

NON-MORTALITY SPECIAL INCIDENTS

**Semi-Annual Report Submitted to the
California Department of Developmental Services**

JULY – DECEMBER 2011



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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This report summarizes rates of special incidents between July and December 2011 for DDS consumers living in community residential care settings. It compares rates across recent years and identifies months in which rates were unusually high.

DDS can use this report to track special incident rates over time and monitor the effectiveness of risk management activities.

As one element of risk management and quality assurance, the California Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and California's network of regional centers monitor the occurrence of adverse events, captured through Special Incident Reports (SIR), to identify trends and develop strategies to prevent and mitigate risks. As required by Title 17, Section 54327 of the California Code of Regulations, vendors and long-term health care facilities report occurrences of suspected abuse, suspected neglect, injury requiring medical attention, unplanned hospitalization, and missing persons, if they occur when a consumer is receiving services funded by a regional center (under vendored care). In addition, *any occurrence* of consumer mortality or victim of crime must be reported whether or not it occurred while they were under vendored care.

This report, one of a series of semi-annual reports on non-mortality special incidents, summarizes incident rates for DDS consumers between July and December 2011. The report has two main goals:

1. To update time trends in special incident rates from our earlier reports to include data through December 2011.
2. To identify specific incident categories that were higher than their historical trend, and identify specific months in which incident rates were unusually high. DDS can use this report to track special incident rates over time.

The statistics and graphs presented in this report were constructed using data from the SIR System from 2002 to 2011. These data are augmented with three additional data sources maintained by DDS:

1. The Client Master File.
2. The Client Development Evaluation Report.
3. The Early Start Report.

This report presents findings based on statistical analyses that measure a consumer's risk of experiencing a special incident. Further details are found at the bottom of each subsequent page.

The average monthly non-mortality special incident rate this period was lower than last period.

**Table 1: All Non-Mortality Special Incidents, Compared to Previous Periods
DDS Out-of-Home Consumers, July - December 2011**

	Change From:	
	Jul-Dec 2010 (last year)	Jan-Jun 2011 (last period)
Raw Rate	-4.4%	-7.3% ↓
Case-Mix Adjusted Rate	-3.8%	-6.9% ↓

Arrows indicate statistically significant differences.

Key Findings:

- The case-mix adjusted non-mortality incident rate for out-of-home consumers was 1.85% this period, compared to 1.99% last period (Jan-Jun 2011) and 1.92% the same period last year (Jul-Dec 2010). These figures are not shown in the table above.
- Case-mix adjusted incident rates fell by 7.3% compared to the last period (Jan-Jun 2011). Comparable declines occurred in the raw incident rates. These declines were statistically significant, but reflect an especially low rate for December 2011 (see page 4 for additional information).

More About These Data

This report summarizes incident rates for consumers residing in community settings such as licensed residential facilities, Family Home Agency (FHA), Supported Living Services (SLS), or Independent Living Services (ILS). This excludes consumers residing in a developmental center or state-operated facility. Special incidents refer to categories of adverse events defined by Title 17, Section 54327 of the California Code of Regulations. They include: missing person, suspected abuse, suspected neglect, medication errors or serious injury, unplanned medical or psychiatric hospitalization, victim of crime, and death.

