



Summary of Public Comments Received During the Master Plan for Developmental Services Committee Meeting #10 - Wednesday, January 8, 2025, 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

This summary reflects the themes and ideas received from public comments provided during the committee meeting's roundtable sessions and public comment period. Public participants were invited to speak and share their comments with the committee and to share their comments using the Zoom chat and Q&A. Themes from public comments included:

Support for Self-Determination Program (SDP)

- A 17-year-old shared that SDP allowed them to pursue music, significantly improving their life.
- Another participant mentioned how SDP enabled them to attend college and focus on their passion for music over the past two years.
- Several participants highlighted how SDP transformed their families' lives, with one participant's child now graduating with a major in animation.
- One mother emphasized that SDP gave her daughter freedom, contrasting with generic services that have long waiting lists and untrained personnel.
- One person voiced support for creating a 22nd regional center for SDP. Others voiced concern for this idea.
- Another person suggested it might be worth considering forming a specialist position at each RC for SDP rather than training all service coordinators in SDP.
- A couple of participants mentioned that the most important meeting of the SDP is the annual renewal meeting. They stated that this meeting sometimes happens without the client present. They called for transparency and inclusion in this meeting.

Need for Transparency and Accountability

- One participant discussed the necessity for service coordinators and vendors to be accountable and ensure clients receive needed services without delays. Being held accountable means establishing

consequences when people do not receive the services they need. This should start at the RC board and director levels and be system-wide.

- Another participant noted setbacks due to lack of trained personnel and long waiting lists at regional centers (RCs).
- Another suggestion was made to develop an “accountability form” – designed by the public – to track services provided to an individual.
- One person suggested the use of term limits for RC board members.
- Another mentioned that accountability cannot happen without transparency, including RC audits.

Tiered Service Coordinator Development

- Participants considered a recommendation that the service coordinator role should be modeled into a tier system where the first year of work is focused on the most basic skills and gets more complex each year.
- One person shared that training could be challenging in a tiered system.
- Another offered that everyone should receive both basic and complex case training.

Workforce and Study on Vacancy and Retention Rates

- Several people spoke about workforce shortages. They talked about delays in services because of this. They talked about experiencing frequent turnover, which means having to repeatedly get to know a new service coordinator.
- They mentioned service coordinators may use RC experience as a step in advancing to a higher paying county job.
- Participants considered a recommendation to conduct a study on vacancy, pay, and retention rates for service coordinators at all RCs.
- Several people supported this idea. One person voiced that conducting a new study would be time consuming and it would be better to compile and analyze existing data.

Enhanced Support for Families and Self-Advocates

- Several participants stressed the need for families and self-advocates to have more support and involvement in decision-making processes.
 - They face challenges such as lack of information, long wait times, and insufficient support from service coordinators.
 - Recommendations included mentorship programs, training for parents, and ensuring self-advocates have a voice in all decisions.
- Several people agreed service coordinators should receive empathy training to better support families and self-advocates.
- A person shared that the language used by RCs is not inclusive. They stated RCs do not speak the same language as families. The language should be universal.

Inclusion of Immigration and Legal Support

- Several participants highlighted the unique challenges faced by non-citizen clients and their families. They stressed the need for RCs to provide specific support to navigate the immigration system and protect their rights.

Addressing Health and Emergency Preparedness

- Participants expressed concerns about the lack of adequate health services and support during emergencies, such as long waiting lists and untrained personnel at regional centers.

Equitable Access to Services

- Participants called for ensuring fair access to services for all clients, regardless of their background.
- They emphasized the need for individualized services that are timely and responsive to the unique needs of each client.

Advocacy for Alternatives to Conservatorship

- One participant advocated for alternatives to conservatorship. They emphasized less restrictive options to preserve the rights and autonomy of individuals with disabilities.

Integration into Community Life

- Another participant highlighted the importance of integrating individuals with disabilities into community life. They emphasized the need for accessible recreational facilities, inclusive educational opportunities, and support for independent living.

Employment Opportunities

- A participant championed employment for people with I/DD. They called for increased access to internships (paid and unpaid). They talked about the internship pathway to employment.

Peer Mentorship

- Several people supported the concept of peer mentoring programs within cultures (including disability cultures), so individuals can get support from others with similar experiences.
- They discussed the need for more training on this.
- They shared that it matters to have a feeling that “someone knows you.”

Housing

- One person recommended the state consider amending Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations to say that if someone lives with their parents, they can still get Supported Living Services (SLS). SLS are a set of services that help adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities live independently in their homes.

- This person recommended implementing an emergency regulation and/or amending the statute. They felt this was needed in light of the state's housing crisis and staffing shortages.