

EDEN I & R, Inc.

2-1-1 Alameda County Monthly Narrative Report: April 2009

Noteworthy Updates

The end of the month saw the most critical aspects of 2-1-1 being tested. The Alameda County Public Health Department contacted Eden I&R shortly after the H1N1/Swine Flu alert was made public. All 2-1-1 Resource Specialists were updated about the most current information on a daily basis (or more often if needed) so that the data could be relayed to callers. People from all over the county inquired about such issues as where to go for immediate medical care. Additional information about 2-1-1's integral communication role during this health-related response will be outlined in the May monthly report.

The first half of this month saw hundreds of 2-1-1 calls related to taxes. Eden I&R has been the gateway to the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) program since it started in Alameda County several years ago, and now 2-1-1 is the advertised 24/7 access point for this critical service. There was a 42% increase in EITC Alameda County calls this year, totaling 3,341 served. Referrals were made in multiple languages, resulting in the return of millions of tax dollars to the people who earned it.

The majority of 2-1-1 calls continue to be related to basic needs such as housing (including foreclosures), food, and utilities (e.g., 48 hour shutdown notices). 2-1-1 Resource Specialists continue to receive ongoing in-service trainings in all of these areas (over and beyond what is in the databases) so that new programs/services can be passed along to callers.

2-1-1 continued to ramp-up its food stamp outreach and pre-screening capabilities so that individuals and families eligible for this program could receive services as soon as possible. In addition, 2-1-1 is now the advertised entry point number for information and referral for the Bank On Oakland program that promotes the use of checking and savings accounts by low income people.

Eden I&R staff distributed thousands of 2-1-1 PR materials, in a variety of languages, throughout the county at numerous fairs, meetings, and other events held for the public and private sectors. The agency's PR efforts, combined with those of its partners, has resulted in a **52% increase in 2-1-1 calls from April 2008 to April 2009.**

Call Information

Call Examples	~ A Fremont resident called seeking information on alcohol abuse support groups for his son who refused treatment. He was given referrals to the Fremont Family Resource Center, the Family Service of the Tri-Cities and the contact information for support groups for alcohol abusers and one specifically for their family members.
	~ A homeless gentleman called from San Leandro looking for information on how to resolve some legal issues that were preventing him from obtaining employment. He was given referrals to 2 organizations that provide legal representation for the homeless and assistance in expunging records.
	~ A Livermore resident called seeking counseling and caregiver support services. She was given 6 referrals to Tri-Valley agencies providing those services.
	~ A single mother from Oakland who had recently become unemployed called seeking information on financial assistance and food programs. She was given 5 referrals.
	~ A Hayward resident called seeking information on evictions and tenant's rights. She was given 2 referrals to agencies providing those services.
	~ A Berkeley resident called seeking information on where to obtain a used or discounted wheelchair for an uninsured friend. He was given 2 referrals.
	~ An Alameda resident called seeking information on after school programs for her daughter. She was given 3 referrals.
Staff In-service Training Sessions	~ Disability Rights of California In-service Presentation ~ Staff attended Food Stamp 101 Training

Resource Information And Technology Updates

Services Database	~ Converted the Services database to new standardized Taxonomy, matching news codes with existing codes.
	~ Nine new agencies were added to the Services database.
	~ The Services database contains 939 agencies and 2,317 programs.
Housing Database	~ The Housing database contains 67,797 Total Housing Units.
	~ 474 new units were added this month.

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Technology	~ Added components to the Client database for the Food Stamp Screening program.
	~ Worked on migration of Services database to newer version of the AIRS Taxonomy.
	~ Continued updating/revisions of Housing database to accommodate a wider range of housing types and more specific information about restrictions for subsidized housing.
	~ Performed routine maintenance and trouble-shooting of work stations and servers such as the installation of software and operating system updates, virus and spyware scans, etc.

