

Quality and Productivity Commission
27th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
"Saluting County Excellence"

59.0

2013 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):

NAME OF PROJECT: LA COUNTY AAS INFORMATION & REFERRAL CALL CENTER

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION: JUNE 25, 2012
 (Must have been implemented at least one year - on or before June 30, 2012)

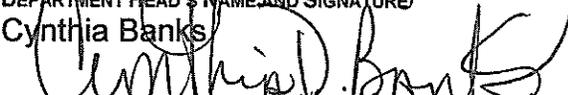
PROJECT STATUS: Ongoing One-time only

HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT? Yes No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. Summarize the problem, solution, and benefits of the project in a clear and direct manner

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The Aging & Adult Services Information & Referral Call Center (AAS-IRCC) was implemented in June 2012 to provide information and referral services as well as serving as the critical "intake" function of receiving calls/referrals of abuse and neglect of the elderly and dependent adult population of LA County. Prior to the establishment of the Call Center, Adult Protective Services (APS) intake and Information & Referral (I & R) functions were two separate functional units. While the necessary services were being provided to callers, the process was cumbersome and lacked the cohesiveness needed to provide as wide a range of services as possible. The merger of the two units into one "Call Center" established a "one-stop shop" to provide a multitude of services (including emergency services) to older and dependent adults in the Los Angeles County community. The new automated system implemented for the Call Center has led to increased efficiencies in the work flow of the unit, leading to enhanced service provision and response time to callers. Cost savings to the county has resulted due to the maximization of work hours including a decreased need for staff to utilize overtime hours.

(1) ESTIMATED/ACTUAL ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ESTIMATED/ACTUAL ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ESTIMATED/ACTUAL ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) TOTAL ESTIMATED/ACTUAL BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ 0	√
SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS Department of Community and Senior Services Adult Protective Services Program and Planning Division 3333 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 400, Los Angeles, CA 90010			TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 351-5065	
PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME Sara Lee Dato			TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 351-5065 EMAIL SDato@css.lacounty.gov	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE <small>(PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME)</small> Stephanie Maxberry 		DATE 6/27/13	TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 738-2015 EMAIL SMaxberry@css.lacounty.gov	
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE Cynthia Banks 		DATE 6/27/13	TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 637-0798	

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FACT SHEET – LIMITED TO 3 PAGES ONLY: Describe the **Challenge, Solution, and Benefits** of the project, written in plain language. Include a discussion of the technology and linkage to the County Strategic Plan. The description should identify Performance Measures.

CHALLENGE

Prior to the establishment of the Call Center, APS intake and I & R functions were handled by two separate units within the APS Program and Planning Division. While the necessary services were being provided to callers (e.g., screening of client information for APS intakes, provision of resource information and linkages to the public), the process was more time-consuming than it needed to be, due to the need for call transfers, consultations with other staff, and other delays. The specific problem was the lack of cohesiveness needed to provide as wide a range of services as possible to the community by one staff unit. In order to make this happen, it was determined that an integration of existing services was required, along with an upgrade in technology to allow for all staff to use the same operating system to receive, process and track all referrals and requests for assistance from the public.

SOLUTION

One of the primary goals of all social services agencies is to make the process of obtaining information, assistance, referrals, and services, as well as reporting suspected abuse, as seamless as possible for their target populations. The Los Angeles County Community and Senior Services (CSS) Department recognized the challenge of improving its system of providing information and referral services to the senior and disabled adult communities and established the Aging & Adult Services Information & Referral Call Center in June 2012.

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BENEFITS

The AAS-IRCC is a telephone call distribution and monitoring system, and serves as a "one-stop shop" for AAA and APS intake, information and referral services. The Call Center provides callers with information about programs and resources available to seniors and adults with disabilities. The success of the Call Center integration is reflected in the use of technology, the enhancement of staff expertise and proficiency, and most importantly, delivery of services and assistance to the public. The overall program effectiveness can be seen in the assurance of a "no wrong door approach" to providing timely and accurate information to the community. The ongoing specialized training of Call Center staff has significantly improved the delivery of service to many Los Angeles County residents. Call Center staff follow up with callers within 30 days of the initial contact to ensure that individuals have successfully connected with the agencies to whom they were referred and received the appropriate services, as well as additional resources. The unit is continuously seeking out and sharing new information to ensure that they can provide the most current information for those seeking assistance.

All elements of the Call Center implementation (i.e., HAPS installation, CIU/Harmony interface with 211, and the merging of Centralized Intake Unit and Information & Assistance Unit) served as a conscious effort to streamline the process of providing information and resources to the public and processing APS intakes. The Center receives an average of 140 incoming calls per day, of which 14% are elder and dependent adult abuse reports, 38% are information and referral calls, and the remaining are either follow-up or consultative calls. Finally, the enhanced technology has greatly improved the ability of supervisors and administrators to monitor the staff's workload/output, and make appropriate modifications accordingly.

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LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN (DETAIL IS REQUIRED FOR COUNTY DEPARTMENTS):

The Call Center project is very much in line with the County mission to enrich lives through effective and caring service, as well as each of the nine County values listed in the County Strategic Plan. In addition, the specific Strategic Plan goals have been met as follows:

Operational Effectiveness – Integration of operational processes and structure has proven extremely successful in maximizing efficiency and effectiveness in delivering customer-oriented public services. This goal was one of the most crucial priorities in implementing the Information & Referral Call Center. The merging of two previously independent units required the development of an optimal flow for the distribution of calls among the agents of the Call Center, as well as a sensibly designed cross-training curriculum for the staff assigned to respond to calls received through the system.

Children, Family and Adult Well-Being – Another critical priority in enriching lives through integrated, client-centered supportive services, is to *simplify* the process of reporting alleged abuse or requesting information and/or assistance from a public services agency. The conceptual approaches taken to design and implement the I & R Call Center were "one stop shop" and "no wrong door." The success of the project ensured a reduction in the amount of time and effort required for a caller to obtain the services needed, and therefore less frustration and more satisfaction.

The implementation of the Call Center also fulfilled significant aspects of the Strategic Plan goals of **Community and Municipal Services**, **Health and Mental Health**, and **Public Safety**.

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COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFIT): If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation.

Cost Avoidance: Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes.

Cost Savings: A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes.

Revenue: Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY