

EDEN I & R, Inc.

2-1-1 Alameda County Monthly Narrative Report: January 2016

Noteworthy Updates

During the month of January, 7,733 calls were handled by 2-1-1 Resource Specialists and 12,216 health, housing and human service referrals were provided. Of the unduplicated callers, 80% were female, 30% were single mothers with minor children, and 42% had disabilities. The call examples below show the breadth and depth of calls handled. Additional people are also relying on Eden I&R's websites, including our online health and human service resource directory; in January they received 19,733 pageviews from 6,341 sessions/visitors.

January 2016 marks the agency's 40th anniversary! This relatively small nonprofit has participated in multiple projects and services over the years resulting in over ONE MILLION people served! Before 2-1-1 was created, Eden I&R was the major translation service for California's 911 phone system. That service alone resulted in the agency handling over 330,000 calls annually. Today, the agency provides 24/7 service each year to over 100,000 Alameda County callers in need of critical health, housing and human service referrals. Eden I&R hopes to be able to have a celebration later in the year to recognize the very hard working staff and volunteers who make 2-1-1 and all of the agency's other programs so successful.

Barbara Bernstein, Eden I&R's Executive Director for over 27 years, has notified the agency's Board of Directors that she plans on stepping down from this very intensive position as of December 2016. Therefore, the Board has started a year-long succession and sustainability planning process that will involve all staff members, the Board, and the agency's funders and community partners.

Eden I&R is pleased to announce that it has added a new board member: Kim Wininger. Kim lives in Fremont and is a Regional Services Manager for Wells Fargo Bank. Kim's many years as a financial analyst will be a much appreciated addition to the Board's Finance Committee.

Call Information

Call Examples

~ An Albany resident living with a disability and on SSI called for assistance because her daughter, with whom she had argued that morning, had asked her to move out of the home. The caller said she had custody of her teen son and was receiving child support for him. She was asked and indicated that she had Medi-Cal and Medi-Care, but she was not receiving CalFresh. She was referred to rental listings and to Center for Independent Living and Satellite Housing for additional rental listings for individuals with disabilities and for affordable housing. The caller asked for and was provided the number for 2-1-1 in Contra Costa County.

~ A veteran living with a disability in Berkeley called for rental and transportation assistance. The caller was not eligible for Season of Sharing, but she was possibly eligible for VA housing assistance so 2-1-1 provided referrals to Operation Dignity and Swords to Ploughshares. Additionally she was referred to SSA to apply for Cal Fresh, General Assistance, and emergency food. Since the caller has a disability and requires assistance with transportation, 2-1-1 referred her for a discount card (bus tickets) and also informed her about the Paratransit program. She was also provided information on the California Emerging Technology Fund for low-cost broadband service as she was actively seeking employment and needed to update her resume and search online for jobs. The caller also had a question about Medi-Cal which the 2-1-1 Resource Specialist answered.

~ A Dublin resident with mental and physical disabilities called because she had received an eviction notice. The caller was referred to ECHO Housing; The Collective Legal Services Eviction Defense Center; and Centro Legal de La Raza for eviction prevention/defense. She was also referred to Community Resources for Independent Living for housing assistance.

~ A Hayward resident called for a domestic violence shelter for herself and her two young children. The caller stated she had been asked to leave the last shelter where she had been staying because she had tried to remove a woman from their shared room for doing drugs. The caller was emotional and cried during the call. She was referred to A Safe Place in Oakland, and to the Family Violence Law Center. She declined the referral offered to the 24 Hour Mobile response team.

~ A Livermore resident who was acutely depressed called and informed 2-1-1 that he had lost everything that he valued and he felt he was to blame. He had lost his wife, custody of his children, and his business. He said he twice tried to end his life because he was tired and ashamed to go on, and that he had hit rock bottom again because the friend that he was living with had asked him to move out that morning. The caller was asked and indicated that he did not have a plan for suicide, but had thought about it. He was referred to Alameda County Behavioral Health – ACCESS for acute crisis care and evaluation. The caller said he had tried to apply for disability benefits and General Assistance but had been denied. He was referred to the Homeless Action Center for benefits assistance.

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Call Examples	~ An Oakland resident called for assistance with a large utility bill that she had been unable to pay. The caller informed 2-1-1 that both she and her adult son, who lived with her, have disabilities. In recent weeks, both she and her son had suffered ill health which had caused them to lose income. She was very worried that not paying the bill would result in the power being shut off which was dire since both she and her son rely on electric medical equipment. Since the caller had no money and the cut-off date was looming, there was insufficient time to apply for Season of Sharing for bill payment assistance. She was emotional and frightened so the 2-1-1 Resource Specialist inquired if she needed assistance calling PG&E. The caller agreed immediately. 2-1-1 called PG&E and spoke with a supervisor and was able to work out a payment plan in line with the caller's budget, with the first payment deferred until the caller received her SSI check. The caller was extremely appreciative of 2-1-1's assistance.
	~ A counselor from James Logan High School in Union City called for residential treatment for methamphetamine abuse by the family member of a student. 2-1-1 provided referrals to CURA Incorporated for long-term therapeutic sober living for chemical dependency, and to Horizon Services' Cronin House for a 60-90 day residential recovery program.
	~ The uncle of a man incarcerated in Alameda County called from out of county for information and referrals. The caller said his nephew had served 23 years in prison but would soon be released and in need of a halfway house, substance abuse counseling, and re-entry supportive services. He was provided a referral to Volunteers of America Bay Area's West House Parolee Service Center for job search, stress management, life skills and help with securing housing. Additionally 2-1-1 provided a referral to Victory Outreach for residential rehabilitative services.
	~ A Piedmont resident called for housing assistance and was referred to Eden Housing, and to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's SF Regional Office Region IX for a listing of low-income, HUD-subsidized rental units.
	~ A Newark resident called for assistance with car repair and with prescription medication. The caller was referred to The Community Housing Development Corporation's Ways to Work for car repair loan and to California Rx card for prescription medication.
Caller Feedback	~ "I live in San Leandro. I called and spoke with your employee. I am a senior and I'm disabled. I have health problems and trouble breathing. Your employee could not have been more patient and outstanding. I need to let you know how much I appreciate that. I have used your service in the past and the people who have answered the phone have always been very helpful. Thank you very much!"
	~ "I live in Livermore and I just wanted to say thank you, thank you, and thank you to your wonderful staff. I have always been treated in a wonderful way. I am blessed to be able to call 2-1-1. Thank you for your help and God Bless. You are loved and you reflect God's love. Thank you for that."
Staff Inservice Training Sessions	~ Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Training
	~ Sausal Creek Stabilization Clinic
	~ 2-1-1 Staff Meeting & Follow-up on Medi-Cal Administrative Activities (MAA) and AC Transit training on paratransit services in Alameda County.

Resource Information And Technology Updates	
Services Database	~ One new agency was added to the services database this month.
	~ The services database contains 1,143 agencies and 2,921 programs.
	~ The process of updating and proofreading the Big Blue Book 2016 edition is complete.
	~ The locations, days and hours of service of VITA tax assistance centers were updated.
Housing Database	~ 86 new units were added to the housing database this month.
	~ The Housing database contains 82,762 total housing units.
	~ Housing Subscriptions (mail, PDF & OHIP) were sent to community-based organizations in Alameda County and San Francisco County.
Online Services Website	~ Eden I&R's health and human services data is provided free through the agency's publicly accessible websites at www.edenir.org and www.211alamedacounty.org , and www.alamedaco.info . This month the Online Services Directory received 19,733 pageviews from 6,341 sessions/visitors.

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Website Updates	~ The following was posted to Eden I&R's website in January: the open enrollment deadline, January 31, for obtaining health insurance coverage through Covered California; free tax preparation assistance available at VITA sites throughout the county; and information on the Earned Income Tax Credit.
Technology	~ Eden I&R hosted the Alameda County IT Department's Director, Tim Dupuis, and Assistant Director, Sybil Gurney. Eden I&R shared information on our databases that are used for providing information and referral through our 2-1-1 phone center. The discussion involved the requirements for a future database system to be used by 2-1-1.
	~ EITC information and referral tracking was enabled in the database.
	~ Work was completed on the annual Big Blue Book – The Directory of Human Services for Alameda County. The 2016 edition of the Book has arrived and is available for order.