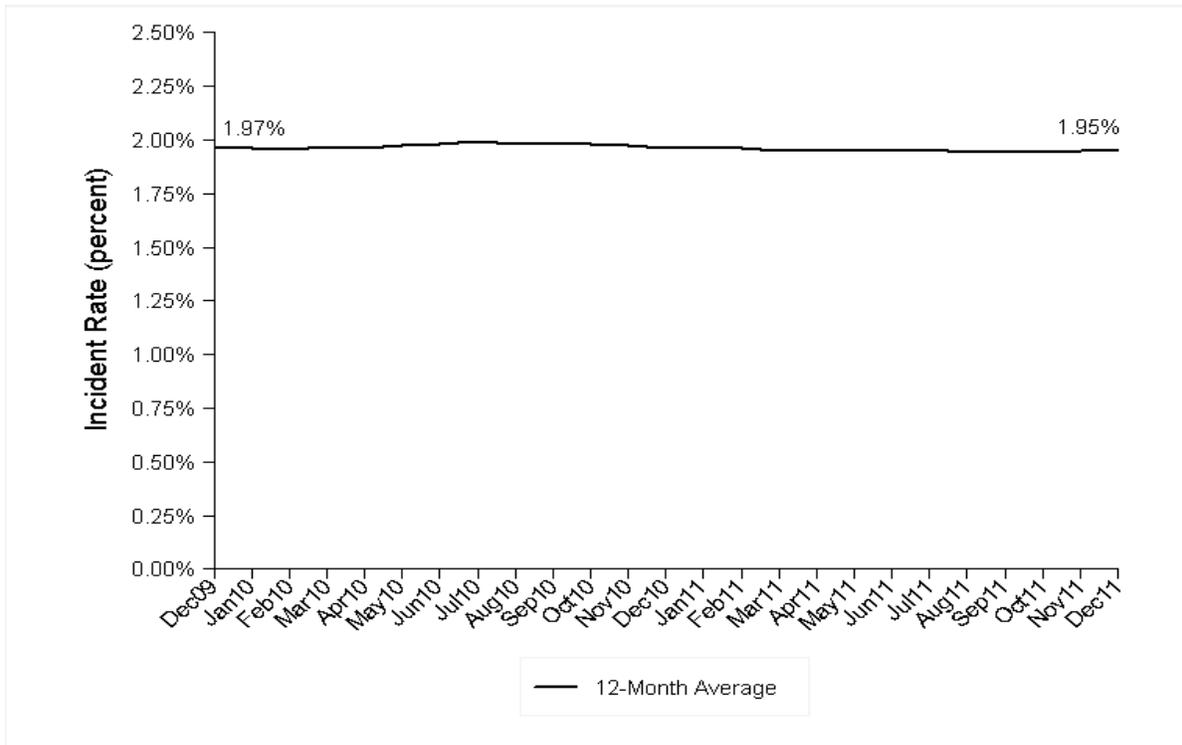
The *Raw Rate* is defined as the percentage of statewide consumers who experience one or more special incidents in an average month. It is calculated by dividing the *total number of consumers with one or more incidents* by the *total consumer population*. Note that this rate does not tell you how many SIRs there were per person in a given month.

The *Case-Mix Adjusted Rate* accounts for differences in the characteristics of the consumer population over time. In comparing statewide SIR rates to those of previous periods, case-mix adjustment permits us to distinguish trends affected by changes in population from trends associated with risk management practices. For example, an influx of medically fragile consumers could increase rates of unplanned hospitalization incidents, even if the effectiveness of risk management practices did not change.

Arrows indicate that the change is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. These differences are expected to occur by chance less than 5% of the time.

The statewide trend for non-mortality special incidents has remained essentially flat over the past two years.

**Figure 1: Non-Mortality Special Incidents, Case-Mix Adjusted Statewide Trend
DDS Out-of-Home Consumers, December 2009 – December 2011**



Key Findings:

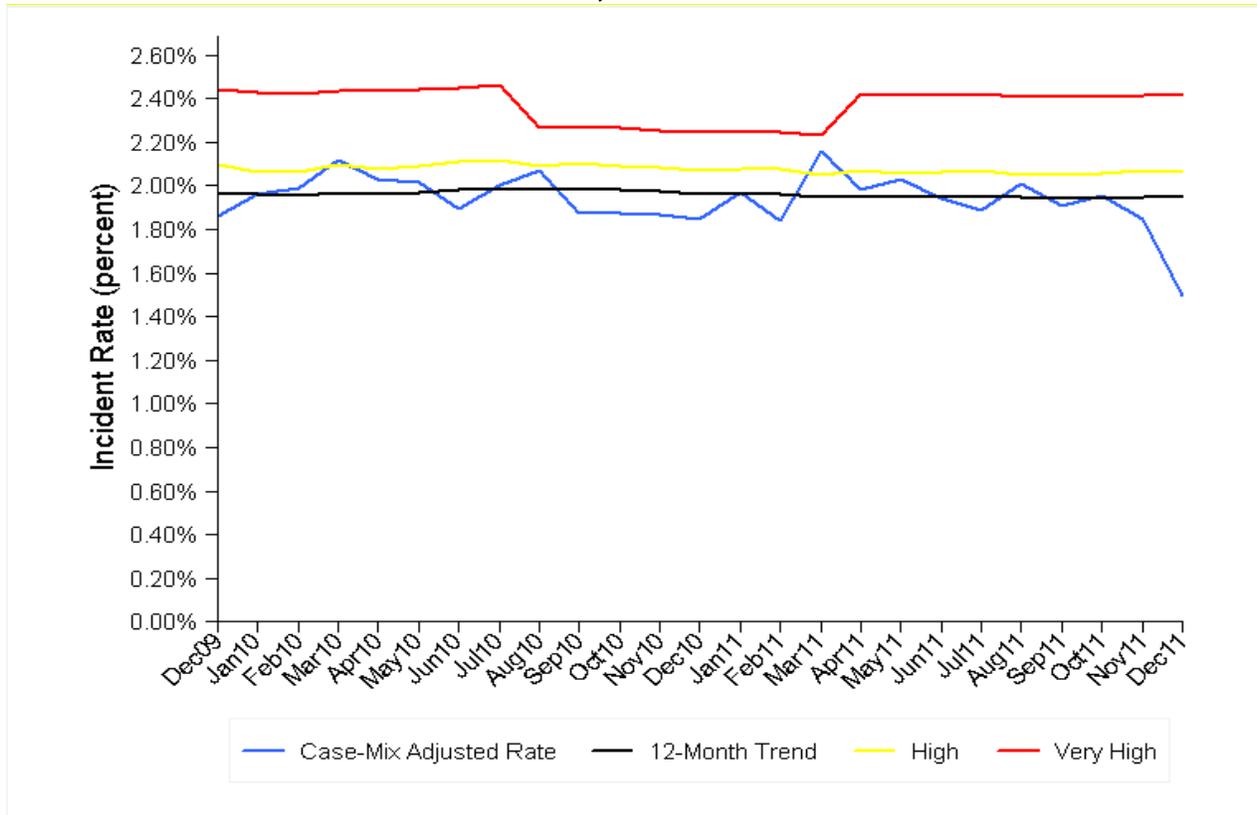
- The long-term trend in statewide non-mortality incident rates is essentially unchanged from the previous period.
- Although the trend in statewide non-mortality incident rates decreased compared to last period (see page 2), the average rate has been just under 2.0% over the previous two years.

