

Eden I&R, Inc.

"linking people and resources"

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2-1-1 Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2010

(July 2009 – June 2010)

In the three years since 2-1-1 was launched in Alameda County, the number of calls more than doubled from its first year of service to 93,190 calls handled in Fiscal Year (FY) 2010. The increase in the number of calls can be attributed to a variety of factors: the increase in needs due to the continued high unemployment and limited economic opportunities, the increase in knowledge about the program, the increase in partnerships with other programs, and the value and quality of the service provided by the 2-1-1 Phone Line Resource Specialists.

2-1-1 highlights for these past twelve months include:

- 2-1-1 established three (3) new partnerships with other programs to provide intake, prescreening, and information and referrals: Homelessness Prevention and Re-Housing Program (HPRP), AC Hire, and NUMMI Displaced Worker Assistance.
- 2-1-1's partnership with the EITC program generated \$12.5 million in tax returns for low-income people in Alameda County.
- The Bay Area Red Cross honored Barbara Bernstein, Eden I&R's Executive Director, with the Community Hero Individual Award for her tireless efforts in garnering public/private sector leveraged funding to launch 2-1-1 in Alameda County.
- In conjunction with the Alameda County Public Health Department and a collaboration of other community based organizations, 2-1-1 began surveying callers to assess attitudes and behaviors related to receiving or not receiving an H1N1 vaccination. The targeted population was "at-risk" and "high-risk" groups, including diverse socioeconomic populations, particularly in under-represented communities. The results of these efforts will assist the Department in developing effective methods to help stimulate demand for vaccination services among these vulnerable populations.
- Eden I&R continued to be the only agency in Alameda County that called 18 shelters twice a day to check on bed availabilities. This critical information was available 24/7 to all 2-1-1 callers.
- Callers who did not speak English were assisted by on-site Bilingual Resource Specialists (Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, and/or Vietnamese), or they were assisted by a "real time" interpreter (via TeleInterpreters which provides over 100 languages) who translated between the caller and the Resource Specialist.
- The Client Caller Database continued to collect the most comprehensive information possible (e.g., size of family, income resources, disability and veteran status, age, etc.) to assist with making appropriate referrals, and to aggregate the data for demographic statistical purposes. In addition, the 2-1-1 Caller Feedback Line was added to allow callers to provide feedback on the service provided. (examples of transcripts can be found under "Who 2-1-1 Assisted")
- Eden I&R continued to compile detailed monthly 2-1-1 reports (also available online at www.211alamedacounty.org) for funders so they can monitor the program's progress.

2-1-1 Disaster Response and Preparedness

In order to ensure that the agency can carry out its roles and duties before, during, and after a disaster, Eden I&R participated in various disaster drills and are active members and participants in numerous disaster preparation groups and meetings. Internally, Eden I&R updated its Disaster Preparedness Plan, created a comprehensive Business Disaster Contingency Plan, tested its HAM radio and call switching capabilities with other 2-1-1 call centers, and entered into an MOU with other local 2-1-1's for mutual support and phone coverage during disasters.

The following are examples of the types of activities Eden I&R was involved in during FY 2010:

- Participated in the Countywide Emergency Volunteer Center Drill where Eden I&R tested its Spontaneous Volunteer capabilities.
- Participated in the Alameda County Public Health Department's Medical and Health Preparedness Strategic Vision meeting during which 2-1-1 was integrated into the Crisis Communication plan.
- Met with The San Francisco Foundation representatives to review Eden I&R's Business Continuity Plan so that the agency will be able to quickly resume its services and assist the community soon after a disaster.
- Collaborated with Red Cross to develop a curriculum for Rental Property owners for their preparation in a disaster.

2-1-1 Partnerships

In FY 2010, 2-1-1 Alameda County continued its partnerships with the following programs:

- ***Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC):*** From January to April 2010, 2-1-1 assisted low-income individuals and families by explaining EITC eligibility guidelines and referring them to the most convenient site for free tax preparation assistance. In FY 2010, 2-1-1 assisted 1,647 EITC callers connect to 33 Volunteer Income Tax Preparation (VITA) sites, 22 AARP sites, and other counties' EITC lines.
- ***Bank On Oakland:*** Eden I&R is a partner in the Bank On Oakland program to refer 2-1-1 callers to financial education classes and to participating banks to open a free or low-cost checking and savings accounts.
- ***Food Stamp Pre-Screening:*** The California Association of Food Banks contracted with Eden I&R to pre-screen 2-1-1 callers for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program eligibility. From October 2009 to June 2010, 2-1-1 pre-screened 666 callers for eligibility in the food program.

