

Purchase of Service (POS) Public Meetings Summary & Recommendations and Plan to Promote Equity and Reduce Disparities Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2023- 2024

This report presents a summary of the Westside Regional Center's (WRC) Purchase of Service (POS) data and community feedback for Fiscal Year 2023–2024, as mandated by Welfare and Institutions (W&I) Code §4519.5. WRC conducted two public meetings to review service expenditure data, identify barriers to equitable access, and gather stakeholder input. This report outlines the key findings from those sessions and WRC's planned actions for addressing identified disparities.

Public Meetings Overview

To ensure transparency and stakeholder participation, WRC held two public meetings:

- **In-Person Meeting** on March 20, 2025: Attended by 30 participants, conducted in English with Spanish interpretation.
- **Virtual Meeting** on March 25, 2025: Attended by 77 participants, conducted in Spanish with English interpretation.

Presentation slides and data summaries were made available in both English and Spanish on WRC's website. Participants included individuals supported by WRC, family members, community stakeholders, WRC staff, Westside Family Resource and Empowerment Center staff, as well as representatives from Disability Rights California, and Department of Developmental Services.

Outreach to Increase Public Attendance and Participation

The announcement of the Purchase of Service (POS) Data Townhall public meeting was made over 30 days prior to the first meeting on March 20, 2025. Community members were provided multiple notifications in English and Spanish and reminders via e-mail blasts and social media posts during a 7-week period. The notifications were sent on the following dates: 2/4, 2/18, 3/3, and 3/17. In addition, flyers in English and Spanish were posted in all WRC entrances and were placed in the reception area.

Summary of the POS Data

WRC served 13,388 individuals in FY 2023-24. The demographics and living situation breakdown are as follows:

- Age Groups: birth to age 2 (n= 2,647), 3 to 21 years of age (n=6,425), 22 years and older (n=4,316),
- Ethnicity: Hispanic (n=4,833), White (n=3,148) Black/African American (n=2,948), Other Ethnicity or Race/Multi-Cultural (n=1,845) and Asian (n=593),
- Primary languages spoken: English (n=11,151), Spanish (n=2,059), and Other (n=147),
- Living situation: living in the home of a parent or guardian (n=11,797).

A large amount of per capita expended services was for adults (ages 22 and up) to support out-of-home living arrangements. The amount spent per individual living in Community Care Facilities was \$189,633, Intermediate Care Facility \$54,277, Skilled Nursing Facility \$45,094 and other \$91,639. Whereas WRC expended \$62,432 per capita for individuals who receive Independent Living Skills and \$18,500 per capita for individuals receiving other in-home services.

Disparities in funded services continue to exist between the three largest ethnic groups:

- Per capita spending for Latinx/Hispanic population:
 - \$6,675 per capita for children 0-2 years
 - \$11,459 per capita for children and adults between the ages of 3-21
 - \$55,665 per capita for adults 22 years and over
- Per capita spending for Black/African American population
 - \$6,035 per capita for children 0-2 years
 - \$14,072 for children and adults between the ages of 3-21 years
 - \$75,628 per capita for adults 22 years and over
- Per capita spending for White population
 - \$6,068 per capita for children 0-2 years
 - \$17,244 per capita for children and adults 3-21 years
 - \$94,494 per capita for adults 22 years and over

Although the differentials are sometimes attributed to higher utilization of residential services by White adults, funding discrepancies continue to be present in funding for Latinx/Hispanic and African American children that live in the family homes.

Pursuant to Assembly Bill 1957 (Chapter 314, Statutes of 2022) added W&I Code section 4519.5(a)(8), WRC also reported on POS expenditures for social recreation, camp, non-medical therapies, and educational services.

The comparison of dollar amounts of services by ethnicity for social recreation services for all ages:

- Asian – \$236,446
- Black/African American – \$844,896
- Hispanic – \$1,046,657
- White – \$1,426,527
- Other Race/Ethnicity or Multi-cultural – \$620,286

The dollar amount of services by ethnicity for social recreation services by age for 3-21 years old:

- Asian – \$138,584
- Black/African American – \$374,359
- Hispanic – \$683,528
- White – \$634,652
- Other Race/Ethnicity or Multi-Cultural – \$481,708

The dollar amount of services by ethnicity for camping services by age (all ages):

- Asian – \$64,136
- Black/African American – \$189,288
- Hispanic – \$160,028
- White – \$292,804
- Other – \$172,108

The dollar amount of services by ethnicity for educational services for all ages under 18:

- Asian – \$265,779
- Black/African American – \$475,267
- Hispanic – \$936,630
- White – \$426,724
- Other – \$ 415,350

The dollar amount of services for social recreation services by language and age (all ages):

- English – \$3,635,429
- Spanish – \$510,471

The dollar amounts that are listed above underscore the possibility that social recreation (including tutoring) is being accessed more readily by Latinx/Hispanic and African American children in comparison to the utilization of other traditional services. However, services such as camps, which also involve overnight camps, are not as frequently accessed by Latinx/Hispanic individuals. There may be some cultural factors as well as language issues that could be a barrier and may need to be explored further in the future.

In addition, social recreational services are utilized more by families who are English speaking versus Spanish speaking though their ethnic background may be Latinx/Hispanic.

