDS disparity funding in support of this project. Upon approval of funding, SCLARC will enter into a short term (3 year) lease for a commercial property in the Southeast area (including cities such as Lynwood, South Gate, or Huntington Park). The agency can make use of existing office

furniture, but will need to purchase office supplies including desktop computers, a projector, a printer/copier, and other general supplies to ensure that staff and families are able to hold meetings effectively.

*Outcome 1:* Increase the number of underserved children and adults assessed by Regional Center by establishing a convenient location in the local community.

*Outcome 2:* Increase consumer and family communication with and access to Service Coordinators, or other specialists working on their case.

*Outcome 3:* Increase service utilization as families will be more likely to comply with required assessments and other meetings if they are held in their community.

*Outcome 3:* Reduce the distance consumers and families have to travel to obtain services.

#### *Evaluation Plan*

Staff will use visitor logs to track visitor information including demographics, UCI, and reason for visit. Attendees at educational presentation, support groups or other special events will be asked to sign in and provide information on the consumer served by SCLARC. SCLARC will also download monthly reports from its room booking and management software which will show the frequency and types of meetings held.

#### *Budget Summary*

<b>Line Item</b>	<b>Requested</b>
Rent of satellite office space (Year 1)	\$85,000
Equipment (Computers, copier, printer, etc.)	\$15,000
Office supplies	\$4,000
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>\$104,000</b>

### **Translation Coordinator - \$71,750**

#### *Target Population*

Spanish-speaking consumers and families.

#### *Program Description*

Approximately 6,900 of SCLARC's consumers are Spanish speaking. Research shows that language barriers can adversely affect service utilization, service quality, and consumer satisfaction.<sup>6</sup> SCLARC will hire a qualified staff person that would be required to be fluent and

literate in English and Spanish. This individual would provide much needed support to staff, consumers, and families, offering accurate and culturally appropriate translation and interpretation. They would be available to interpret during intake appointments, evaluations, clinical meetings such as the Early Autism Clinic, and for IPP, IFSP, and other small meetings. The Translation Coordinator will also translate commonly used agency documents including correspondence and Notices of Action, in order to standardize information provided to all consumers and families. They will create and maintain an agency glossary of culturally relevant Spanish terms to help establish consistency of terms in Spanish written materials.

By eliminating linguistic barriers, consumers and families will have the opportunity to communicate more clearly about their beliefs and needs which in turn will allow SCLARC to provide better service. In addition to translation and interpreter services, the Translation Coordinator will coordinate and implement ongoing training on conversational Spanish to our non-Spanish speaking staff and vendors. The classes will cover pronunciation, essential grammar, common expressions and important vocabulary terms for Service Coordinators.

#### *Implementation*

Upon approval of funding, SCLARC will immediately release a job announcement. The estimated total cost of this position will be \$71,500, which includes a salary of \$55,000 plus 30 percent benefits.

*Outcome 1:* Consumers and families will be able to communicate more clearly about their beliefs and needs, allowing SCLARC to better serve our consumers.

*Outcome 2:* Increase in the communication between Spanish speaking families and SCLARC management team.

*Outcome 3:* Increased competency of our non-Spanish speaking staff to greet and provide basic information to our Latino Spanish speaking consumers and families.

#### *Evaluation Plan*

The Translation Coordinator will keep a log of each translation, which will include consumer name, UCI, and type of translation services (i.e. Document translation, ID team meeting translation and interpretation, or psychosocial translation and interpretation). The log will be utilized to evaluate translation needs, Coordinator productivity, and efficiency.

*Budget Summary*

<b>Line Item</b>	<b>Requested</b>
Translation Coordinator	\$55,000
Staff Benefits (30% of salaries)	\$16,500
Conversational Spanish Curriculum	\$250
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>\$71,750</b>

**Develop New Service Providers - \$200,000**

Since FY 2009-10, the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) has limited startup funding for resource development to the Community Placement Plan (CPP). CPP's goal is to develop the necessary resources in the community that would allow individuals transitioning from state hospitals to live in the least restrictive setting, with services appropriate to their needs. While SCLARC and other Regional Centers have focused on this directive, other much needed resource development has been direly impacted.

Resource development is designed to help a Regional Center enhance the capacity of its community service delivery system. Traditionally, Regional Centers have done this by providing start-up funding to service providers contracted to develop of a variety of resources, including but not limited to residential development, transportation, day program services, mental health and crisis services, within individual communities consistent with resource development as described in Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 4418.25. Presently, SCLARC desperately needs to be able provide start-up funding for new service provider programs which offer culturally relevant day, work, therapeutic or other services, with a focus on communities with high Latino, Spanish-speaking families.

*Target Population*

Latino, Spanish-speaking population in SCLARC's southeast area who is without authorized services, or who does not utilize authorized services.