2-1-1 Alameda County's success with its programs and partnerships prompted the following new partnerships in FY 2010:

- ***Homelessness Prevention and Re-Housing Program (HPRP):*** Through the EveryOne Home Priority Home Partnership Program, 2-1-1 pre-screened applicants for eligibility to receive rental and utility payment and deposit assistance funded by Federal Stimulus Funds. From November 2009 to June 2010, 2-1-1 pre-screened 3,600 callers and directed those eligible to the most appropriate Housing Resource Center(s).
- ***AC Hire:*** Alameda County Social Services Agency contracted with Eden I&R to pre-screen CalWORKS clients and other qualified unemployed callers for eligibility to participate in the County's Subsidized Employment Program funded through a grant from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. From April to June 2010, 2-1-1 pre-screened 3,680 callers for employment eligibility and provided 8,391 referrals.
- ***NUMMI Displaced Worker Assistance:*** As a result of the NUMMI plant closing, Alameda County Workforce Investment Board contracted with Eden I&R to assist the 4,700 displaced NUMMI employees as well as the thousands of NUMMI-affiliated laid off employees. A Bilingual 2-1-1 Phone Line Resource Specialist was dedicated to serving former NUMMI and NUMMI-affiliated employees in identifying and locating affordable housing and health and human services through 2-1-1.

Who 2-1-1 Assisted

During FY 2009-2010, Eden I&R continued to pursue various outreach methods to inform and remind the Alameda County community about the 2-1-1 Alameda County phone service. For its efforts, 2-1-1 Alameda County handled 93,190 calls, and provided 161,374 referrals to health, housing, and human service programs throughout the County and beyond. Of the unduplicated callers, 32% were disabled and

33% were female head of households with minor children. The majority of 2-1-1 callers continued to seek housing and housing-related services. The top 10 service needs were: housing and utilities (54%), legal, consumer and public safety (8%), food and meals (7%), health care (5%), income support and assistance (4%), individual, family and community support (4%), information services (3%), mental health and addictions (2%), employment (2%), and clothing, personal and household (2%). The following are examples of the variety of services Alameda County residents and employees are seeking on a daily basis.

- An Alameda resident called to inquire about mental health assessment services for her school age daughter. She was referred to Alameda Family Services and to Alameda Children's Services for assessment and treatment, and to the Alameda County ACCESS phone line.
- A Berkeley resident called seeking information on how to apply for disability benefits for a disabled homeless friend. She was referred to Center for Independent Living and the Homeless Action Center for benefits assistance.
- A Dublin resident called to inquire about employment and rent assistance programs. The family income had been reduced significantly due to a loss of employment. The youngest child had also recently been diagnosed with a developmental disability. The Resource Specialist screened the caller for eligibility for the HPRP program, and also provided referrals for rent and utility assistance and benefits assistance to apply for SSI for the child. The parent was also screened and referred to AC Hire, Alameda County's subsidized employment program.
- A staff member from Avalon Apartments in Emeryville called seeking information on services for a senior in need of care and case management. She was referred to Bay Area Community Services, Center for Elder Independence and to the Alameda County Senior Information Hotline.
- Staff at a nursing home in Fremont called to inquire about friendly visiting programs for a disabled elderly resident who had no family to visit him. She was referred to LifeElder Care, Fremont City Multi-purpose Senior Services Program, and the Area Agency on Aging's Senior Information Line.
- A Hayward resident called looking for information on where to obtain free school supplies for her children and food resources. She was referred to the Salvation Army in Hayward, Hope for the Heart, South Hayward Family Resource Center, and the Alameda County Community Food Bank.
- A Livermore resident called seeking information on counseling and support groups for her teenage daughter struggling with alcohol abuse. She was referred to Axis Community Health and an Al-Ateen support group in the Tri-Valley area.
- A 20 year old former foster youth from Newark called seeking shelter. He was given referrals to CityTeam Ministries, East Oakland Community Project, Covenant House, Fred Finch Youth Center, Genesis Project, Abode Service's Project Independence Program, and Pivotal Point Youth Services.
- A Spanish-speaking Oakland resident called to inquire about food programs while she was waiting for her unemployment benefits to come through. She was screened and referred for Food Stamps and also received referrals for rent and utility assistance, job search assistance, and counseling and stress management programs.
- A Pleasanton resident called seeking information on home repair assistance. She was referred to the Alameda County Community Development Agency's Construction Program and the City of Pleasanton's Housing Programs Information Line.
- A couple from San Leandro called seeking information on bereavement counseling and support groups after the death of their infant child. They were referred to the Compassionate Friends Group at the Unity Church of San Leandro, St. Rose Hospital Grief Support Groups, Alameda County Crisis Support Services' Grief Counseling Project and to the FamilyPaths Families in Transition Program.
- A Union City resident called seeking information for her husband who was in need of assistance in filling out forms to receive Veteran's benefits. She was referred to the Veteran's Service Office in Fremont.

