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2-1-1 Alameda County Monthly Narrative Report: January 2013

Noteworthy Updates

During the month of January, 9,123 calls were handled by 2-1-1 Resource Specialists and 16,654 health, housing and human service referrals were provided. Of the unduplicated callers, 77% were female, 49% were single-headed households with minor children, and 42% were disabled. The call examples below show the breadth and depth of calls handled. Additional people are also relying on Eden I&R's online health and human service resource directory; in January it received 84,977 hits from 8,862 visitors.

Tax season has arrived and Eden I&R is once again providing assistance for low-income people. 2-1-1 Resource Specialists are pre-screening and referring callers eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) to free tax preparation sites in Alameda County. Additionally, Resource Specialists are providing information and scheduling appointments at events across California for people to do their own taxes, with the free assistance of volunteer tax professionals, using Turbo Tax software.

Eden I&R began preparations to celebrate National 2-1-1 Awareness Day on February 11. To mark the occasion on 2-11, the agency will join with 2-1-1 centers across the nation to highlight the vital role the 2-1-1 service plays in providing critical health, housing, and human services to people in need. Eden I&R staff will celebrate 2-1-1 Day with a festive lunch and press tours.

Call Information

Call Examples

~ A single male just released from prison and now on probation called 2-1-1 for food assistance. Due to his record, he is not eligible for CalFresh, and he wanted to contribute to the household where he is staying in Berkeley. He was not interested in any transitional housing programs as he does not want to be with others in recovery or the re-entry population, but wants alternate housing so that his probation's housing search and seizure requirements will not affect the friends and family that he is staying with. He will call back when he has an income for a low-income housing search. On this call he was referred to the Berkeley Food Pantry, Mount Zion Baptist Church, Telegraph Community Center and the Mary Ann Wright Foundation, as well as the Alameda County Community Food Bank for more food referrals. He was also referred to the East Bay Works One-Stop Career Center to aid him in seeking employment income.

~ A single, homeless male disabled with HIV and on parole for a sex offense called 2-1-1 to find shelter once his stay in a San Leandro motel runs out. He had no income or benefits so he was referred to Homeless Action Center and Bay Area Legal Aid for benefits assistance to get SSI. He was referred to AIDS Minority Health Initiative and AIDS Project of the East Bay for applications for Shelter Plus Care. He was provided information on CalFresh food benefits. He shared that he had been refused at the Oakland Army Base Winter Relief Shelter due to his conviction, so he was also referred to Disability Rights California for legal advice regarding finding shelter.

~ A single, physically disabled 84-year-old female living in senior housing in Oakland called for help because she is falling in her home and has nobody to take care of her. She was referred to In Home Supportive Services, pre-screened and referred for CalFresh benefits, referred to the Alameda County Community Food Bank for CalFresh enrollment assistance and food referrals, Legal Assistance for Seniors for help with an outstanding claim with New York Life Disability Insurance, and she was referred to Bay Area Community Services, St. Mary's Center, and the City of Oakland's Multipurpose Senior Services Program for case management.

~ A single, homeless female called 2-1-1 from Hayward to request help getting housing with two other former foster youth with little or no income. She was referred to four low-income housing developments (California Hotel, Drachma L.P. Apts, Fox Court Apartments, and Maple Square Apartment Homes.) She was also referred to First Place for Youth, Pivotal Point Youth Services, Fred Finch Youth Center, and Beyond Emancipation for housing programs, as well as Cal State East Bay's Renaissance Scholars Program for former foster youth, as the caller wanted to attend that college. For immediate housing, the caller was referred to Covenant House and YEAH youth shelters.