Outreach/Public Information Activities

Meetings	~ The Executive Director attended the Hayward's Community Services Commission in order to update them on 2-1-1's progress for this year, and the goals for next year.
	~ A representative from the Castro Valley Chamber toured Eden I&R and learned of our many programs and services. As a result of the tour, the agency will now be involved in the Castro Valley Unified College's Health Career Day, and we will provide periodic tours for students from the Work-based Learning program of the San Lorenzo Unified School District.
	~ The Walter and Elise Haas Fund was the first funder of Eden I&R's 2-1-1 communication system. The foundation's new program officer visited the agency this month and indicated that the Haas Fund will continue to support Eden I&R's efforts to provide 24/7 2-1-1 services to Alameda County residents.
	~ The Executive Director met with elected officials and staff from the City of Oakland to discuss that over 50% of 2-1-1 calls are from Oakland, and that the city's financial investment in the system has remained stagnant. These conversations will continue throughout the year. Other city officials will be contacted by Eden I&R regarding similar issues since the 2-1-1 calls are getting more crisis-oriented, time-consuming, and resulting in additional abandoned calls (people hanging up before the Resource Specialists can get to their calls).
	~ Agency management staff met with First 5 of Alameda County representatives regarding a possible partnership to further the goals of the Help Me Grow initiative. Although 2-1-1 and First 5 cross-refer callers frequently, this new partnership would involve additional "in-reach" and proactive approaches to educating targeted populations about Help Me Grow services.
	~ Management staff continue to work with AC Transit on our partnership to conduct outreach to seniors and people living with disabilities about their transportation options.
	~ The Executive Director attended the amazing launch event for the Oakland Promise Initiative. This very ambitious Initiative involves several programs to help Oakland youth, from cradle to career, succeed in life. It is a multi-agency partnership, led by the Oakland Mayor's office, whose goals are lofty yet we believe realistic. Eden I&R is supportive and in partnership with the efforts to conduct outreach to "at promise" youth so that they get the resources they need to be successful in their education and career goals.
	~ Several Eden I&R staff are involved in the EveryOne Home Coordinated Entry efforts that would, in part, assist low-income Alameda County residents avoid becoming homeless.
	~ Representatives from Board of Supervisor Wilma Chan's office visited the agency for a first-hand look at the current 2-1-1 operations. Supervisor Chan was one of the first supporters of 2-1-1 in Alameda County, when she was on the 2-1-1 Alameda County Advisory Board while the agency's Executive Director was working with the California Public Utilities Commission to be the statewide designating body for 2-1-1s throughout California.
	~ A new Succession & Sustainability Committee of the agency's Board of Directors was formed. The committee began meeting with the Executive Director this month as she begins to plan for a smooth transition from the agency after more than 27 years.
	~ Most of the agency's administrative staff members are in the throes of responding to city and county FY2017 funding procedures. The Executive Director is working toward more multi-year funding, wherever possible, in order to be more efficient with staff time for both Eden I&R and government departments.

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Meetings	~ The Development Consultant attended the City of Dublin's Human Services Commission meeting to deliver a presentation about 2-1-1 and the ways in which it serves Dublin residents and employees.
	~ The Deputy Director and the 2-1-1 Program Manager attended the kick-off community partners meeting in San Leandro related to planning for a Coordinated Entry System to better integrate the work of various agencies providing shelter services and housing. They have each volunteered to serve on two sub-committees and will attend future planning meetings.
	~ Various management staff members participated in informational webinars to learn more about two recently released Request for Proposals: the California Accountable Communities for Health Initiative and the federal Accountable Health Communities Program. These funding opportunities have been designed to implement a new population health model that would link together health care systems, community resources and social services with primary prevention approaches in a given geographic area to address a particular health need, such as chronic disease, on a community-wide basis. Eden I&R is pursuing opportunities for 2-1-1 Alameda County to play a critical role in these projects.
	~ The Deputy Director and the AHIP Housing Specialist hosted the Annual HOWPA Property Managers and Service Providers Meeting in Alameda. Attendees shared updates about their respective organizations and properties and plan to continue to share information and resources that would help their clients secure housing and other resources.
Fairs/Events/and Outreach	~ The Executive Director attended the event honoring Ronald V. Dellums for his 50 years of community service and his 80th birthday. Eden I&R's Executive Director worked as an aide for U.S. Representative Dellums in the early 1970s representing constituents housed in prisons throughout the country; and then again in the early 1980s working on a universal healthcare bill. The celebration was attended by hundreds of the Congressman's supporters who shared stories from the past and present related to successes and challenges faced by progressives working toward economic and community equality and justice.
	~ The Development/Marketing Officer attended the Fremont Chamber of Commerce Career and Community Resource Fair.
	~ Outreach and marketing materials were distributed to Meals on Wheels; Eden Housing; Oakland Housing Authority; and to an Oakland resident who requested some 2-1-1 cards that she could distribute to homeless individuals in her neighborhood.