

Request for ABX2 1 Funding

To Understanding Barriers and Strategies to Reduce Disparity in Purchase of Services

Proposal Submitted to the Department of Developmental Services

Valley Mountain Regional Center

November 2016

A. Propose – Background and Introduction

In accordance with state law, Valley Mountain Regional Center (VMRC) conducted an analysis of the Purchase of Service Expenditure Data and convened a stakeholder meeting to present its utilization and expenditure data to the community. Our stakeholder meeting had a diverse representation of participants present.

The following are ideas that emerged from the stakeholder meeting.

- 1) VMRC has a wide range of service areas that includes very rural to urban areas. This poses different types of service needs for the individuals and families served. VMRC needs to conduct more research to better understand what the numbers of the disparity report is really indicating. This research needs to take into account the vast regions served by VMRC as well as the population residing in these different types of areas.
- 2) VMRC needs to provide training to staff that will reinforce the need for continued awareness of consumer and family needs and differences while balancing the need to develop a person centered plan that also adheres to the expectation of VMRC, by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), and the State of California.
- 3) VMRC needs to be a more visible agency within the community to help show our support and commitment to the people we serve and the community as a whole.
- 4) VMRC needs to put mechanisms in place to provide easier communication to individuals who may not speak English. This should include written documentation and services provided at consumer meetings.

In our 2016 Performance Contract report, we indicated our intention to better understand what the data is specifically with respect to the actual Purchase of Services disparity, provide outreach within the community, develop bilingual resources and services to improve service delivery access and finally provide training pertaining to cultural understanding. We believe that our proposal request will be effective in addressing disparities in utilization of services. We hope to target the children between the age of 3 and 18 whom we serve. We also believe that your proposed request will also positively benefit our adult population.

Our statistical analysis of the data and feedback from stakeholders indicates that the key factors driving the disparities in utilization can be grouped into broad categories.

- 1) **Language and Cultural Barriers** unique to the populations that we serve, which includes stigma and shame regarding disabilities, lack of awareness/understanding of the services available, lack

of trust of the system as a whole, fear of state and federal laws such as immigrations laws, life circumstances and stress.

- 2) **Accessibility Barriers** or factors linked to the appropriateness of services offered by VMRC, including the complexity of the service delivery system and a lack/shortage of services in rural areas.

We are requesting funding to assist VMRC in effectively addressing these barriers, particularly the need for training for our Service Coordination Staff, increase trust between families and the system, as well as more culturally appropriate and individual and family driven services.

B-1 Describe your regional center's POS disparities

In accordance with the guidance provided by DDS, VMRC prepared a report on VMRC's Purchase of Service Expenditure and Demographic Data, for the fiscal year 2014/15.

During this period, VMRC served a total of 15,699 consumers. Of those 5,746 were white; 5,045 were Hispanic; 1,347 were African American; and 738 were Asian.

In terms of annual expenditures:

- Among racial/ethnic groups, all ages, average per capita expenditures were highest for Russian (\$21,765), Native American (\$15,235) and White (\$12,720). The lowest were for Samoan (\$1,364), Hispanic (\$5,166) and Pacific Islander (\$5,913).
- Among racial/ethnic groups, all ages, average per capita utilized services were highest among Russian and Native American respectively (95%), Other Multi-cultural (93%) and Filipino (88%). The lowest were for Native Hawaiian (61%), Samoan (78%) and Hispanic (79%).

In terms of annual utilization by age, across the board it seems services are underutilized:

- Birth to age 2, among racial/ethnic groups, average per capita utilization rates were highest for Native Hawaiian (80%), Multi-Cultural and White respectively (61%) and Filipino (60%). Among Samoan (25%), Other Pacific Islander (52%) and African American (55%) had the lowest utilization of services.
- Age 3 years to 21 years, among racial/ethnic groups, average per capita utilization rates were highest for Russian (100%), Samoan (87%) and other Multi-Cultural (78%). Among Native Hawaiian (46%), Native American (55%) and Hispanic (65%) was the lowest utilization of services.
- Age 22 years and older, racial/ethnic groups, average per capita utilization rates were highest for Native Hawaiian (100%), Native American (97%) and Filipino (96%). Samoan (77%), White (90%) and African American and Russian respectively (92%) had the lowest utilization of services.

The data seems to point to the need for enhanced services across our populations, but more importantly understanding the barriers in utilization of the services across all ethnic groups.

B-2 Identify the target population(s)

POS data points to the need for improved relationships, as well as greater outreach, education and training for our staff, families and providers. For the initial portion of the proposal, Spanish speaking individuals would be our target in our effort to improve service utilization and relationships. We would be focused primarily on families and children between 3 and 22 years of age. However, we believe that the development of our proposals will also be a positive impact for our adult population.

We will focus our service enhancement efforts on existing VMRC consumers who have an Individual Program Plan (IPP) as well as new and potential consumers from the target population.