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Call Examples	~ A single mother with three small children in Livermore, homeless due to domestic violence, called 2-1-1 for housing in the Tri-Valley area. She has a new job in Livermore and needs to stay close by, so she was referred to Tri-Valley Haven domestic violence shelter, Shepherd's Gate and God's Love Transitional Housing Program. Just in case she was not able to find shelter space, she was also given the 2-1-1 for Contra Costa and Santa Clara counties. This caller called back a few days later for low-income housing and was referred to Drasnin Manor, Shinsei Gardens, and the Drachma L.P. Apartments.
	~ A single, mentally and physically disabled mother of two children called 2-1-1 from her residence in the city of Alameda for help paying her bills. She is going to college and is in the process of applying for permanent disability, but her state disability is about to get cut, as well as a reduction in her child support due to her ex-husband losing his job. She was referred to Season of Sharing and Operation Dignity for rental assistance, Project EASE for electric bill assistance, DSL Extreme for cheaper internet, and the Alameda County Food Bank for groceries.
	~ A single, male veteran with a physical disability and PTSD depression called from Oakland for rent assistance. His hours had been cut over the holidays at his restaurant job, and he was still waiting for his GI Bill money. He was referred to Operation Dignity's Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program, St. Vincent de Paul, and the Department of Veterans Affairs Homeless Veteran Outreach program for help with further referrals. Several days later he called 2-1-1 again to report that the SSVF program's voicemail was full, which the 2-1-1 Resource Specialist (RS) confirmed. The RS double-checked the caller's income information and found that he had previously forgotten to tell 2-1-1 about a source of income which made him possibly eligible for Season of Sharing (SOS) rent assistance, so he was referred to their intake line as well as Community Resources for Independent Living to apply for SOS funding. The caller was also referred to Hillview Baptist Church for temporary financial assistance, and the VA's Oakland Behavioral Health Clinic for information on applying for VASH housing subsidy. The RS also called on his behalf to a contact at Operation Dignity (gathered at a staff In-Service), explained the situation and got a new phone number for the veteran to call for the SSVF program.
	~ A single, disabled female living in Dublin called 2-1-1 for healthcare referrals that would accept her Medi-Cal. She was referred to the ACCESS line for mental health referrals, Axis Community Health for general medical care, as well as UC Berkeley School of Optometry and La Clinica de la Raza for help getting eyeglasses.
	~ A single mother of two adult children living in Pleasanton on only a small pension and with HealthPAC healthcare program called for emergency dental care. She was referred to Tri-City Health Center, Highland Hospital Dental Clinic, Native American Health Center, as well as Alameda County Public Health Department's Dental Health phone line for further information and referrals. The caller also mentioned she needed to get a special procedure used to diagnose joint disease, so she was referred to the Public Health Clearinghouse for further referrals.
Caller Feedback	~ "Your employee was marvelous and she really had great customer service skills... thank you very much for your help and everything...please keep the agency and program going."
	~ "2-1-1 is very helpful for people like me in need of special resources... and they work great."
	~ "The person I talked to at 2-1-1 was very polite, very professional, and very helpful. This is the first I called...she was very helpful, and she wanted to give me as much help as possible."
	~ "I just called the 2-1-1 service and your employee was very helpful...really made my day and I now have more resources to use for me and my children. Thank you very much for your service."
Staff In-Service Training Sessions	~ 2-1-1 Call Center Training by United Way on its Earn It, Keep It, Save It free tax preparation program
	~ Portia Bell Hume Behavioral Health Center In-Service Presentation
	~ Family Paths In-Service Presentation
	~ A Hand 'N Hand Career Training Center In-Service Presentation
Resource Information And Technology Updates	
Services Database	~ Three new agencies were added in the services database this month.
	~ The services database contains 1,107 agencies and 2,846 programs.
	~ The process of updating and proofreading the 599 agencies in the agency Directory is complete.
	~ The process of updating the 475 Non-Directory agencies in the services database has begun. Each agency has been requested by mail, fax or email to update their information.

