

EDEN I & R, Inc.

2-1-1 Alameda County Monthly Narrative Report: March 2014

Noteworthy Updates

During the month of March, 8,450 calls were handled by 2-1-1 Resource Specialists and 12,253 health, housing and human service referrals were provided. Of the unduplicated callers, 78% were female, 30% were single-headed households 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 online health and human service resource directory; in March it received 152,665 hits from 15,682 visitors.

The open enrollment period under the Affordable Care Act officially ended on March 31, though people are still able to apply for health insurance through the Covered California marketplace until April 15. Eden I&R, a Certified Enrollment Entity through Covered California, began assisting people in late November in person to complete their applications for health insurance. The agency's two multilingual Certified Enrollment Counselors met with a total of 138 people through the end of March. To date, 77 have successfully enrolled in a private insurance plan through the marketplace or were found eligible for Medi-Cal. Additionally, the agency's services database was updated last fall with the appropriate taxonomy to track and provide referrals to people with questions about health care reform.

As the April 15 tax deadline looms, we reflect on another successful year of 2-1-1's participation in programs serving low-income taxpayers. For the sixth consecutive year, Eden I&R/2-1-1 was contracted to provide information and refer callers to free tax assistance events held throughout California sponsored by the Computer and Communications Industry Association and the Intuit Financial Freedom Foundation. The 10 events served hundreds of lower-income taxpayers and those on active military duty. 2-1-1 handled a total of 1,286 calls about this year's program. Resource Specialists booked 703 appointments, for each of which a reminder call was attempted and a reminder email was sent. Additionally, in partnership with the City of Oakland and United Way Bay Area, thus far 2-1-1 Resource Specialists have handled 774 calls and made nearly 1,313 referrals to EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit) sites for lower income people this tax season.

Call Information

Call Examples

~ A social worker from Kaiser Fremont called for information to assist a 52-year-old patient whose 25-year-old daughter died suddenly last November due to unknown causes. The autopsy was still underway and caller indicated that it could potentially take as long as six months. The mother had visited Kaiser's Oncology Department and had expressed her high level of stress. The caller informed 2-1-1 that the patient has two grandchildren, ages 2 and 8, for whom she was seeking guardianship. The 8-year-old had lost his father in a car accident some time earlier and had accepted that both "mommy and daddy are in heaven, but has asked where his mom's body is." The caller wanted to know what referrals 2-1-1 could provide that might assist the family. 2-1-1 asked if the family was seeking counseling and was told that the grandmother had been provided grief counseling referrals.

2-1-1 provided resources for kinship adoption, guardianship, kinship support, respite care (as the grandmother might need help with child care if she attended grief counseling and needed time following up with guardianship, etc.), mental health assessment and evaluation and individual/family counseling referrals. The caller was asked if the children had Medi-Cal and whether the family was receiving CalFresh. The caller indicated that she did not know as the grandmother was the patient. 2-1-1 provided referrals to Alameda County Social Services for application to both the Medi-Cal and CalFresh Programs. The caller was very appreciative and said that 2-1-1 really had provided her with a lot of information. The caller was also referred to Alameda County Social Services Agency Adoptions Program, KSSP through Lincoln Child Center, Self-Help Services and Family Law Facilitator for kinship help; Alameda Family Services and Family Service Counseling and Community Resource Center for counseling; Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services' ACCESS line for further referrals for counseling; as well as Medi-Cal and CalFresh at Social Services.

~ A single man from Newark called for apartment listings as he had recently become employed and was able to pay rent. The caller was referred to three rentals as well as four low-income housing wait lists in Oakland: Casa Verde, Ironhorse at Central Station, Effie's House, and the Santana Apartments. These referrals were provided since there was nothing currently available in Newark that matched his income. He was encouraged to call back for additional listings.

~ A single mother with a mental health disability, with one adult and one teenaged child, called from San Leandro for help paying her- utility bills. The caller informed 2-1-1 that her husband had passed away and they were struggling to survive and pay all their bills. The family was relying on the minor daughter's Social Security Survivor's benefits, as her own SSI case was still pending. The caller also shared that her daughter was getting difficult to handle and the family needed counseling. The caller was referred to HEAP and Season of Sharing for the electric bill, and Native American Health Center for family counseling that would accept Medi-Cal. The caller was further referred to the Alameda County Community Food Bank for food referrals, and St. Vincent de Paul for miscellaneous needs.

