



**San Gabriel / Pomona
Regional Center**

April 20, 2022

TO: Sheila James, Board President & Board of Directors
San Gabriel / Pomona Valleys Developmental Services, Inc.

FROM: Anthony Hill, M.A. J.D. Esq.
Executive Director

RE: Executive Director's Report

Autism Awareness & Acceptance Month

San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center (SG/PRC) welcomes April 2022, as autism awareness and acceptance month. Through this recognition, we are encouraging all to read and learn more about autism. Specifically, understanding the condition, and finding ways that each of us can support, empower, and include people with autism and developmental disabilities within the vibrant mural of people living their fullest life within our communities. When we envision inclusion, we see a society where our love, care, and empathy for each other demonstrates how we live and connect with each other, every second, every minute, and every hour... during every day.

SG/PRC's Critical Business Functions

SG/PRC's critical business functions remain unchanged from prior month. SG/PRC is the **only** regional center in the state that kept its business office open throughout the pandemic and has delivered full scope in-person intake, eligibility, early intervention, dentistry, and other clinical assessments and services. Every business day we see children and their parents or guardians spending time with us, waiting in our temporary lobby, and thereafter receiving diagnostic counselling, assessments, and intake services.

SG/PRC recognizes itself as a health care setting tethered to the designation from the State Public Health Officer that all regional center employees are healthcare workers. SG/PRC continues its "abundance of caution" strategy through remote working, weekly COVID- 19 testing for all staff, and temperature screening and face mask wearing for all staff and members of the community that visit the SG/PRC office.

Since April 2021, all SG/PRC employees are required to participate in the SG/PRC COVID-19 testing clinic weekly, and at minimum are required to receive both the rapid BinaxNow Antigen test, and PCR test consecutively. Unvaccinated staff are required to test more frequently. As many of you are aware, during August 2021, all SG/PRC employees are required to disclose their vaccination status when engaged in business activities, upon entering homes of individuals served, residential facilities, skill nursing facilities, supported living arrangements, day programs, schools, jails, and homeless shelters through relying on our electronic confirmation system, verified through our Human Resource team.

Regarding Individual Program Plan and Individual Family Service Plan meetings, SG/PRC Service Coordinators are conducting these meetings in-person at the discretion of the individual served, their legal guardian or conservator while practicing health care guidance, in wearing surgical grade masks, and staying within prescribed boundaries for physical distancing. Service Coordinators are conducting in-person meetings with all individuals served that reside in any residential facility type, skill nursing facilities, adult family homes, psychiatric treatment settings and state operated facilities.

We are getting closer to opening the newly redesigned lobby. We are pleased to report that we have begun, phase two which is the redesign of the temporary lobby space that will transition into a community space for all visitors and staff to enjoy and connect with each other. We imagined this space as an extension of the main lobby.

Intake/Eligibility Data Ending February 2022

Early Intervention/Intake

1585 New Referrals
1514 Eligibility Reviews
1431 Children Found Eligible
53 Reactivations
8 Transfer in

Lanterman/Intake

343 New Referrals
426 Eligibility Reviews
272 Found Eligible
542 Exiting EI (Eligibility Reviews)
261 Eligible (/EI transitions)
54 Provisional Eligible
126 Reactivations
46 Transfer in

(See Attachment A.)

SG/PRC COVID-19 Data

Los Angeles County COVID-19 positivity rate 7-day average reported as of my last report was 0.81% percent, and now the positivity rate is 1.01%, as of April 14, 2022, according to Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (*See Attachment B*).

COVID-19 Vaccine Data

As required by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Directive, all regional centers are required to collect COVID-19 vaccine data for individuals served. Regional Centers are collecting the vaccine brand, whether the individual served is fully vaccinated, whether the individual served received a vaccine booster, and whether the individual served demonstrated their choice to decline COVID-19 vaccines. SG/PRC's vaccine data collection efforts remain at the **top** of the list of regional centers according to DDS Data at [www.dds.ca.gov under COVID-19 data](http://www.dds.ca.gov/under/COVID-19/data) updated on April 8, 2022.

SG/PRC's COVID-19 Testing Clinic

The SG/PRC COVID-19 testing clinic is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday for individuals served and their families, Service Provider staff and their families, and SG/PRC staff and their families, and general members of the community. The clinic is held at the SG/PRC office from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. We are now offering both BinaxNow Covid-19 Antigen test, a rapid test, and the gold standard PCR test to anyone that participates in our clinic.

