



County of Santa Cruz

PROBATION DEPARTMENT

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April 7, 1999

Agenda: April 13, 1999

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

County of Santa Cruz

701 Ocean Street

Santa Cruz, Ca. 95060

Accept and File Report on Culturally Competent Group Homes and Facilities for Post-Disposition Youth

Dear Members of the Board:

On March 3, 1999, your Board directed the Chief Probation Officer to report back with a review of county group homes and facilities and their ability to provide culturally competent services to post-disposition youth. As your Board is aware, the concept of "cultural competence" is drawn from a model which has been used in the provision of mental health and social services to indicate a set of behaviors, attitudes and policies enabling an agency to work effectively in cross-cultural situations. The language was included in a report to your Board on Standards of Accessibility which were adopted by your Board in 1992 and revised in 1994 (Attachment 1). These standards are being utilized by the Probation Department to assess group homes and assist them in achieving these goals. They will also be incorporated into contractual requirements. For your information we are also attaching a copy of a Board letter dated December 14, 1998 which further discusses and defines "cultural competence" (Attachment 2).

Background:

The Probation Department partners with community-based and government agencies to provide comprehensive intervention services for court wards. The vast majority of probation interventions occur while the minor is in in-home placement. The exception occurs when the safety of the minor or community warrants out-of-home placement. Such a recommendation is subject to the scrutiny of the inter-agency pre-placement committee.*

* The pre-placement screening committee is composed of Probation and Children's Mental Health staff. If the minor is participating in a therapeutic program, the individual's counselor is also invited to attend.

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During calendar year 1998, there were 97 individual minors placed in group homes by the Probation Department, as follows:

	Number	Percentage
Latin0	55	57%
Anglo	36	37%
African / American	6	6%
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Total	97	100%

The 97 group home minors were placed a total of 105 times (eight were placed twice). Of the 105 placements, 50 were out-of-county and 55 were in county.

Out-County Placements:

	Number	Percentage
Latin0	31	62%
Anglo	18	36%
African / American	1	2%
	-----	-----
Total	50	100%

In-County Placements

	Number	Percentage
Latin0	32	58%
Anglo	17	31%
African / American	6	11%
	-----	-----
Total	55	100%

Fifty-one minors were placed in the Redwoods Program during 1998.

	Number	Percentage
Latin0	22	47%
Anglo	27	53%
Other	2	4%
	-----	-----
Total	51	100%

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Probation Efforts to Assess Service Needs/Current Status:

In an effort to determine the degree to which group home placements were responsive to cultural issues, the Probation Department surveyed sixteen of its private placements last year to assess their ability to provide culturally competent services. The results of that survey indicated that group homes operating in Santa Cruz County were the most culturally competent. In the surveyed group were the four local placements currently used by the department: Palomar-es, Group Home Society, McDowell and New Chance. The results indicated that the percentage of Latino residents in all sixteen placements averaged 25%, yet the average ratio of Latino full-time staff averaged only 12%. Fortunately, the three programs employing the highest percentage of Latino staff were from Santa Cruz County: McDowell, 21%; Palomares, 33% (four of 12 full time counselors); and New Chance, 67%. Four of the surveyed programs did not have any bilingual supervisory or line staff and six did not have a bilingual therapist. Additionally, six of these programs did not provide any cultural sensitivity training for their staff. The two programs providing the most training were from Santa Cruz County: Group Home Society provides 25 hours, and Palomares provides 26 hours of cultural sensitivity training. Additionally, Palomares provides all client workbooks, residents' handbooks and program descriptions in both Spanish and English.

The Redwoods Program, run by County Mental Health, is an 18 bed, co-educational residential facility located on the Juvenile Hall grounds. Redwoods serves Court wards who would otherwise be in group home placement, and averaged 43.2 percent Latino youth in their program during 1998. Approximately one third of the Redwoods staff is bilingual and bicultural.. The goal of Mental Health is to have at least two of the three primary clinicians in Redwoods and the AfterCare Program to be bilingual/bicultural, as well as at least half of the line staff.