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Call Examples	~ A single mother of three children, who was a victim of domestic violence, called from Hayward for help paying the utility bill. The caller shared with the PRS that her ex-husband was her abuser and that he had beaten her and attempted to strangle her one day and had consequently been incarcerated. The caller had divorced him and expressed feeling very fortunate, because her ex-husband had later murdered his girlfriend and had been on the run for a year before he was finally caught and incarcerated. The caller had been going through a lot of financial hardship as a result of being a single parent. The 2-1-1 Resource Specialist made sure the caller was up to date with her CalFresh benefits and that she had Medi-Cal for the family. For the electric bill, the caller was referred to HEAP and Season of Sharing.
	~ A Union City resident who was part of a two-parent family with three small children staying with relatives in Union City called for help finding market-rate housing rentals. The caller was referred to two listings in Oakland and one listing in Castro Valley since no referrals matching the family's income were currently available in Union City. The caller was also referred to Satellite Housing for more information on one of their properties. The caller was encouraged to check back with 2-1-1's housing database every few days.
	~ A single male on probation with a felony weapons conviction on his record called from Oakland for low-income housing and help locating more lucrative employment. He was referred to IronHorse at Central Station and Terraza Palmera apartments for housing, and the EASTBAY Works One-Stop Career Center, Goodwill Industries Job Placement Center, and Healthy Oakland Resource Center for job leads.
	~ A Berkeley two-parent family with two small children and a baby on the way called for low-income housing. The caller was referred to Cathedral Gardens, Chesley Avenue Mutual Housing, and Terraza Palmera apartments for open wait lists. The caller was encouraged to call 2-1-1 back for additional listings.
Caller Feedback	~ "I just called 2-1-1 because I was very distressed. My son was killed last year when he was in a traffic accident. He was the pedestrian. I needed to file for bankruptcy for a deceased child. I was so overwhelmed. Then I remembered 2-1-1. Your Resource Specialist was very helpful. She was nice, she made me laugh, she listened, she was very kind. I was so depressed when I called. You know, I used to call other people to collect on debts, but I was never like the people these banks have hired to collect on my son's debts...they are horrible. I have never seen people behave like this. I am so happy I called, very happy. Your Resource Specialist was wonderful and I am so glad I spoke with her. I cannot thank you enough for making this service available."
	~ "I was just calling to comment on the 2-1-1 person who helped me out. She was very helpful, very sweet, and the stress that I had before is about 100% less than what it was before. I appreciate all her help and I appreciate 2-1-1. You have all the telephone numbers to essential information that helps people like me who've been calling everywhere to find help without much success. So, thank you very much."
	~ "I have called several times and you are the only ones that get back to me with information when you say you will. I appreciate all the information that you have given me. Thank you."
Staff Inservice Training Sessions	~2-1-1 staff review of CalFresh and Medi-Cal outreach procedures
	~Unity Council Inservice Presentation
	~2-1-1 staff review of Covered California and Coordinated Care

Resource Information And Technology Updates	
Services Database	~ Six new agencies were added in the services database this month.
	~ The services database contains 1,139 agencies and 2,913 programs.
	~ The process of updating the 474 Non-Directory agencies continues. So far, we have updated 257 agencies.
	~ The Information Management Department has been working on entering the appropriate taxonomy for a soon-to-be launched portal on our website featuring transportation information for those with disabilities.
	~ The Information Management Department has been searching for new low-cost broadband resources for inclusion in the services database as part of a new contract with 2-1-1 California and the California Emerging Technology Fund to decrease the digital divide for low-income individuals and families.

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Housing Database	~ 115 new units were added to the housing database this month.
	~ 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 152,665 hits from 15,682 visitors.
Technology	~ Staff consolidated the DNS registration for its websites and made progress toward the creation of a new transportation-related website.
	~ Staff evaluated the technology requirements of potential new partnership agreements with third party agencies.
	~ Staff updated the organization's internal SharePoint TeamSite in conjunction with regular monthly system maintenance and upgrades.