*Program Description*

SCLARC will release a Request for Funding Proposal which seeks to provide startup funding for vendors to address a need for services that are not readily available in our community, and that will not be created without incentive and encouragement for new vendors. Services such as behavior day programs, occupational and speech therapy programs, and others, which will meet the needs of the majority Latino, Spanish-speaking population in SCLARC's southeast service area are most in need.

*Implementation*

Within one month of approval of funding, SCLARC’s Community Services Department will create and release a Request for Funding Proposal. This RFP will be distributed to all current vendors through an email list serve, and will be posted to SCLARC’s external website. The Department will host a bidder’s conference approximately two weeks after the release of the RFP for interested applicants to answer questions and receive technical support in completing the application. Within two weeks of the bidder’s conference, Department staff will review all applications and will announce funding decisions. The RFP will remain open until all funds are exhausted, or for a period of up to one year. New applications received after the initial round of funding approvals will be reviewed and approved or declined on an ongoing basis.

*Outcome 1:* Decrease disparity by increasing utilization of services among Latino consumers.

*Outcome 2:* Increase the amount of available vendor services which offer quality culturally competent services.

*Evaluation Plan*

The success of the RFP will be gauged by the amount of new programs which are approved for startup funding, and by the long term number of consumers who are approved for, and who utilize, services created as a result of these funds.

*Budget Summary*

<b>Line Item</b>	<b>Requested</b>
Approximately 8 RFPs (Av. \$25,000 ea.)	\$200,000
<b>Total:</b>	\$200,000

**Cultural Competency & Capacity Building Trainings - \$50,000**

According to June 2016 data, SCLARC’s consumer population is 63 percent Latino and 28 percent African American. The agency’s Service Coordinator demographic breakdown is 60 percent Latino, 34 percent African American, 3 percent White, and 3 percent Asian. With such a large minority staff and consumer population, there is a large amount of cross-cultural contact within the agency, which can create miscommunication between staff, service providers and families. Therefore, it is critical that staff is aware of the cultural differences that exist with the consumers we serve and receive training on methods to improve their interviewing and consumer engagement skills. In an effort to improve the capacity of our agency staff, SCLARC proposes Cultural Competency and Motivational Interviewing trainings for staff and service providers.

### *Target population*

African-American and Latino consumers and families.

### *Program Description*

Funding will cover the costs of providing a series of trainings including cultural competency training and motivational interviewing to build the capacity of our staff. The cultural competency course will focus on understanding African American and Latino cultures, how culture may impact an individual's willingness to use SCLARC's services, and practical tools to address barriers to service delivery within SCLARC's unique consumer population. The Motivational Interviewing training will provide staff with a consumer-centered method for facilitating and engaging with consumers and families during meetings. SCLARC will produce training videos for both courses to be used in training new staff on an ongoing basis. SCLARC will also offer training on these two topics for vendored service providers, in both live and in video format.

### *Implementation*

The cultural competency and Motivational Interviewing trainings will include five on site trainings each, for groups of no more than 50 staff members and one group of managers. For each of the trainings, SCLARC will hire a qualified professional or organization that is able to provide information and tools customized for the Regional Center population. Training for vendor service providers will vary based on the vendor's size and availability. Options include hosted trainings at SCLARC's offices, shortened presentations during regularly-scheduled Vendor Advisory Committee meetings, and presentations at larger vendor sites. The estimated cost for each of the trainings is \$20,000, totaling \$40,000. The production of the training videos is estimated to cost \$10,000. The total program cost is \$50,000.

*Outcome 1:* Staff and service providers will increase their knowledge and concrete skills that demonstrate an understanding of and respect for the importance of culture in service delivery.

*Outcome 2:* Staff and service providers will increase their capacity to support consumers and parents in accessing services and supports in a culturally appropriate manner.

*Outcome 3:* Staff will increase their skills in listening, culturally responsive communication, motivational interviewing, and facilitation of difficult conversations.

*Outcome 4:* Increased service utilization as communication improves between SCLARC staff or service providers and consumers and their families.

*Outcome 5:* SCLARC will develop video training modules for the purpose on ongoing staff and service provider training.

*Evaluation*

SCLARC will utilize pre and posttest measures to evaluate training participants’ cultural competence, effectiveness of training, and to illicit feedback for future training topics. SCLARC will implement an annual staff survey of training needs to evaluate future topics for large-scale staff training to improve staff capacity.

*Budget*

<b>Line Item</b>	<b>Requested</b>
Consultants, supplies to conduct live Cultural Sensitivity training for SCLARC staff and Vendors	\$20,000
Consultants, supplies to conduct live Motivational Interviewing training for SCLARC staff and Vendors	\$20,000
Costs related to recording and producing training videos	\$10,000
<b>Totals:</b>	\$50,000

**Informational Marketing Campaign - \$35,000**

SCLARC will produce bilingual informational brochures on services, and conduct a marketing campaign using newspapers and other advertising platforms to increase community awareness.