More About These Data

The monthly incident rate is defined as the share of consumers experiencing one or more non-mortality incidents in a given month. The trend line in Figure 2 represents a 12-month moving average of the monthly incident rate. It is calculated by taking an average of statewide non-mortality special incident rates from the most recent 12-month period. This trend also accounts for the differences in the characteristics of the consumer population over time. This approach, called “case-mix adjustment,” controls for changes in consumer characteristics and removes these effects from the calculated trend.

Monthly incident rates have been close to the long-term trend, except for a drop off at the end of the calendar year.

**Figure 2: Non-Mortality Special Incidents, Case-Mix Adjusted Monthly Rates
DDS Out-of-Home Consumers, December 2009 – December 2011**



Key Findings:



- Between July and December 2011, the monthly incident rate never rose above the “High” threshold.
- The decrease for the period is largely due to the lower rate for December, which may reflect delayed reporting due to the holidays.

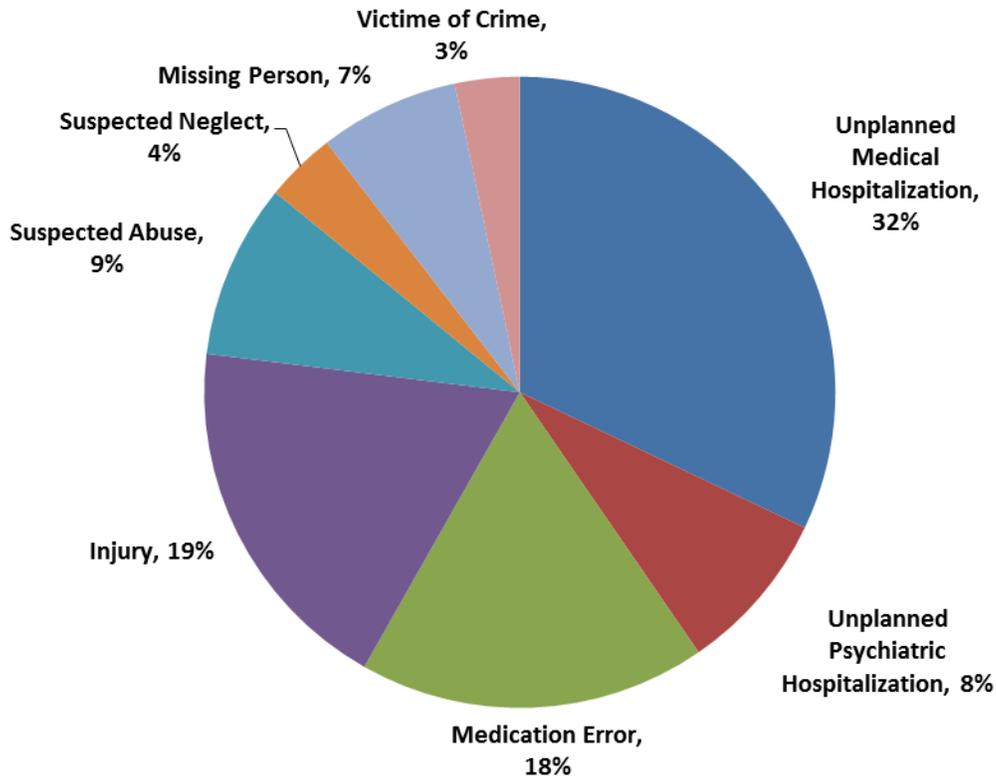
More About These Data

