



Golden Gate Regional Center

Serving people with developmental disabilities since 1966

BY EMAIL TO SARAH.STEENHAUSEN@DDS.CA.GOV.

March 3, 2009

Terri Delgadillo, Director
Department of Developmental Services
P. O. Box 944202
Sacramento, CA 94244-2020

Dear Terri,

Golden Gate Regional Center is prepared to help the Department in any way it can to preserve services and supports to those served by GGRC. We feel this can best be done by finding savings that preclude the necessity for triggering the additional 7.1% reduction in rates to regional center providers. The key to these savings is to focus on the original intent and core values of the system.

Support Community-Based Services

Regional Centers, as currently structured, cannot fulfill their legal and contractual responsibilities within their diminished operational budgets. It is our belief that with support from DDS for restructuring its processes, Regional Centers can serve individuals and families and withstand the 3% reduction. There are two areas where restructuring would be helpful; they are Regional Center staffing requirements and provider staffing flexibility.

For some years the core staffing formula has allocated insufficient dollars to enable Regional Center case managers to carry out their responsibilities in the prescribed ways indicated by law. It is time to take a look at case management staffing that focuses expertise and support to clients at critical, transitional phases of their lives (demand/response) rather than a formula based on ratios.

Stringent staffing requirements for service providers are costing many of them right out of business. This is another area where staffing needs to be restructured to meet the needs of clients (not a staffing formula) while continuing to make health and safety the number one priority.

We believe that additional flexibility granted by the Department to Regional Centers and providers will enable them to deliver quality services effectively, continue to fulfill their contractual and statutory obligations under the law and protect the basic elements of the system.

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Golden Gate Regional Center will be submitting one or more 637 proposals in the near future to effect the changes stated above. Two of the criteria that we are using to gauge the necessity of the current required processes are: 1) The extent to which the lives of people served by the system are enhanced by the required process and 2) whether federal dollars are generated by the required process.

Support Individualized Options

Allowing families to move to an Individualized Model for "Self-Direction" can result in savings by design. The Department needs to allow Regional Centers to propose innovative models for self-direction that encourage the purchase of services based upon individual client need. An effective model that includes a budget cap will result in savings in the range of **\$10 million** statewide.

Golden Gate Regional Center will soon be submitting a 637 Proposal for the piloting of such a model.

Clarify who should receive Services from the System

Many people can benefit from the services provided and purchased by Regional Centers. However, only a small percentage of those people qualify for our system under the Lanterman Act.

Eliminating typically developing children from the Early Start Program who require only speech and/or language therapy will achieve a savings of approximately **\$40 million** statewide.

Clearly defining the 5th category requirements for Regional Center services has the potential to eliminate **\$40 million** statewide.

Capture Additional Federal Revenues

Based on a review of the Golden Gate Regional Center caseload, we believe that the entire Regional Center system can generate an additional **\$30 million** by qualifying for and using Medicaid Waiver dollars. This will require considerable effort; the Department may want to consider providing incentives to Regional Centers for their efforts.

Restructure Transportation Services

Golden Gate Regional Center believes that a careful look at transportation services can yield a safer and more efficient system as well as yield a statewide savings of **\$20 million**. With the assistance of experts in transportation, the savings may be as high as **\$30 million**. In particular, we believe that the Department should look at the current pilot being conducted at North Los Angeles County Regional Center to achieve a part of these savings through more individualized services.

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Operationalize Parental Responsibility

The Department should set a statewide standard for services that parents need to be responsible for that they would typically purchase for a non-disabled child. In the purchase of diapers and camp services alone the savings to the state would be approximately **\$12 million**.

The fees paid for out-of-home placement of children should be based on the cost of supporting a non-disabled child at home. These figures are available through the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This would be neither an incentive nor disincentive. Based on Golden Gate Regional Center numbers, we believe it would generate about **\$6 million** statewide.

The foregoing ideas reflect a general consensus in the Golden Gate community and are supported by a significant majority of constituents. We believe these cost-saving strategies will not only allow the system to address the 3% reductions but also the additional \$100,000,000 reduction in General Funds for the budget year.

It is also the consensus in our community that the Department needs to focus on two long-term strategies: 1) Pursuing long-term housing strategies that result in a permanent stock of housing for people with developmental disabilities. This will result in significant savings when looked at over a 30 year period. 2) Pursuing the consolidation and improvement of the quality assurance system. We believe this consolidation will result in dollar savings and greater effectiveness.

We offer our support and wish you well in this difficult task.

Very truly yours,



Laura Bliss, Chairperson
Board of Directors
Golden Gate Regional Center

c: Robert J. Baldo
James L. Shorter
GGRC Board of Directors