Transcripts from the 2-1-1 Caller Feedback Line indicate that not only are callers thankful that the service exists, but are appreciative of the quality and the breadth of services provided:

- *"I wanted to thank you for the 2-1-1 service. I was feeling very desperate about my rental situation and 2-1-1 was able to direct and help me. Thank you very much."*
- *"I called 2-1-1 today and spoke with [a Resource Specialist]. Not only did she listen with care and compassion but she was also able to provide 10-12 referrals for housing options. She really made me feel better about any situation and gave me hope. Thank you."*
- *"Thank you for all the information. I really appreciate this service. Please don't ever change because disabled people like me need to use this line."*

Marketing Outreach and Publicity

The vast majority of 2-1-1 callers (75%) indicated that they learned about the 2-1-1 phone service themselves or through families and friends, who most likely learned about it through the various outreach methods Eden I&R has conducted throughout the year. Because the success of the 2-1-1 service depends on the community's knowledge about this public communication service, Eden I&R continues to promote the 2-1-1 program via different outreach methods. The following highlights some notable outreach and publicity performed in FY 2010.

- Over 138,000 flyers, outreach cards, magnets, note pads, and posters were distributed throughout the county (this number did not take into account the number of times it was emailed, downloaded, and/or photo copied by other agencies).
- Eden I&R staff were recurring guests for the Comcast Newsmakers segment in which 2-1-1 was discussed. In addition, Eden I&R's Executive Director, Barbara Bernstein, was interviewed for Channel 30's Conversations with Robin Fahr segment, and by KPOO Radio.
- Eden I&R hosted booths at 56 resource fairs/expos to inform event attendees and other vendors about 2-1-1. Among the many events were the Lao Family Community Development 30th Anniversary Community Resource Fair, Mary Hayashi's 3rd Annual Women's Health Fair, Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory's 4th Annual Emergency Preparedness Fair, 4C's 8th Annual Children's Faire, Pleasanton Community Readiness Day, Annual Lunar New Year Celebration in Oakland, NUMMI Education and Career Fairs, Senator Ellen Corbett's Housing Information Fair, Veteran's Health and Resource Fair, Livermore ArtWalk, Loma Prieta Earthquake Anniversary, City of San Leandro's 12th Annual Senior Resource Fair, Newark Days, and Alameda United School District Community Resource Fair. Materials were made available at 10 other fairs that staff were unable to attend.
- Staff attended mixers, meetings, and other functions at various chambers of commerce and community meetings throughout the County to share information and to distribute 2-1-1 materials.
- Staff gave presentations to numerous community groups about 2-1-1 including: California State University of the East Bay Nursing Students, The English Center students, the Emergency Managers Association and Davis Street Resource Center.
- Staff provided the Oakland Unified School District with 5,300 pieces of 2-1-1 materials for their back to school enrollment period and insertion in their backpacks.
- The Union City public transit buses posted 2-1-1 flyers in their buses.
- Eden I&R staff gave materials to the different community groups who included them in holiday baskets.
- 2-1-1 colored posters (donated by DualStar Digital) were posted inside the Wheels/LAVTA (Livermore-Amador Valley Transit Authority) buses.

Agency Infrastructure Advances

- **Staffing**

Through the various contracts Eden I&R secured in FY 2010, the 2-1-1 Call Center was staffed 24/7 to assist the increasing number of calls from the Alameda County community. When there was a surge in call volume due to the announcement of federal housing assistance funds, for example, all available Eden I&R staff were temporarily reassigned to 2-1-1 to assist in handling the expanded call volume.

To keep up with the changing programs and services, 2-1-1 Phone Line Resource Specialists attend weekly in-service trainings in which pertinent updates to services are shared, technological changes to the databases are discussed, and representatives from various organizations present information about their agency's programs and services. Examples of agencies that presented included: Bank On Oakland, Bay Area Community Services, AXIS Community Health, Alameda County Public Health Clearinghouse, Family Violence Law Center, Alameda County Veteran's Service Office, and the Fremont Family Resource Center.

- **Health, Housing and Human Services Data Resources**

During FY 2010, Eden I&R's Housing Database increased by 4,500 units for a total of over 74,000 rental housing units (e.g., subsidized, Below Market Rate, Market Rate, residency hotel rooms, SROs, and shared rental housing) tracked. In addition, the Information Management Department contacted over 1,000 agencies to update the over 2,600 programs it has in its Health and Human Services Database. The comprehensive information is also used to update the 2010 Edition of *The Big Blue Book: Directory of Human Services for Alameda County*, and can be accessed for free online at www.211alamedacounty.org, www.alamedaco.info, and www.edenir.org.