The black line in the graph above is the same line shown in Figure 1, representing the 12-month trend. The blue line represents the percentage of consumers statewide who experience one or more special incidents in a month. Both rates are case-mix adjusted, meaning that the trends account for changes in consumer characteristics over time. See page 2 for more details.

This graph identifies non-mortality incident rates that are unusually high and, therefore, classified as a “spike.” A rate that rises above the yellow line in a given month will occur randomly in only one month out of twenty (less than 5% of the time) and is considered “High”. A rate that rises above the red line in a given month will occur randomly less than 1% of the time. Rates above the red line, therefore, are very unlikely to be chance events and are classified as “Very High.”

Unplanned medical hospitalization, medication error and injury incidents are the most common non-mortality incident types.

Figure 3: Breakdown of Non-Mortality Special Incidents by Type
DDS Consumers, July - December 2011



Key Findings:



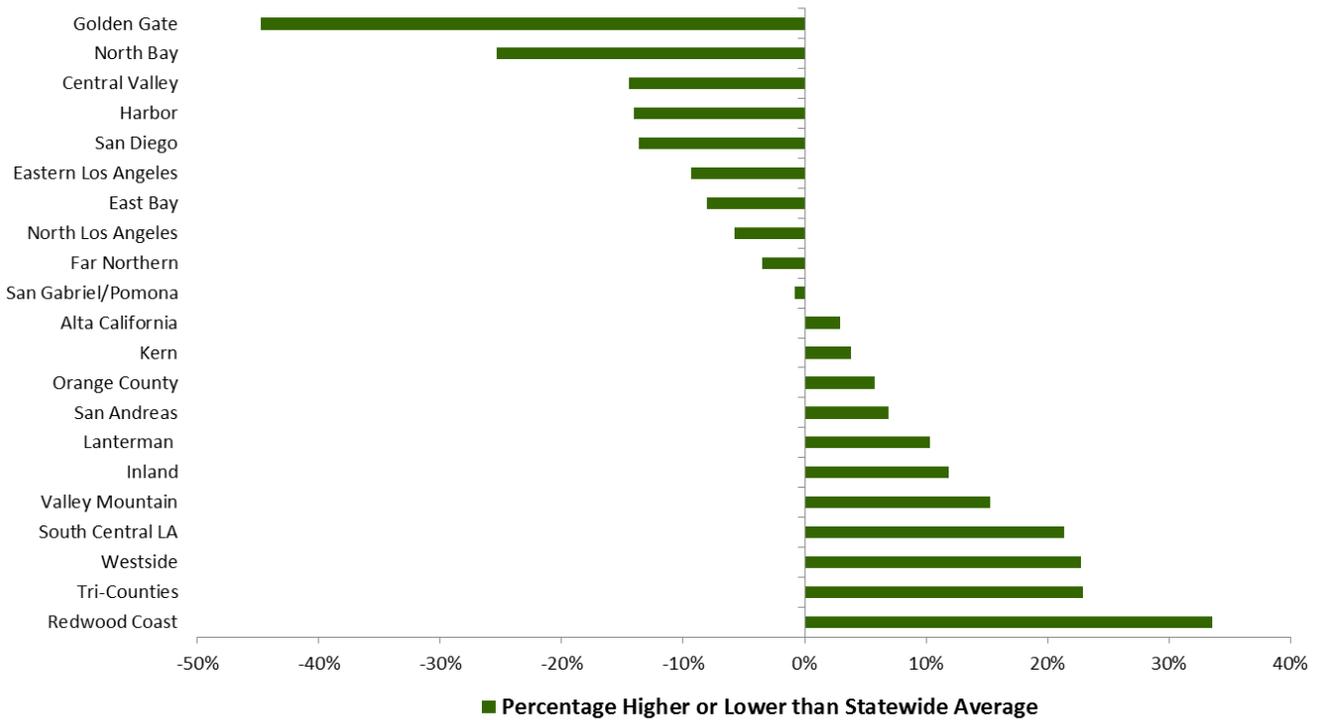
- Starting in July 2011, we began tracking unplanned psychiatric and medical hospitalizations separately, as well as breaking out medication errors from other injury incidents.
- Unplanned medical hospitalization, injury and medication error incidents accounted for more than two-thirds of incidents between July and December 2011.