*Target Population*

Latino, Spanish-speaking population in SCLARC’s southeast area, and consumers with no authorized services.

*Program Description*

SCLARC will conduct an awareness campaign in local community publications advertising SCLARC’s services and eligibility process. Additionally, staff will edit, update, and print a previously-used publication, the Family Services Handbook, so that it includes specific information on the services available from SCLARC. As suggested by families during public forums, the book will have age-specific groupings of services to make it easier for parents to understand the types of services frequently used by children versus adults. Finally, the campaign will redesign and print SCLARC’s Autism Guide, which features information on the diagnosis,

treatment, and services available to individuals with Autism, in language that is clear and easy to understand. Both the handbook and guide would be printed in English and Spanish.

*Implementation*

SCLARC’s Director of Community Services and Family Supports and the Community Relations Specialist will coordinate the development of informational materials and will place ads in community newspapers including local Spanish-language and neighborhood-focus publications such as the L.A. Watts-Times, La Opinion, The Downey Eagle, and Compton Bulletin. An internal workgroup of key SCLARC staff will begin to edit the Family Services Handbook and Autism Guide in January 2017, finishing final edits by March 2017. SCLARC will then solicit bids on printing from several print shops that have worked with the agency in the past.

*Outcome 1:* Campaign will decrease disparities by increasing visibility and knowledge of SCLARC services in the Latino, Spanish-speaking, and African-American communities.

*Outcome 2:* Materials on available services will decrease the number of consumers with no authorized services, and increase the utilization of authorized services as families gain a better understanding of available services and the requirements for service usage.

*Outcome 3:* Campaign will increase awareness of developmental disabilities in the local community, allowing families to better access services without the fear of stigma associated with developmental disabilities.

*Evaluation Plan*

In evaluating the campaign, the most apparent indications of its success will be an increase in referrals and intake appointments, as well as an increase in service utilization. SCLARC will also use the agency’s incoming referral form on the Smart Chart database to track consumer-reported information about the referral source of new individuals. It is expected that SCLARC will be able to show an increase in the number of children and adults who cite print ads or brochures received in the community as the reason for their connection to SCLARC.

*Budget Summary*

<b>Line Item</b>	<b>Requested</b>
Advertising in local community publications	\$5,000
Design & publication of “menu of services” handbook	\$15,000
Redesign & publication of “Autism Guide”	\$15,000
<b>Totals:</b>	\$35,000

## **Parent Portal – \$100,000**

### *Target Population*

Underserved consumers, and consumers without services.

### *Program Description*

SCLARC will create an online Parent Portal. Linked to SCLARC’s public website, this Portal will provide parents with an online resource directory, allowing consumers to access frequently requested documents, to upload scanned documents requested by SCLARC, and to communicate with their Service Coordinator or other staff who are working with their case. The Portal resource directory will list online resources grouped by interest areas such as Autism, Cerebral Palsy, speech delays, behavior, etc. The resource directory will make use of existing online informational factsheets, but would organize them into one easy to access and understandable guide. This resource section would also provide Spanish-speaking parents with links to hard to find Spanish-language resources.

The Portal will provide consumers or their authorized caregiver the ability to exchange confidential information through a safe and secure process. After setting up a secure online profile, consumers can access confidential records such as the IPP, IFSP, psychological report, or Regional Center Eligibility Letter, documents which are frequently requested by other systems of care. Through this same secure, encrypted exchange, visitors can communicate directly with their Service Coordinator or other SCLARC specialists who may be involved in the support of their case.

### *Implementation*

SCLARC previously contracted with Kea Systems, Inc. to implement a new online data management system. SCLARC would solicit proposals from Kea, and/or other parties, to design a secure online portal for the exchange of confidential information with consumers and their authorized family members. As the Kea-designed “Smart Chart” system holds all consumer data, including scanned hard documents, it could interact with the portal to pull needed files for consumer access. It is estimated that the design process would take approximately six to eight months, followed by approximately two to three months of testing and modification before launching the system for use to the broader consumer population. The resource guide would require frequent monitoring and updates, which will be checked and managed by an assigned group of SCLARC staff who manage agency resource lists currently.

*Outcome 1:* Decrease disparities in access to and utilization of services by facilitating communication between consumers, families, and SCLARC staff.

*Outcome 2:* Increase access and communication between SCLARC staff and underserved families who may have limited ability to travel, or difficult work schedules which prohibit their ability to meet during the day.

*Outcome 3:* Increase utilization of services as it will improve communication between consumers, families and SCLARC about requests for new services, and facilitate the exchange of documents which may be required in order to process a request for new services.