The first phase of our proposed plan will begin with the research to better understand our POS disparity. This research will assist in better guiding the future phases of the proposal. During the first phase we will also implement training for staff. Future phases will then include outreach to our local communities, first within San Joaquin County the largest county we provide services to. Finally our proposal will integrate translation of necessary written and spoken materials for individuals to have in their native language. This proposal is expected to take several years to fully implement.

B-3 Brief Summary of the Public Forum

A community stakeholder meeting was held on November 14, 2016.

B-4A Strategies to Reduce Service Disparities

In response to the identified recommendations from our stakeholder meeting, VMRC proposes to utilize the current internal Project Manager who has over 15 years' experience with the regional centers to facilitate collaborating with consumers, families, schools, vendors and community agencies to bridge the gap in trusting of the system and service utilization. The Project Manager will also coordinate community and agency training. All members of the Senior Management Team will also be involved in reviewing and ensuring the proposal continues to move forward. By increasing the trust between VMRC and the families it serves, several outcomes are anticipated:

- 1) New families will be more trusting of the system.
- 2) Existing families will better understand the value and importance of services authorized and recommended in the IPP.
- 3) By engaging our staff and providing training, it will reduce language and cultural barriers allowing existing families to have increased access to and utilization of authorized services.

B-4B Implementation Plan, Services to be Delivered and Duration

VMRC is requesting funding for a three year project to include a research and planning phase. During the research and planning phase (year 1), VMRC will conduct the following activities:

- 1) Contract with a research company to analyze the Purchase of Service disparity data and provide an analysis of how the information compares to the service community make up. The analysis will also include a review and recommendations of where the disparities really are and how they may be addressed.
- 2) Provide staff with cultural competency training and training regarding person centered thinking. VMRC will contract with trainers to provide comprehensive training to individuals on cultural

competency. Strategically selected managers will complete training on person centered thinking. They will then provide training to all staff and be available to assist in situations when person centered thinking is needed.

- 3) Design the project implementation process for the Promotora project. During phase 1, VMRC will begin researching local community agencies that have individuals who are trained as Promotora's. VMRC will research with these agencies how the program works and how it may be implemented as an assistance to VMRC consumers. Initially VMRC will research a Spanish speaking Promotora agency. We will also attempt to contract with the local community agency to begin a small pilot project of Promotora.
- 4) Begin translating frequently used materials into different languages that are common within our catchment area. VMRC will work collaboratively with other regional centers to translate commonly used materials for all regional centers into languages that are needed by individuals that we serve. VMRC will also independently translate essential documents used by VMRC specifically into commonly served languages.

During the second phase (year 2) VMRC will

- 1) Follow-up with the recommendations from the disparity research and continue staff training. Pending the results of the research study, VMRC will continue to review and implement strategies recommended to help reduce disparity concerns. VMRC will also continue to provide training to staff in cultural competency and person centered thinking.
- 2) Community Outreach project will begin which will include conducting outreach through educational presentation about regional center services in venues serving families with children in our catchment area. VMRC will also start providing support and presence at local cultural events within the catchment area community.
- 3) Continue implementation of a small pilot project of Promotora's with our Spanish speaking community. Targeting a small group of children VMRC will contract with an agency to pilot a Promotora. The pilot will last a year so results can be determined before expanding the project to more consumers of different languages.

During the third phase (year 3) VMRC will

- 1) Research different types of translation systems and their effectiveness for use in the field for staff who are unable to speak the native language of the consumer or family. This will give VMRC the opportunity to locate an appropriate translation system that staff can use to make translation easier for both the family and staff. It is hoped that with ease of translation will help bring about better communication and relationships between the family and staff. Once a translation system is located the purchase and implementation of it will begin.
- 2) Continue translating frequently used materials into different languages that are common within our catchment area. VMRC will work collaboratively with other regional centers to translate commonly used materials for all regional centers into languages that are needed by individuals that we serve. VMRC will also independently translate essential documents used by VMRC specifically into commonly served languages.

- 3) Pending union approval is necessary to implement financial incentives for staff who are bilingual. These staff members will carry an established percentage of their caseload that speak a different native language.

B-4C Anticipated Cost of the plan and Evaluation Criteria

The total anticipated cost for the proposed three year project is \$721,600. Of this amount, \$10,000 is for conducting VMRC specific POS disparity research, \$36,600 is for training cost in cultural competency and person centered thinking, \$300,00 is for the implementation of the Promotora project, \$15,000 is for working collaboratively with other regional centers in translating commonly used documents, \$15,000 is for translation VMRC specific documentation, \$30,000 is for locating and purchasing an electronic interpreter system, \$15,000 is for community outreach, \$300,000 is for incentives for bilingual staff pending union approval, \$15,000 is for incidental cost related to the implementation of the plan such as mileage/travel and other incidental cost associated. At the end of each phase (year) VMRC Management team will complete a review of the monies spent and any impact it has had. Below is a more detailed estimation of the cost for the Cultural Competency Training and Person Centered Thinking.