Redwoods has utilized resources such as Barrios Unidos and Fenix Services to provide culturally focused services. Ongoing regular programming at Redwoods (which includes groups focused on young men's and women's issues, victim awareness, drug and alcohol issues, etc.) attempts to include and weave in awareness of cultural issues relevant to those topics. In addition, several of our clinicians in the GROW program are planning an ongoing group on cultural pride in Juvenile Hall that Redwoods residents will be able to attend.

Probation Efforts to Address Service Needs:

In addition to the survey described above, the Probation Department has responded to this problem in numerous ways. First, Probation staff have met with local providers and challenged these programs to correct this deficiency. Two programs have responded: McDowell's now has one bilingual substance abuse home in Watsonville and Palomares' diversity training has become more extensive.

The Probation Department and the Latino Strategic Planning Collaborative have convened a task force which includes broad-based community representation. Major focuses of this group will be


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the issues of disproportionate minority representation in all phases of the criminal justice system, including your Board's concerns regarding the cultural competency of group homes treating Latino youth. Probation staff is meeting with local group home providers and sharing the "Standards of Accessibility for Latino Services" and will include them in contracts with group homes. These issues will also be presented to Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission which has legal authority to inspect local group home programs. The department is assisting local placement providers in the development of cultural competency goals through use of the "Standards of Accessibility for Latino Services" as an assessment tool and by providing training on this issue. Additionally, the Probation Department, along with the Health Services Agency, is working closely with Palomares to implement an enriched drug treatment program for local court wards. We are conducting an assessment of cultural competence and will be assisting Palomares in reaching their goals.

The Probation Department will continue its efforts to develop programs to provide culturally sensitive residential services. Your Board's interest and support of the development of culturally sensitive placement programming are welcome and contribute to helping Probation place a priority on this serious problem.

IT IS THEREFORE RECOMMENDED that your Board accept and file this report on culturally competent group homes and facilities for post-disposition youth.

Sincerely,


JOHN P. RHOADS
Chief Probation Officer

RECOMMENDED:


SUSAN A. MAURIELLO
County Administrative Officer

Attach:

cc: County Administrative Office
courts
Probation Department

STANDARDS OF ACCESSIBILITY FOR LATINO SERVICES

All programs contracting with the County are expected to comply with the following standards if providing services in areas with a significant Latino population.

- A. All materials are available in Spanish and are culturally sensitive and appropriate.
- B. Services are actively marketed to the Latino community.
- C. All services - and the entry points to services (reception, information and referral, etc.) - have bilingual capability with equal levels and quality of service.
- D. Services are located in areas readily accessible to the Latino community.
- E. Services are culturally competent¹.
- F. Agency leadership is culturally competent, aware of the special needs of the Latino community, and effective in empowering the Latino community.
- G. When recruiting new staff, the agency advertises vacant positions in locations and publications readily accessible to the Latino community, and actively conducts outreach to ensure equal employment opportunities for Latinos.
- H. The Latino community is adequately represented on agency policy and advisory boards.
- I. Services are evaluated annually, in part, according to these standards of accessibility. It is assumed that if services are accessible and appropriate, the client population will reflect the needs in the Latino community.
- J. Client demographics are representative of the agency's service and geographic areas.
- K. HRA's Monitoring of agencies will include compliance with these standards and conformance in service provision with the demographic characteristics of the geographic area in which they are located.

¹ The concept of "cultural competence" is drawn from a model which has been used in the provision of mental health and social services to indicate a set of behaviors, attitudes, and policies enabling an agency to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.
(Adopted 4/7/92; Revised 12/94)

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HUMAN
RESOURCES
AGENCY
COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

ADMINISTRATION
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DATE: December 14, 1998

TO: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

FROM: CECILIA ESPINOLA, Administrator

SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION TO LATINO EQUITY REPORT

Subsequent to the Board's action on December 8, 1998 to continue consideration of the above item for one week, individual Supervisors requested further explanation of the terms used in the criteria for Latino Equity funding. This brief summary will provide the additional information requested.

