

Message from the Executive Director
(English)

The San Diego Regional Center (SDRC) proudly serves almost 26,000 persons with developmental disabilities and their families. Our clients are a cross-section of San Diego and Imperial counties; they are of all colors, languages, and ethnic groups. Irrespective of the language spoken, their race, or their ethnic group, all our clients are treated with respect and dignity. Indeed, as stated in our Corporation's core values, the uniqueness of all human life is valued and the services we provide reflect, and are sensitive to, the cultural and ethnic diversity of the community. We are committed to serve, support and provide services to all our clients centered upon their individual needs and goals, not based on ethnicity, race or language!

The San Diego Regional Center is required to post data regarding the differences in the amount of spending for services for clients among different ethnic groups. The data indicate that the average spent per client by SDRC is different across ethnic groups (*Asian, Black/African-American, Filipino, Latino, Native American, Polynesian, and White*). The data prompted us to develop a comprehensive plan. Differences can be attributable to many factors and the first logical step is to carefully make sense of the numbers.

We have engaged local partners (*University of California, San Diego and Rady Children's Hospital – San Diego*) who possess the research expertise to carefully analyze the data. As part of this thorough understanding; SDRC will begin a process in which we will be updating client information to improve our confidence in the classification of ethnicity for all clients. Our service coordinators will begin to reach out by telephone to clients and families and ask for ethnicity information. Please do not be alarmed or concerned. We fully understand your sensitivity about sharing this type of information. We assure you we will maintain your confidentiality. Your name and information will not be provided to anyone or any organization, including governmental organizations, without your consent, or consent of the adult client, conservator, or legal guardian. **I would like to underscore that the San Diego Regional Center is a nonprofit organization. We are not an agent of the federal government and we will serve residents of San Diego and Imperial counties without inquiring as to their citizen or immigration status.**

Our effort to ensure having a fair system of providing services to all our clients does not stop with this first step of researching the nature of the differences. We are committed to having a culturally competent organization. Both our Board of Directors and employees' racial and ethnic profile mirror the client population we serve. Our staff and board members are provided with multicultural competency training. We have recently hired a "cultural specialist" who will lead many organizational and community activities that will promote greater cross-cultural competence and familiarity. With our community partners we will be initiating a "promotora model" that employs and trains lay members of the

Latino community to assist Latino clients and families to comfortably and effectively navigate the SDRC system. SDRC also plans to use a tele-medicine model to improve services for minority groups residing in remote areas in Imperial County.

As you can see, we care about all of our clients having fair and equal access to services. We welcome your input and will continue our dialogue with clients, families and community partners about this very important issue.

Carlos Flores
Executive Director

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