*Evaluation*

Data will be downloaded to show the rate at which the new Portal is used by families. Numbers of site visits, including site visits per consumer per month can be generated. Additional information will be gathered on the reasons for visits and the type of activity completed by the visitor, such as downloading documents, uploading documents, communicating with SCLARC staff, or accessing resource referrals.

*Budget Summary*

<b>Line Item</b>	<b>Requested</b>
Design & building of Portal site	\$80,000
SCLARC IT Consultant to support design and testing of site	\$20,000
<b>Totals:</b>	\$100,000

**Disparity Proposal Supports**

In order to fully implement the projects described above, SCLARC requests funding for a part time Disparity Grant Administrator, who will be responsible for keeping track of required timelines, working with SCLARC’s various departments to successfully implement projects, maintaining program data, and conducting or coordinating evaluations to show program outcomes. It is estimated that this position will cost \$2,500 a month, or \$30,000. An individual who could take on this work has already been identified within the agency, and could begin immediately to implement the programs outlined in this proposal. The Administrator will convene a Disparity Advisory Committee, which will include members of SCLARC’s Board of Directors, Consumer Advisory Committee, Parent Advisory Committee, and Vendor Advisory

Committee. In addition, the DAC would include representatives from several community partner organizations who share our common target population, such as Healthy African American Families, and UCLA CART. Their input and guidance will be valuable as SCLARC implements these various programs, and will help to evaluate and enhance our various strategies to address disparities in purchases of service.

SCLARC additionally requests 8 percent administrative overhead costs for the Navigator Program, Early Childhood Outreach & Screening Program and the Translation Coordinator. As each of these involves staff, administrative overhead will cover agency costs related to supervision, payroll, security, space and equipment.

*Budget*

<b>Line Item</b>	<b>Requested</b>
Disparity Grant Administrator	\$30,000
Administrative Overhead Costs	\$53,411
<b>Totals:</b>	\$83,411

**Additional Proposals to Address Disparities**

SCLARC, along with other Regional Centers, also supports the proposal presented to DDS by San Gabriel Pomona Regional Center titled, “Understanding Barriers and Implementing Effective Strategies to Address Disparities in Service among Californians with Developmental Disabilities.” This research project will help all Regional Centers to better understand the needs of the unique populations we serve, and to see current issues and barriers in access and utilization of services.

SCLARC endorses the Association of Regional Center Agencies’ proposal to address the reinstatement of limited or suspended services, and to address median rate issues statewide. Close to 93 percent of Latino consumers served by SCLARC live with their families, so the need for providing family supports is critical. In response to the 2009 budget crisis, California imposed temporary limits on respite services and limited the ability of Regional Centers’ to purchase most camp and social recreation services. Over 7 years later, these restrictions on vital services cause huge problems for families trying to keep their disabled loved one at home, and add to the disparity problem. These services are a constant topic at SCLARC’s annual disparity town hall meetings, and families continue to request these services as a support in their efforts to

maintain their loved ones at home. As suggested by ARCA, statutory changes should be made to fully restore these important services to individuals and their families, to ensure that SCLARC's consumers can remain at home.

A second issue which has contributed greatly to the disparity problem is that new regional center funded services negotiated rates have been capped at the lower of either the local or statewide median rate for that service. These rate limitations apply even if the of the actual cost of providing a service is higher than the median rate. SCLARC has seen the detrimental impact of these limitations severely affect its vendors. Service providers who work with a large number of Spanish-speaking and low-income working families require additional costs associated with hiring bilingual staff, providing flexible scheduling, and traveling greater distances. Rate differentials adversely affect SCLARC's disparity data as the agency has some of the lowest median rates when compared to the six other Regional Centers in Los Angeles County. An increase in median rates for vendors would allow equitable access to quality vendors, would increase spending per capita, and would increase the utilization of services by expanding the pool of available vendors.

**SCLARC Reduction of Disparities in Purchase of Service Proposal Budget**

<b>Proposals</b>	<b>Amounts</b>
<b>Navigator Program</b>	<b>\$ 453,300</b>
<b>Early Childhood Outreach &amp; Screening Program</b>	<b>\$ 144,300</b>
<b>Outreach Van</b>	<b>\$ 83,700</b>
<b>Connections Satellite Office</b>	<b>\$ 104,000</b>
<b>Translation Coordinator</b>	<b>\$ 71,750</b>
<b>Develop New Service Providers</b>	<b>\$ 200,000</b>
<b>Cultural Awareness &amp; Sensitivity Training</b>	<b>\$ 50,000</b>
<b>Informational Marketing Campaign</b>	<b>\$ 35,000</b>
<b>Parent Portal</b>	<b>\$ 100,000</b>
<b>Disparity Grant Administrator</b>	<b>\$ 30,000</b>
<b>Administrative Overhead 8% of: Expand Navigator Program Early Childhood Outreach &amp; Screening Program Translation Coordinator</b>	<b>\$ 53,548</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,325,598</b>

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