Outreach/Public Information Activities

Meetings	~ Staff attended the California Alliance of Information & Referral Services (CAIRS) Board Retreat. Major emphasis of the retreat was on SB712 and 2-1-1 California, both activities focus on facilitating statewide funding for 2-1-1.
	~ 2-1-1 was approached by the Alameda County Public Health Department to keep the public informed about the emerging swine flu medical situation. As new information was developing, the department contacted Eden I&R to make sure that the agency had the most up to date information to pass along to the public, 24/7 and in multiple languages.
	~ Meetings were held to further enhance the Food Stamps outreach efforts throughout the county via an Eden I&R Rover and the 2-1-1 phone line.
	~ The Executive Director began negotiations with PG&E about the possibility of additional support for the hundreds of utility related calls being handled by the 2-1-1 Resource Specialists on a monthly basis. These calls are often crisis related because of the power being turned off due to non-payment of bills in homes where there are medical problems. The utility related calls are very lengthy and often require several calls to other institutions before a resolution can be achieved.
	~ The Executive Director and staff met with EveryOne Home representatives to discuss the ways in which 2-1-1 can act as a single point of entry for those in the community who are eligible for receiving assistance through the President's stimulus package program. It was noted that when EveryOne Home had its community focus group meeting in Hayward recently, almost all of the participants indicated that a single point of entry (2-1-1) would be an easy access process for people to enter the new system of services. An example discussion point included whether or not there could be one initial intake form for all programs to share electronically, saving the clients and the program staff time and effort.
	~ The Executive Director met with almost all of the City Managers at their monthly association meeting. A very comprehensive 2-1-1 program update was presented that included the numerous ways in which the communication system had been enhanced, and what it had accomplished, within its first full year of operation. In addition each city received a large packet of material that included numerous examples of outreach materials; lists of outreach locations by city; statistical information about the calls and the callers; and much more. There was a very frank discussion about the economic issues facing all of the municipalities as well as the increased need for the provision of services like the unique social services and housing databases maintained by Eden I&R (and distributed to the public and their advocates via the 2-1-1 phone line).
	~ The Executive Director met with representatives from the Eden Township Healthcare District. They are long-term funders of the 2-1-1 phone line and were impressed by the breadth and extent of the agency's other programs and services as they toured Eden I&R's facilities.
	~ Staff attended an information workshop at the San Francisco Foundation regarding establishing an MOU with the foundation for the distribution of financial assistance for Disaster Response.
	~ Staff met with the Alameda County Food Stamp Coordinator to receive training on the appropriate method to use to prescreen and process food stamp applications.
	~ Staff attended the Tri-Valley Housing Scholarship Meeting to review requests for housing assistance.
	~ Staff met with East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO) to plan the May 2009 Affordable Housing Week activities.
	~ Staff attended a planning meeting for the Project Homeless Connect event to bring the 2-1-1 housing, health and human services databases of information to clients at the event.
	~ Staff attended Rental Property Owner briefings with Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) and Rental Housing Association (RHA) to explain the free listing service and the benefits of 2-1-1.
~ Staff presented a Housing Workshop for Landlords at the Rental Housing Association of Northern Alameda County.	

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Meetings	~ Staff attended a Piedmont City Council meeting and presented information about 2-1-1 services to the residents of Piedmont.
	~ Staff participated in the San Francisco Bay Area CA Disaster Volunteer planning meeting discussing statewide volunteer coordination.
	~ Staff attended a Disaster Preparedness Symposium planning meeting to highlight 2-1-1's role before, during and after a disaster.
	~ Staff attended a monthly meeting for Alameda County VITA Site Coordinators sponsored by United Way of the Bay Area.
Fairs/Events/ and Outreach	~ Staff hosted a booth at seven events to promote the 2-1-1 service: Bank on Oakland's Launch, TESA Emergency Preparedness Fair in Newark, Bank on Oakland's Community Event, Week of the Young Child Celebration & Resource Fair in Oakland, Tri-Valley YMCA Healthy Kids Day in Pleasanton, Livermore's Emergency Survival Expo, and Surviving and Thriving in Tough Times Conference in Berkeley.
	~ The Executive Director and the 2-1-1 Manager were featured speakers at a Department of Behavioral Health meeting consisting of staff from that department as well as a variety of Community Based Organizations from throughout Alameda County. Hundreds of 2-1-1 outreach materials were distributed including magnets, cards, posters, and flyers in a variety of languages. Also distributed was information about EITC and Food Stamps.
	~ The Executive Director participated in the launch of the Bank On Oakland program that promotes the opening of checking and savings accounts by low income individuals. During the press conference that included Oakland's Mayor Dellums and representatives from the Governor's Office, 2-1-1 was promoted as the number to call for information about the program (e.g., eligibility requirements) and where to go for assistance (e.g., which bank branches are participating). There was a large turnout from the public, businesses, community based organizations and elected officials. Eden I&R had a booth where hundreds of 2-1-1 outreach materials were distributed.
	~ The Executive Director was the featured speaker at the Hayward Rotary meeting that was attended by approximately 60 people representing public safety, elected officials, businesses, government departments, academic institutions, and community advocates. Hundreds of 2-1-1 outreach materials were distributed to the very interactive audience.
	~ 2-1-1 materials were made available at three events: Healthy Kids Day in Fremont, Chabot College's Spring Job Fair, and Stepping Stones Center's Walk/Run & Health Fair in San Leandro.
	~ Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty included information about 2-1-1 in his April 2009 Newsletter.
	~ Staff attended the Youth Forum at San Lorenzo High School and talked about 2-1-1 and how it can help them and their families.
	~ Staff attended the Oakland Chamber of Commerce's Nonprofit Roundtable, the Newark Chamber of Commerce's Leads for Success Club Meeting, the Hayward Business Expo and the Fremont Chamber of Commerce Business Mixer and shared information about 2-1-1 to the members.
	~ Staff hosted an agency tour for The Evangelical Churches of Hayward and met with this group of faith-based leaders to discuss the services 2-1-1 provides to the community.
	~ Staff attended the open house of the East Bay Community Recovery Project and distributed 2-1-1 information, posters and outreach materials.
	~ Staff facilitated Housing Workshop and 2-1-1 Service Training for the staff of Clara House.
	~ Staff hosted a booth at the Project Homeless Connect event in Oakland distributing information about 2-1-1 and Eden I&R's housing database. Ten homeless individuals and families were assisted in finding housing in Alameda County.