We have sufficient testing supplies, and SG/PRC staff volunteers are very proud to do their part in supporting the health and safety of our community. We are thankful for the support of our partners including that California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Aveanna Healthcare, Color, and Valencia Branch Laboratories. Effective April 4, 2022, sponsored through our partnership with the California Department of Public Health, any time a person test with us at our clinic, the individual will receive a \$20 dollar gift card with a selection of over fifty merchants (Amazon, Walmart, Target, Starbucks) to choose from. For example, if a person test with us all four days that our clinic is open during the week, the person will receive (4) \$20 dollar gift cards. Additionally, we are pleased to announce that everyone that test at our clinic will receive (2) COVID-19 home test at a retail value of near \$18 dollars through SG/PRC's partnership with the California Department of Public Health.

Personal Protective Equipment

SG/PRC has sufficient supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for our Service Providers and individuals served and their families. SG/PRC has partnered with Parents' Place to distribute PPE. You can reach Parents' Place at (626) 919-1091.

Jaimie Anabalon, Quality Assurance Manager coordinates PPE distributions for Service Providers and can be reached at PPE@sgprc.org.

Community Conversation about Future Care Planning Needs

On April 14, 2022, SG/PRC sponsored a community conversation via Zoom in collaboration with Helen Sanderson Associates to listen to the service needs and ideas that parent and family caregivers share to support their loved ones. Helen Sanderson Associates will develop a report for SG/PRC that will be the foundation for future conversations to create a resource development plan and parallel strategies to connect with resources available through the community system of care (*See Attachment C*).

Sirens of Silence

San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center, in partnership with the Los Angeles County Fire Department, encourages the entire SG/PRC community to spend the day with us on April 30, 2022, beginning at 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. to meet first responders, including the California Highway Patrol, Pomona Police, Los Angeles County Sherriff, Pomona Valley Hospital, Care Ambulance Service and to connect with staff with San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center. There will be music, sensory stations, dental screening, the LACoFD's support dog, police dogs, fire trucks, police cars, swat vehicles, and other emergency response vehicles. The first three hundred people that register will receive a lunch prepared by Baja Cali. You can register through the QR code within the flyer (*See Attachment D*).

Community Outreach/Compliance Report

The SG/PRC Community Outreach/Compliance Director, Salvador Gonzalez has issued a report dated April 4, 2022, that includes SG/PRC's community outreach activities occurring during prior months covering the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companions Programs, Cultural Specialists, Board Certified Behavioral Analyst, Educational Specialist, Fair Hearings Specialist, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist, and Equity Partnerships (*See Attachment E*).

National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS)

The NASDDDS and Green Mountain Self-Advocates began a partnership in 2021 to ensure that the advocates' voices reach diverse forums. Max Barrows is the Outreach Director for Green Mountain Self-Advocates, and Mr. Hasan Ko is a professional at Green Mountain Self-Advocates (GMSA) and he represents their national projects. On February 10, 2022, Mr. Barrows and Mr. Ko met with more than sixty self-advocates from at least twenty-five states. They had a conversation regarding what works and what does not work when receiving service delivery remotely. They stated the benefits of remote service delivery are the flexibility in the location where services are provided.

They agreed that remote services have many drawbacks. They describe that remote service delivery gets in the way of communicating true feelings, limits one to one interactions with Direct Support Professionals (DSP), disengagement when the DSP or program participant has their camera off, unreliability of technology or internet connectivity, and it is difficult to participate in Zoom services for long hours and being required to sit for many hours. They agreed that at times many felt isolated, lonely, and they agree it is necessary to get out in the community. If you are interested in reading the entire story you can find it at www.nasddd.org.

SG/PRC's Budget Expenditures FY 21/22

SG/PRC's Operations allocation is \$35,296,155 with projected expenditures of \$34,505,940. An OPS allocation reserve is projected. SG/PRC's POS allocation is \$318,032,645, with year-to-date expenditures \$175,040,249 aggregating expenditures projected and late billings reflecting \$129,875,987. A POS reserve is projected.

Department of Developmental Services (DDS)

Social Recreation Services Directive

On October 7, 2021, DDS issued a directive to all regional centers regarding the restoration of regional center funding for camping services and associated travel expenses, and social recreation services. SG/PRC was required to implement a community outreach plan and engage in activities to increase awareness of this beneficial change. On December 16, 2022, SG/PRC sent a letter in threshold languages to all individuals served and their families. Further, SG/PRC was required from DDS to update its purchase of service policy and obtain Board approval and submit its Board approved policy to DDS for review and approval. The SG/PRC Board has approved the SG/PRC Social Recreation/Camp & Non-Medical Therapies Policy. DDS is currently reviewing this policy. In the interim, SG/PRC is fulfilling its obligation to fund social recreation services, camp and associated travel, and non-medical therapies as guided through the Individual Program Planning needs assessment process (*See Attachment F*).