Outreach/Public Information Activities	
Meetings	~ Fremont Bank Director of Community Relations Marie-Pascal Peterson visted Eden I&R for an agency tour and presented a \$10,000 check from the Bank in support of 2-1-1.
	~ A representative from Cisco, one of Eden I&R's financial supporters, visited the agency in order to see firsthand the 2-1-1 communication system in action.
	~ A representative from the City of Hayward's Community Services Commission visited the agency in order to see firsthand the breadth and depth of Eden I&R's services. He expressed an appreciation for the many ways in which we assist the residents of Hayward.
	~ The Executive and Deputy Directors participated in the 2-1-1 California Summit, entitled "Moving Forward Together," held in San Francisco. This statewide meeting brought together 2-1-1 centers that serve both rural and urban areas. Discussion topics included: the statewide 2-1-1 business plan (financed by Kaiser Permanente), the expansion of 2-1-1 to the remaining rural areas in the state currently without access to 2-1-1, disaster back-up systems, the movement toward seamless importing and exporting of shared data, special projects, and the challenges of long-term sustainable funding.
	~ The Executive Director met with several representatives of the Office of Emergency Services (OES) in Dublin in order to revise and update a disaster-related MOU. This document, once signed, will outline the ways in which Eden I&R and OES have been working in partnership for years. Specifically, when the Emergency Operations Center is activated, Eden I&R has a position in the Public Information Officer's room and is charged with keeping the public informed about disaster-related details (e.g., shelter in place, where to find purified water, road closures).
	~ The Executive Director attended the annual California Alliance of Information and Referral Services (CAIRS) Board retreat in beautiful Asilomar. It was an intensive two days during which all aspects of statewide 2-1-1 activities and basic I&R/I&A agency priorities were discussed. Best practices were shared; challenges were prioritized and discussed in terms of next steps; and the next annual statewide conference was developed (e.g., focus, workshops, funding).
	~ Discussions were held with the Center for Elders Independence about the ways in which our two organizations can work more closely together, especially in relation to 2-1-1's 24/7 multilingual capabilities.
	~ Eden I&R hosted a regional meeting, chaired by 2-1-1 California, related to 2-1-1 Alameda County (and other surrounding counties) becoming involved again in a grant from the California Emerging Technology Fund that promotes low-cost broadband, computer training, and low-cost or free computers to low-income individuals and families.
	~ The Executive Director represented the agency at Rubicon's quarterly partner meeting. Presentations included the ways in which Rubicon assists north Alameda County residents with employment and housing services, as well as the ways in which partner organizations (like Eden I&R) work in concert with Rubicon to serve the same low-income clients.
	~ Ongoing discussions were held with AC Transit related to the use of Eden I&R's website for enhanced transportation information targeted to seniors and those with disabilities, as well as the possibility of 2-1-1 assisting when individuals have problems with motorized wheelchairs and scooters that break down.
	~ The Executive Director attended State of the City annual luncheons in Alameda and Emeryville as a guest of PG&E. Much information was gathered and the networking opportunities were fantastic. Eden I&R thanks PG&E for its generosity.
	~ The Executive Director attended the monthly Community Corrections Partnership Executive Committee's meeting during which many reentry-related topics were reviewed including: the numbers and types of reentry clients being served, the successes and challenges in serving this population (e.g., employment, housing), the movement toward opening a Day Reporting Center and the overall county reentry strategic plan.

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Meetings	~ Discussions were held internally and with other 2-1-1 centers about our participation with Code For America, a national project whose primary purpose is making electronic human service-related information more easily accessible.
	~ The Deputy Director participated in the monthly 2-1-1 Bay Area partnership conference call. Best practices and topical information from each regional 2-1-1 was shared.
	~ The Development/Marketing Officer represented Eden I&R at the Ashland-Cherryland Healthy Community Collaborative Meeting and at the Hayward Chamber of Commerce's Non-Profit Alliance.
	~ The Housing Outreach Coordinator is working in collaboration with the Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) to conduct 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 us at no cost.
	~ As Chairperson, the Housing Outreach Coordinator facilitated the monthly Tri-Valley Housing Scholarship board meeting.
	~ The Housing Outreach Coordinator attended the Alameda County Emergency Managers Association meeting. This meeting was dedicated to reviewing the After Action Report for the Table Top Disaster Drill focusing on climate change and power outages.
	~ The Housing Outreach Coordinator attended the Emergency Management And Disaster Preparedness Council (EMADPC) meeting. The topic of discussion was communication between the agencies and the City of Oakland after a major disaster, including 2-1-1's role in the public notification process.
Fairs/Events/and Outreach	~ One of the Housing Resource Specialists attended the RHA Property Owner Workshop and explained how to list properties with Eden I&R in our housing database.
	~ As Chairperson, the Housing Outreach Coordinator facilitated the monthly Alameda County Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) executive committee meeting.
	~ 2-1-1 marketing and outreach materials were distributed to the Eden Area Office of County Supervisor Nate Miley.
	~ Staff participated in and distributed 2-1-1 materials this month at: City of Pleasanton Community Services' Teen Job Fair; Education Summit for First Generation African American, Latino, Asian American, Native American and Pacific Islander Students at Chabot College in Hayward; and Community Day at Southland Mall in Hayward; Peralta Colleges Wellness Faire at Laney College in Oakland; the City of Pleasanton Transit Fair; and Alameda Health System's Department of Medical Social Services Community Resource Fair at Highland Hospital in Oakland.
	~ The 2-1-1 Program Manager and Information Technology Director participated in and distributed 2-1-1 materials at a community health care reform enrollment event sponsored by Kaiser Permanente at REACH Ashland Youth Center in San Leandro.
	~ The Development/Marketing Officer made a 2-1-1 presentation to seniors and staff at the Mastick Senior Center in City of Alameda, and to the staff and officers of the Youth and Family Services Bureau of the Hayward Police Department.
	~ The Housing Outreach Specialist attended an Oakland Housing Authority property owners briefing and distributed 2-1-1 materials.
	~ The Veterans Roving Housing Resource Specialists participated in and distributed 2-1-1 materials at the Housing for Heroes event at the Veterans Administration in San Leandro and a Veterans Resource Fair at Hayward Veterans Memorial Building.