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Housing Database	~ 1,866 new units were added to the housing database this month.
	~ Housing subscriptions (mail, PDF and OHIP) with the inventory of available units in Alameda County were sent to community-based organizations in Alameda and San Francisco counties.
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 84,977 hits from 8,862 visitors.
Technology	~ Staff performed routine software and hardware maintenance, updated the agency website, and provided updated services data for the Online Service Directory.
	~ Functionality is being added to the Client/Call tracking database that will allow Eden I&R to accurately assess the time spent by Phone Line Resource Specialists in serving callers according to Medi-Cal Administrative Activity (MAA) billing codes.
	~ Staff began reviewing the agency's back-up power supply options and is making recommendations for improvements as well as developing procedures for after-hour and weekend shifts to follow in the event of extended power outages.
Outreach/Public Information Activities	
Meetings	~ The Executive Director and other management staff attended several re-entry criminal justice meetings in order to stay abreast of the needs of this population as well as provide and recommend whatever assistance is appropriate and applicable.
	~ The Executive Director had a productive meeting with Oakland's Assistant City Administrator regarding the ways in which 2-1-1 has assisted Oakland's residents and advocates, and potential new partnerships that might further assist that city's very low-income and diverse populations.
	~ Eden I&R hosted an on-site meeting for Rubicon staff members in order to enhance the partnership and cross-referrals between both agencies.
	~ Eden I&R hosted an on-site meeting with representatives from the Workforce Investment Board. Discussions included a review of the variety of past special projects that Eden I&R has performed (i.e., assisting NUMMI laid-off workers; placing a Rover in the Eden Area One Stop; producing a customized resource directory for veterans) as well as potential new projects.
	~ The Executive Director chaired this month's 2-1-1 Bay Area Partnership meeting during which numerous topics were discussed including visiting Southern California 2-1-1 Centers, improving 2-1-1 California networking opportunities and communications, and current and future statewide grants.
	~ The United Way of the Bay Area (UWBA), the Contra Costa Crisis Center and Eden I&R updated and approved another MOU between the agencies pledging to support one another, especially during a local disaster. This agreement also includes continued funding from UWBA for local 2-1-1 activities.
	~ The Executive Director spent the last few days of the month touring, and learning from, the two largest 2-1-1 Centers in the State, 2-1-1 Los Angeles and 2-1-1 San Diego. They both have huge centers with state of the art equipment. Discussions centered on how both LA and San Diego are an integral part of the healthcare navigation systems in their counties.
	~ The Housing Coordinator is working in collaboration with the American Red Cross to develop a curriculum for rental property owners to prepare their properties and tenants for disaster-related scenarios.
	~ The Housing Coordinator is working in collaboration with the Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) to do outreach to rental property owners, on a monthly basis, to inform them of the opportunities with OHA and Eden I&R. Through this outreach, property owners throughout the County are able to list their properties with Eden I&R at no cost.
	~ The Housing Coordinator attended the Children in Disaster Meeting to discuss the challenges and gaps in service for providers, parents, and children during a disaster.
	~ The Housing Coordinator is working in collaboration with the East Bay Rental Housing Association (EBRHA) to do outreach to rental property owners and inform them of the opportunities with EBRHA and Eden I&R.
	~ The Housing Coordinator participated in the Public Health discussion about creating a countywide registry for the disabled and frail elderly, so during a disaster the Public Health Department is aware of these vulnerable populations, where they live, and their special needs.
	~ The Housing Coordinator attended the Review Team Meetings to discuss the Community Living Facilities requirements for Board & Cares and transitional housing in Alameda County.

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Meetings	~ The Housing Coordinator attended the Coastal Region Volunteer Center meeting. The discussion centered on the future of local Volunteer Centers and how 2-1-1's might be able to assist in filling the gaps in service.
Fairs, Events, and Outreach	~ The Development/Marketing Officer made eight 2-1-1 in-service training presentations to over 125 staff members, advocates, and volunteers throughout the month at the following government and social service agencies in the Tri-Valley area: Tri-Valley Haven in Livermore (two sessions), Youth Services of the Pleasanton Park and Recreation Department, Open Heart Kitchen, A Hand 'n Hand Career Training Center, Child Care Links, and Pleasanton Senior Center. 2-1-1 outreach materials were provided to each agency to make available to their clients and community members.
	~ The Development/Marketing Officer made a presentation to the Practicum in Small Business Management at Cal State University East Bay. A group of seven students in the class will be working with Eden I&R during the academic quarter as part of their required Business Consulting Project. The project will entail developing a marketing plan for 2-1-1 outreach to college students.
	~ The Deputy Director and Housing Outreach Specialist participated in an Interfaith Community Health Fair sponsored by American Red Cross, the Islamic Society of the East Bay Mosque, and St. Paul United Methodist Church in Fremont.
	~ 2-1-1 outreach material was provided to Allen Temple Hispanic Ministry in Berkeley, The American Red Cross in Marin City, the Hayward Adult School, the City of Dublin, and Sunrise Village (Abode Services).
	~ The Housing Coordinator attended the Pleasanton Planning Commission Meeting to lend Eden I&R's support to emergency shelter and transitional housing in the City of Pleasanton.
	~ The Housing Coordinator facilitated an In-Service for the Cal State University East Bay Nursing class and explained the importance of 2-1-1 in assisting their clients.
	~ The Housing Coordinator facilitated an In-Service presentation for the shelter and case management staff of Abode Services.