As referenced in staffs December 1, 1998 letter to your Board, an application for Latino Equity funding must first meet two threshold qualifications to be entered into the pool of programs eligible for funding. The first requirement is that the agency provide services where there is a high percentage of low income residents at or below **200%** of the poverty line and whose primary language is other than English. At least 70% of applicant programs clientele must reflect these characteristics. The second requirement is that a majority of the programs staff must be bilingual, bicultural and "culturally competent."

"Cultural competence" was not defined by your Board in adopting the criteria for Latino Equity funding on October 7, 1997. However, the criteria do refer back to the Standards of Accessibility, (adopted by your Board in 1992 and revised in 1994), which include as a footnote, the following:

The concept of "cultural competence" is drawn from a model which has been used in the provision of mental health and social services to indicate a set of behaviors, attitudes and policies enabling an agency to work effectively in cross-cultural situations. (See 12/1/98 Latino Equity Report. Attachment C.)

In attempting to define this phrase, it is critical to point out that "cultural competence" is not a fixed characteristic of an agency, rather it is an ongoing developmental process engaged in by

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agencies and individuals to address diversity in the community service area. Thus it is not surprising that cultural competence is often defined as a “system” or a “model”. For instance in the seminal work, Towards a Cultural Competent System of Care (Cross, Bazron, Dennis, and Isaacs:1989), a treatise widely used in all levels of mental health and other public and private service systems. “cultural competence” is defined as a system that:

acknowledges and incorporates at all levels the importance of culture, the assessment of cross-cultural relations, vigilance toward the dynamics that result from cultural differences, the expansion of cultural knowledge, and the adaption of services to meet culturally unique needs.

As the definition above illustrates, cultural competence is developed in a program as an intrinsic and pervasive part of service delivery planning and implementation, not as a isolated set of guidelines to be adopted by a program and placed on a shelf. By the same token, cultural competence itself is not a performance outcome which can be numerically quantified and measured. Rather, cultural competence is demonstrated through a cluster of measured activities (such as the Standards of Accessibility) tailored to the program’s mission, and designed to assure access and culturally appropriate services to the program’s client population.

The goal of defining and creating culturally competent service delivery systems in Santa Cruz County is not unique to Community Programs. This is not surprising in light of the changing demographics in the County’s low income population. Recently County Community Mental Health was required to address cultural competence as part of its County mental health plan submitted to the state as part of Phase II consolidation (managed care system). Cultural competence is also one of seven existing components for the Children’s System of Care, the County’s comprehensive interagency system of care for seriously emotionally disturbed children, adolescents and their families.

Typically in these other service systems, cultural competency is described in the context of a series of steps and goals, such as hiring linguistically and culturally sensitive staff, translating materials into the client’s language, and participation in training by staff, board of directors, and volunteers. Similarly, cultural competence for Community Programs has been defined and evaluated in the context of the Standards of Accessibility adopted by your Board more than six years ago, and utilized as a model by other County agencies.

How we as a community define cultural competence itself is also a matter of ongoing development. Currently staff is working closely with the Coalition of Latino Agencies and Programs (Coalition) to further design standards which assist Community Programs in promoting cultural competency. The Coalition is in the process of finalizing a cultural competency matrix, which includes relevant definitions, guiding principals, and program design and evaluation tools. The coalition and staff anticipate presenting the cultural competence matrix to your Board in the spring of next year.

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A common misconception is that "cultural competence" means an agency must have a board of directors of whom a majority of the members reflect the ethnicity of the client group served by the agency. While such a board may indeed be an indicator of cultural competence in the agency, having a board of whom a majority reflects the ethnic make-up of the client community has never been a requirement for receipt of Latino Equity funding. As your Board will recall, such a requirement was initially included in the proposed Criteria for Latino Equity Funding, however it was removed prior to final adoption on October 7, 1997. The requirement for an ethnic majority of board members was deleted as a minimum qualification, and instead the cultural competence of the board of directors (with no reference to a majority) is to be considered together with other factors after an applicant meets the minimum qualifications for funding. Indeed programs whose boards are not a majority Latino have been recommended for and awarded Latino Equity funding.

We hope this additional information assists the Board.

cc: County Administrative Officer

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