Cultural Competency Training Cost: Training @\$2000.00 per day for 3 days. This is providing 2 trainings a day that last for 3 hours each with 50 people in each training. Cost of Expenses for the trainer are approximated: Travel \$500.00, Hotel \$1000.00 and Incidental Expenses such as meals, photo copies, car rental and gas costs \$500.00. An approximated total cost of \$8000.00. This will provide training for all staff and board members at total of 300 people

Person Centered Thinking Training: This is an areas that VMRC wants to provide a lot of emphasis on. First there are 6 people that will attend a 2 day training on Person Centered Thinking. The cost of this would be a per person cost of \$150.00 for the workshop, \$250.00 travel, \$600.00 hotel, \$100.00 food. An approximated total cost of \$6,600.00. It is important to bring the Person Centered Thinking Training to all VMRC staff and Board Members. The training is a 2 day training costing approximately \$1,500.00 a day. To provide this training there will be workbook materials that will need to be purchased for approximately \$5,000.00. The cost of travel and expenses for the trainer would be added. Cost of Expenses for the trainer are approximated: Travel \$500.00, Hotel \$1000.00 and Incidental Expenses such as meals, car rental and gas costs \$500.00. An approximated total cost of training the VMRC staff and Board would be \$10,000.00. Finally to keep Person Centered Thinking moving forward within VMRC we would certify 2 staff to be Person Centered Thinking Trainers. This is a 18 month-2 year process with a cost of approximately \$6,000.00 per person for a total of \$12,000.00. To provide in-depth Person Centered Thinking training the total approximated cost would be \$28,600.00.

B-4D Timeline

Timeframe	Goal	Strategies	Accountability
January 2017- December 2017	Begin Phase 1 Implementation	Begin quarterly project team meetings	VMRC Senior Management Team

		Locate and contract and agency/individual to complete in-depth POS disparity research	VMRC Senior Management Team
		Locate and contract a trainer for the cultural competency trainings	VMRC Senior Management Team/Project Manager
		Locate and contract Person Centered Thinking Training	VMRC Senior Management Team/Project Manager
		Locate community partner agency with Promotoras and develop an initial contract for the project	VMRC Senior Management Team
	Develop Plan Evaluation Plan	Identify project baseline and benchmarks, design data collection and monitoring system	VMRC Senior Management Team/Project Manager
		Work in collaboration with other regional centers to translate documents that are used system wide into necessary languages.	VMRC Senior Management Team/Project Manager
		Translate documentation that are widely used specific to VMRC in to necessary languages	VMRC Senior Management Team/Project Manager
January 2018-December 2018	Enhance understanding of disparity information	Review recommendations of contracted research	VMRC Senior Management Team
	Enhance Staff Development	Continued cultural competency training	Project Manager

		Begin Training all Staff on Person Centered Thinking	Project Manager
	Enhance public relations	Provide presentation to community agencies about VMRC	Project Manager
		Provide support and presence at community cultural events	VMRC Senior Management Team/Project Manager
		Continue with initial community Promotora agency	VMRC Senior Management Team/Project Manager
	Yearly Evaluation Plan	Review current baseline and benchmarks, collect data and monitoring system	VMRC Senior Management Team/Project Manager
January 2019-December 2019	Provide Effective Communication	Locate and Purchase an electronic interpretation system	VMRC Senior Management Team
		Continue to work in collaboration with other regional centers to translate documents that are used system wide into necessary languages.	VMRC Senior Management Team/Project Manager
		Continue to translate documentation that are widely used specific to VMRC in to necessary languages	VMRC Senior Management Team/Project Manager
		Pending union approval provide incentives to bilingual staff	VMRC Senior Management Team
	Yearly Evaluation Plan	Review current baseline and benchmarks, collect data and monitoring system	VMRC Senior Management Team/Project Manager

B-4E Plans for Data Collection and Tracking Outcomes

It is VMRC’s goal to increase service utilization rates of children and adults who are White, Hispanic, Asian and African American in general, by implementing the above proposed strategies. The following provides a list of short and long term outcomes objective, performance measures, and data sources to help fully develop the evaluation plan, tools and data collection instruments for the project. The Project Manager will work closely with the Senior Management Team throughout the entire implementation of this proposal.

Short Term Goal	Performance Measure	Data Source
Train staff on cultural competency	Number and percentage of VMRC staff trained by job classification	Names of persons registered and attendance confirmation
Conduct outreach and presentations regarding VMRC services to consumers and community	Number of outreach presentations by county, number of attendees at each and percentage of diverse representation at each	Sign-in sheet, number and frequency of outreach presentations
Train staff in person centered thinking	Numbers and percentages of VMRC staff trained by job classification	Names of persons registered and attendance confirmation

Long Term Goal	Performance Measure	Data Source
Increase service utilization rates and expenditures for White, Hispanic, Asian and African American consumers	Increase the percent of POS utilization and dollar expenditures for target populations in specified areas	SANDIS database, Department of Developmental Services
Increase satisfaction with VMRC including high ratings for culturally appropriate service	Increase in consumer satisfaction rates for culturally appropriate person centered thinking and service delivery	Consumer satisfaction survey’s conducted once a year; stakeholder meetings to gather qualitative data annually