View the PowerPoint Presentations in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

FY 22-23 Community Feedback and WRC's Actions to Improve Service Delivery and Equity

Self Determination Program (SDP)

- **Concerns:** Protracted implementation, lack of communication
- **WRC Response:** Developed monthly “Question and Answer” drop-in sessions where parents can obtain quick guidance and clarification on their SDP, streamlined internal processes and built a larger and more focused SDP team (expanded from 4 to 8 service coordinators), and community outreach efforts (survey was sent to collect information on barriers in transitioning to SDP). The SCs will have a 1:25 caseload ratio to provide families with extensive support.

Service Awareness and Navigation

- **Concerns:** Families unaware of available services
- **WRC Response:** Hosted 22 informational sessions/resource fairs, updated service lists online, materials and interpretation provided.

Date	Title of Event	# of Participants
May 8, 2024	Intake & Eligibility Information Session	8
June 5, 2024	Social Recreation Services Information Session	38
June 12, 2024	Social Recreation Resource Fair	18
July 10, 2024	Social Recreation Services Information Session	30
July 17, 2024	Social Recreation Services Information Session	73
July 31, 2024	Social Recreation Resource Fair	69
August 14, 2024	Personal Assistance, Respite, and Health & Safety Information Session	24
August 21, 2024	Personal Assistance, Respite, and Health & Safety Resource Fair	21

September 11, 2024	Personal Assistance, Respite, and Special Supervision Info Session	17
September 18, 2024	Personal Assistance, Respite, and Health & Safety Resource Fair	23
October 2, 2024	Intake & Eligibility Information Session	18
October 9, 2024	Applied Behavior Analysis Information Session	9
October 15, 2024	Intake & Eligibility Information Session	15
October 23, 2024	Applied Behavior Analysis Resource Fair	27
November 6, 2024	Adaptive Skills Information Session	17
November 13, 2024	Adaptive Skills Resource Fair	20
December 4, 2024	Applied Behavior Analysis Resource Fair	48
December 12, 2024	Regional Center Appeals Process Info Session	7
January 29, 2025	Coordinated Family Support Information Session	17
February 19, 2025	Coordinated Family Support Resource Fair	45

In addition to informational sessions and resource fairs, WRC committed to reviewing and updating age specific service list documents and making them available in Spanish. The updated service lists are available on our website.

Access to Social and Recreational Services

- **Concerns:** Geographic limitations, long waitlists
- **WRC Response:** Approved five new vendors in underserved areas. Promotion of Participant Directed Services (as a path in accessing social recreation programs) through informational sessions and consultations. WRC renews the goal to broaden the list of vendored social recreational programs and increase community education regarding Participant Directed services.

Platform for Open Dialogue

- **Concerns:** Lack of community engagement
- **WRC Response:** Launched two “Community Conversation” in-person events. These sessions were held on September 19, 2024, and December 11, 2024.

Community members recognized the value in meeting and having a space to discuss barriers in accessing services, ask questions, and brainstorm ideas together. No meeting was held in March due to the POS public meetings, which served as a community listening opportunity. The next session is scheduled for June 25, 2025.

High Caseload Ratios

- **Concerns:** Vacant caseloads and service coordination overburden
- **WRC Response:** Positive strides in reducing caseload ratios. Improved ratio from 1 to 80 individuals (03/2023) to 1 to 70 (03/2025). A caseload ratio of 1:70 means that one service coordinator supports 70 individuals. WRC is committed to monitoring caseload ratios by actively recruiting and hiring new Service Coordinators. While direct partnerships with local college career centers have not been established yet, WRC has been participating in various job fairs and career events at colleges and universities. WRC's Human Resource Department has also been utilizing the Handshake platform, ClearCompany software, LinkedIn, employee referrals, internal promotions, partnership with local workforce development agencies to streamline recruitment, meet hiring needs, and support caseload management.

FY 23-24 Community Feedback and WRC's Action Plan to Improve Service Delivery and Equity

WRC has committed to several actions in the upcoming fiscal year to address ongoing disparities and enhance service access:

- 1) Launch on-demand, self-paced e-learning modules in English and Spanish explaining WRC services.
- 2) Conduct an outcome-focused survey for participants of information sessions, as a follow-up to an inquiry made during one of the public meetings.
- 3) Expand support groups for Self-Determination Program (SDP) (every first and third Wednesday, in English, and every second and fourth Wednesday, in Spanish). Information about those support groups is available on WRC's website and social media accounts.
- 4) Develop bi-lingual SDP enrollment guide available on WRC's website.
- 5) Implement technological improvements to expedite accessibility to translated IPP documents to ensure that parents have an opportunity to review, approve and amend yearly goals soon after the IPP meeting is held.
- 6) Continue recruitment of Service Coordinators to further improve caseload ratios.

- 7) Review and improve current notification processes to inform families of caseload movement and vacancies.
- 8) Broaden vendor pool and improve geographic service distribution for social and recreational programs.
- 9) Continue partnership with a community-based agency, Westside Infant Network, to support Latinx/Hispanic and African American families with children under five years of age who receive low/no POS funded services. This collaborative project has been made possible through the California Department of Developmental Services' Service Access and Equity (SAE) Grant Program.
- 10) Develop collaborative partnerships with other SAE grantees and local community-based organizations working in WRC's catchment area, in response to inquiries from the community. WRC will coordinate quarterly opportunities to meet and greet other community-based agencies to exchange information and resources that would benefit the communities we support.

Westside Regional Center remains dedicated to improving service equity and addressing disparities in POS funding and access. Through targeted community engagement, data transparency, and responsive action plans, WRC works collaboratively with individuals and families to foster inclusive, accessible support services for all.