More About These Data

The percentages shown above are based on raw counts of reported special incidents and are not case-mix adjusted.

Among the 21 regional centers, Redwood Coast, Tri-Counties and Westside had the highest non-mortality incident rates.

Figure 4: Non-Mortality Special Incident Rates by Regional Center Compared to State December 2010 – December 2011



Key Findings:

- Over the last year, Redwood Coast Regional Center (RCRC) continued to have a rate of reported non-mortality incidents that was more than 30% above the statewide average. Although Tri-Counties Regional Center (TCRC) had the second highest rate, it was closer to the statewide average than in the previous period.
- Westside Regional Center (WRC) shifted from below to more than 20% above the statewide average. This appears to be a one-time event and not a systemic increase. No additional follow-up is planned. See page 7 for additional information.

Follow-Up Activities:

- Mission Analytics is providing technical assistance to RCRC to determine the cause of high incident rates and possible remediation activities. See page 7 for additional information.

More About These Data

The percentages above are case-mix adjusted, meaning that they account for differences in the characteristics of the consumer population over time. See Page 2 for more details.

Mission Analytics Group is conducting further analyses to identify and address causes of unusually high incident rates.

Mission Analytics is coordinating closely with the regional centers to track and monitor the follow-up activities associated with quarterly SIR spikes. For longer term increases in incident rates, Mission Analytics uses SIR case reviews, site visits and statistical analyses as part of its monitoring, discovery and improvement activities. A number of additional activities continue to support DDS and regional centers in preventing future incidents. We describe these activities below.

Monitoring & Discovery Activities:

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- *Reporting Back:* Regional centers with quarterly spikes in individual incident types are required to report back to Mission Analytics any discovery and remediation activities related to these spikes including a description of why any spikes occurred, what follow-up actions were taken, and whether they faced obstacles in implementing these follow-up activities. These responses are reviewed by the DDS Quality Management Executive Committee on a quarterly basis and may be used to develop strategies on how to mitigate risk to consumers statewide.
 - Preliminary analyses of the high incident rates at RCRC indicate a high rate of medication errors. Mission Analytics is conducting more detailed analyses of the residence type and other consumer characteristics associated with the high medication error rates.
 - WRC's increase relative to the statewide average (as seen on page 6) was due to unexpectedly high rates of unplanned psychiatric admissions, medication errors, and suspected neglect incidents in the July-September 2011 quarter. WRC reported back on its investigations of each of these incidents. For all three incident types, the spike, in part, reflected multiple incidents occurring to the same consumers. Specific mitigation strategies were developed for several consumers involved in multiple incidents. An additional three consumers were relocated from a facility associated with neglect incidents. No additional follow-up is planned.
 - *Long-term Increases in Incident Rates:* Mission Analytics has established a multi-stage process to investigate drivers of long-term increases in incident rates. We provide additional analyses and technical assistance to regional centers identified based on results such as those shown on page 6. For such regional centers, we conduct additional analyses to determine the detailed incident types and/or consumer characteristics associated with the increase. Based on these results, we determine whether or not a more detailed review of the SIRs is necessary to better understand the issue. As appropriate, we also work with the regional centers to identify mitigation strategies.

System Improvement Activities:

- *DDS SafetyNet Website:* Mission Analytics maintains the DDS SafetyNet, a website promoting health and safety for individuals with developmental disabilities. In addition to addressing general safety issues, SafetyNet

materials respond directly to trends in special incident rates to help manage risk among the consumer population. For example, content for Spring 2012 focuses on avoiding unplanned hospitalizations for urinary tract infections.

- *DDS Mental Health Services Act (MHSA)*: DDS began Cycle II of the MHSA Projects on July 1, 2011. Five regional centers received MHSA funds in the following areas: Substance Abuse, Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health, MHSA Forums, Psychotherapy to Reduce Psychiatric Hospitalizations, and Transition Age Youth. Projects will establish a task force; develop assessment and treatment tools; train professionals, families, and consumers; and, promote best practices and service approaches to effectively serve consumers with mental illness involved in the criminal justice system.