

**OFFICE OF CLIENTS' RIGHTS ADVOCACY**  
**Protection & Advocacy, Inc.**

**MEMORANDUM**

Date: July 31, 2002

To: Jeanne Molineaux

Cc: Catherine Blakemore, Guy Leemhuis, Lisa Navarro

From: Eva Casas-Sarmiento

Re: **Annual Outreach Report to DDS for the Period of  
June 2001 through June 30, 2002**

---

**Overview**

This report serves as both a quarterly report (covering the period of April 1, 2002 through June 30, 2002) and a yearly overview report covering July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002).

By June 30, 2001 of last year, OCRA had completed one full year of target outreach activities in an effort to reach those groups that OCRA had identified as traditionally underserved. Review of data from this first year of target outreach activities revealed that OCRA, as a whole, had increased the number of consumers served from the target groups that had been identified.

From July 2001 to the end of December 2001, all OCRA staff continued doing outreach based on their plan of the previous year. At the same time during this 6-month period, staff analyzed the outcomes of their past outreach efforts, received extensive training on how to prepare a new target outreach plan, and began drafting goals and objectives for a new target outreach plan to go into effect January 2002.

By January of 2002, all OCRA staff had begun work on their new target outreach plans that would be in effect from January 2002 through the end of June 2003 (a 6-quarter period of time). Each of the 21 OCRA offices

developed individualized outreach plans based on newly release census data, DDS data, and OCRA intake data.

Now that OCRA has had experience doing target outreach, OCRA is confident that these new outreach plans will yield even better results in reaching traditionally underserved communities by the end of the 6-quarter period. The new plans reflect certain key changes that were implemented as a result of experience incurred during the first outreach period. These changes include such things as a focus on only one target group instead of several, focus on reaching existing regional center consumers and not potential consumers from the general population, a focus on conducting training directly to consumers and/or their families whenever possible instead of other agencies and/or providers.

Another change in the new outreach plans was an increase in the number of minimum target outreach activities that each staff must conduct within the 6-quarter period. Each OCRA staff must now complete a minimum of 3 target outreach activities within the outreach plan period. Please note that this is a minimum, not a maximum, requirement. A review of our initial year of target outreach showed that most staff completed many more outreach trainings and presentations than just 3 per year. In addition to target outreach per each individual office, staff also conduct general outreach and training, self-advocacy trainings, and focus groups used to help PAI develop its new four year advocacy services plan. This will help to ensure that the needs of persons with developmental disabilities throughout California are met.

### **Status of Current Efforts**

All OCRA employees have now had two full quarters of outreach work under their new outreach plans and the amount and quality of outreach conducted has been impressive. OCRA now has a sound and effective system in place that allows for effective outreach to take place. We have office procedures for access to interpreters and translation services, more extensive referral information, procedures for releasing staff to participate in outreach, procedures for tracking and overseeing outreach efforts, and a means of coordinating and sharing outreach information statewide between offices. Staff also have a checklist of things to do and take to an outreach event and have received training on how to achieve a diverse caseload. The annual report contains a tally of all outreach trainings and presentations that

have been conducted to date. Below you will also find a sampling of some of the trainings and presentation that have taken place during the last quarter.

One of the major lessons learned from having more than two full years of OCRA intake data, new California census data, and updated DDS data was that it is imperative to pay special attention to the cultural and language needs of Californians with developmental disabilities. California in general is one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse states in the nation. OCRA's ability to improve the number and quality of services to traditionally underserved groups requires culturally and linguistically competent staff. Ongoing cultural and disability sensitivity training is critical to meeting the needs of the diverse clientele of persons with developmental disabilities. Equally important is OCRA's ability to recruit, hire, and retain staff who are able to meet the linguistic needs of our clients.

To this end, over the past year OCRA has had staff participate in cultural and disability sensitivity training along with other PAI staff. Select OCRA staff have also been trained as cultural and disability trainers so that they could continue to work as consultants with new OCRA employees who get hired who may not have had the opportunity to participate in the pre-scheduled sensitivity trainings. The goal of such sensitivity training is to empower staff to better understand the unique experiences and needs of consumers and their families who may not share the same ethnic, cultural or disability experience.

Also, OCRA has convened a committee to assess the varied non-English monolingual communities that exist throughout California's developmental disability groups. An initial review of current census data and DDS data reveals that by far one of the largest groups of non-English monolingual groups of persons with developmental disabilities in California is the Latino community.

Many of the individual CRA offices decided to make Latinos their target outreach group for the current outreach plans. However, many of the individual offices who have the Latino community as a target outreach group do not have a CRA and/or ACRA who speaks the Spanish language. The OCRA statewide outreach committee will be meeting to develop strategies to assist individual CRA offices who do not have someone on staff who speaks Spanish. The committee will also be meeting to assess how OCRA is meeting the needs of other ethnic groups. The committee will strive to

develop a plan to improve how OCRA recruits, hires, and retains qualified staff who can meet the needs of a diverse clientele throughout California.

OCRA has already completed an OCRA Diversity Plan which was approved by its advisory committee. The diversity plan sets goals and priorities to supplement existing merit-based selection and retention policies, to assist hiring teams in removing barriers to achieving a diverse workforce and to develop and implement programs designed to retain staff.

### **Sample of Outreach Conducted April 1, 2002 through June 30, 2002**

- East Bay – May 30, 2002; Presentation on education issues to Padres Unidos, an East Bay Latino parent support group.
- East Bay – June 1, 2002; Workshops and Participation at Harambee, A Village Gathering 3, African American Consumers and Families
- Westside – June 22, 2002; Presentation at Latino Family Outreach Project Resource Fair; both Latino and African-American families attended.
- Various OCRA L.A.-based offices – June 7 & 8, 2002; Annual Fiesta Educativa Conference (table and presentations).
- Alta – June 6, 2002; Philipino Festival
- East L.A. – April 16, 2002; Alternatives to Conservatorship Training to Latino parents.
- Harbor – May 29, 2002; Advocacy Training to Asian/Latino Parent Support Group Members.
- Inland – May 16, 2002; Rights Under the Lanterman Act Training to Latino Consumer/Family Support Group
- Kern – June 20, 2002; Coordination Meeting with Chumash River Tribe Members
- North L.A. – April 24, 2002; Educational Resources Training for “Mi Casa Es Su Casa” Families
- Redwood Coast – May 7, 2002; Special Education/Lanterman Act/Public Benefits Training to Native American Robinson Rancheria Tribal Members
- Redwood Coast – April 6, 2002; OCRA/Regional Center Services Training to Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians Tribal Council Members
- Orange – May 23, 2002; Early Start Training for Latino Parents of the Epilepsy Foundation of Orange County

- San Diego – April 22 to 23, 2002; Training of S. CA Native American Advocates on Special Education, Regional Center Services, and Mental Health