- **Technology Capacity**

During FY 2010, Eden I&R upgraded the operating systems and software of all workstation computers. These upgrades provide greater security and system stability as well as ensuring that the agency's software remains compatible with other agencies and our partners. To enhance the agency's ability to recover following a disaster Eden I&R subscribed to an off-site backup service for critical files and databases.

In the past year 2-1-1 Alameda County took on several projects that required the collection of additional caller information. This required integrating surveys or screening tools with the agency's client and call tracking database system.

Regional 2-1-1 Partnerships

Eden I&R continued to meet monthly with other 2-1-1 providers in the Bay Area (including Volunteer Center of Sonoma, United Way of Santa Clara, United Way of the Bay Area HELPLINK, and Contra Costa Crisis Center) to create a seamless and coordinated 2-1-1 regional system. Additionally, through the Northern California and Southern California 2-1-1 centers' Collaborative Meetings, 2-1-1 California has been founded to support all 2-1-1 centers in the state. Efforts from the collaboration have included:

- **Common Client Data:** Eden I&R, along with other 2-1-1 centers, continue to gather client data information using California Alliance of Information and Referral Services (CAIRS) collection standards.
- **Sharing Resource Information Databases:** A new technical plan to connect all 2-1-1 centers' phones and databases statewide in case of a disaster was discussed as a possible way to share information throughout the State.
- **Handling Call Volume Overflow:** Eden I&R signed an MOU with United Way of the Bay Area and Contra Costa Crisis Center to handle each other's calls during emergencies and to establish back-up procedures for data sharing.
- **Disaster Response Preparation.** Members of the collaborative discussed and approved a statewide 2-1-1 Emergency Operations Plan.
- **Public Policy:** Eden I&R continued to work with other 2-1-1 providers to support the "Calling for 2-1-1 Act" legislation that will provide federal leveraged funding for 2-1-1. Also, as the Public Relations

Chair for CAIRS, Eden I&R's Executive Director included articles about state and federal legislation that would assist local 2-1-1 providers with much needed financial resources.

- **Statewide/Regional Events:** Eden I&R's Executive Director and 2-1-1 Community Programs Manager attended the CAIRS conference titled "I&R: Riding the Wave In Turbulent Times" and the 2-1-1 Summit in which topics such as how to provide 2-1-1 service to EVERY California resident, how to best provide disaster-related backup services and best practices were all discussed.

Funding Successes and Challenges

Eden I&R was proud to have reported handling 93,190 calls in FY10 even though it faced a reduction in revenue sources. A significant financial challenge for 2-1-1 was the impact of the state, county and municipalities' budget reductions. As a result the Eden I&R Board of Directors pursued a fiscally conservative budget approach by enacting pay reductions and shortened work hours for administrative staff.

The private sector continued to be an enthusiastic supporter of 2-1-1. For this, and many other reasons, Eden I&R is extremely grateful to the following private and public funders for their past and/or current support:

The United Way of the Bay Area; Walter & Elise Haas Fund; Pacific Gas and Electric Company; Kaiser Permanente; The San Francisco Foundation; Chevron; AT&T Real Yellow Pages; Community Technology Foundation; First 5/Every Child Counts; Thomas J. Long Foundation; Bank of America Foundation; Western Digital Foundation; Eden Township Healthcare District; and Alameda County departments and cities.

Next Steps

For FY 2010-2011 Eden I&R will focus on:

- Promoting 2-1-1 so that every resident in the county knows about this very critical service. This effort will necessitate the help of the cities and the media to be successful. Therefore Eden I&R staff will work with our many partners throughout the county to broadcast news about 2-1-1 in printed, electronic and verbal messages targeted to individuals and families, and their advocates, in need of health, housing and human services.
- Continuing to request and respond to feedback about 2-1-1 services so that the communication system expands in its breadth as well as its customer services.
- Solidifying partnerships with the Office of Emergency Services and Alameda County Sheriff's Office by participating in disaster drills to provide the public with vital information before, during, and after a disaster.
- Continuing the agency's high profile participation in the California Alliance for Information and Referral Services (CAIRS), especially as Chair of the statewide Public Relations Committee.

As always, Eden I&R staff and Board of Directors thank and truly appreciate all of the support we have received from city, county and private sector officials, staff, and business leaders as well as our individual donors. We look forward to our continued partnership efforts.

Report compiled by Barbara Bernstein, Executive Director, 510-537-2710, ext.8