SG/PRC Caseload Ratio Compliance

DDS issued SG/PRC a letter dated March 21, 2022, finding that SG/PRC did not meet caseload ratio requirements for individuals served on the Home and Community Based Services Waiver; children under the ages of three; individuals served over the age of three; and individuals moved from the developmental center over the past 12 months and over the past 24 months. SG/PRC caseload ratios were within caseload ratio thresholds for individuals served with complex needs. SG/PRC is required to create a plan of correction, obtain input from the public, the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, and Disabilities Rights of California.

On April 26, 2022, during the weekly SG/PRC community meeting, SG/PRC staff will present the SG/PRC plan of correction and encourage feedback. DDS acknowledges in their letter that the Governor's Budget includes funding for the upcoming fiscal year 2022/2023 to close the caseload ratio gap between compliance. However, the gap has widened since the last survey during March 2021. This trend is as a perpetual outcome of the broken core staffing formula that underfunds the cost for Service Coordinators salaries and other regional center positions. A key Association of Regional Center Agencies' (ARCA) proposal is for California lawmakers to fix the core staffing formula. We are pleased to inform the SG/PRC community that several lawmakers have agreed to propose legislation to modernize the core staffing formula (*See Attachment G*).

On March 22, 2022, DDS issued a Directive: Extension of Waivers and Modifications and Directives Due to COVID-19 (See Attachment H).

Health and Safety Waiver Exemption

Regional Center Executive Directors' authority to grant adjustments to residential service rates is extended under Welfare and Institutions Code Sections 4681.6, 4689.8 and 4691.9 until May 1, 2022, excluding Executive Directors' authority to do so for Service Code 109.

Day Programs

Day Programs service delivery is permissible in person but must be provided in accordance with local public health orders and guidelines issued from the California Department of Public Health. This Directive is extended until May 7, 2022.

Presumptive Eligibility

The regional center may determine that an individual is presumptively eligible for services under a reasonably certain standard if circumstances prevent the regional center from making a definitive determination. This Directive is extended until May 14, 2022.

Additional Participant-Directed Services

Additional Participant-Directed Services includes Personal Assistance, Independent Living Services and Supported Employment. This Directive is extended until May 19, 2022.

Residential Facility Payments

Regional Centers shall report all current and approved payments for temporary residential service absences. This Directive is extended until May 5, 2022.

Extension of Early Start Services

Regional Centers may fund Early Start services as a transitional bridge to cross over to Part C Services. This Directive is extended until May 6, 2022.

Half Day Billing

The Half Day Billing requirements are waived, until April 25, 2022.

Self-Determination Program

This Directive waives the requirement that the cost of the financial management service is paid by the Self-Determination Program participant from his or her individual budget. This Directive is extended until May 13, 2022.

On March 17, 2022, DDS issued a Directive: Self-Determination Program; Home and Community-Based Services Setting Assessment.

This Directive provides regional centers and Self-Determination Program Participants guidance and a list of settings that must be assessed by the Planning Team prior to the delivery of regional center funded services under the Self-Determination Program (*See Attachment I*).

Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) Updates

The Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) represents the twenty-one non-profit regional centers that advocate on behalf of and coordinates services for California's over 380,000 people with developmental disabilities. The Association functions as a leader and advocate in promoting the continuing entitlement of individuals with developmental disabilities to achieve their full potential and highest level of self-sufficiency. The Association participates in the development of public legislative policy that impact individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

ARCA Supports - Senate Bill 387

ARCA supports Senate Bill 387-Anthony Portantino, requiring local educational agencies to increase staff training to be prepared to manage and be more responsive to behavioral health challenges. This bill would require, on or before January 1, 2025, that local educational agencies certify that 75% of both its classified and certificated employees have received youth behavioral health training (*See Attachment J*).

ARCA Supports- Senate Bill 987

ARCA supports Senate Bill 987-Anthony Portantino, requiring that Medi-Cal managed care plans include in its contractor provider network at least one National Cancer Institute (NCI) Designated Cancer Center. This Bill will ensure that Medi-Cal managed care plans ensure access to effective treatment for cancer, including diagnosis, timeliness of intervention, choice of therapy, collaboration among experts, and access to appropriate clinical trials or emerging therapies (*See Attachment K*).

Grassroots Day

Grassroots Day occurred on April 5, 2022, through Zoom meeting format. SG/PRC's delegation including individuals served, their families, Service Providers, and SG/PRC staff, met with lawmakers representing Districts within SG/PRC's service area. We are so very proud of the SG/PRC delegation and their advocacy. They prepared and delivered compelling rationale and achievable beneficial outcomes flowing from key budget policy adjustments. They covered modernization of the core staffing formula, acceleration of the Service Provider rate reform, and SB 882 (Eggman) that is vital to improve outcomes from interactions between law enforcement and individuals with developmental disabilities (*See Attachment L*).