

Eyes on the Prize

A Note to VAC Representatives to Rate Study Presentation

The actual statute (W&I 4519.8) addressing the rate study accompanies this note. Please read it carefully. The key elements have been highlighted to focus our attention on the true purpose and deliverables we need to keep in mind. The essential purpose of this study and proposals for a new rate system is to establish the most cost-effective way to ensure that high quality services are available to all consumers of regional center services whatever their specific service needs may be and wherever they may live within the State of California.

It is important to note that the statute uses the term “sustainability” within its first paragraph. This means the purpose of this study is not simply to identify whether or not there is a current need for a rate increase, but rather how a new rate system should function to ensure that services remain viable and in sufficient supply in future years as costs rise with inflation and new service or legal mandates.

As DDS and Burns and Associates rolls out presentations and materials next week we must evaluate everything we see and hear through the prism identified in the statute:

Do proposed rates ensure that all consumers in all areas of the State will have access to the quality services they need? How do proposals ensure that services are equally available in areas of California with very different labor and other business costs? From your perspective, what drives the costs that you must pay to deliver truly effective quality services?

We know that more than 80% of provider costs relate to the workforce we employ to deliver services. Does the study accurately document the current costs to recruit, train, deploy and supervise a quality workforce capable of delivering effective services? Does the study accurately document the costs to maintain a stable direct support workforce – one that would allow providers to keep all positions staffed, hold turnover under 20% and allow DSP’s to stay in DSP roles an average of three years, while receiving reasonable wage adjustments.

From your perspective does the study accurately document the costs to manage and administer the service delivery process to ensure Quality Control and Quality Assurance as well as compliance with all regulatory, legal and fiscal requirements relevant to your organization?

From your perspective, will rates proposed for services make it more possible for you to improve and expand your services in order to serve more people and or to improve services you currently deliver? From a fiscal point of view, will it make capacity expansion more likely?

From your perspective, will the proposals if fully adopted and funded reverse the problems identified in the provider impact study attached and enable you to deliver services in a manner that is fully compliant with CMS final rules due to take effect in 2022?

Will the proposals meet their mandate to offer a sustainable, community-based service system?