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**Assessment of the Administrative
Mechanism (AAM)**

Ryan White Program Year 31
(March 1, 2020-February 28, 2021)

Approved by COH June 8, 2023



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
COMMISSION ON HIV



**Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism
Ryan White Program Year 31
(March 1, 2020-February 28, 2021)**

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I. Introduction and Purpose of Report

As a Ryan White Part A planning council, the Los Angeles County Commission on HIV (“the Commission”) is required by Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to conduct a regular “Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism” (AAM). The AAM is meant to evaluate the speed and efficiency with which Ryan White Program funding is allocated and disbursed for HIV services in Los Angeles County. The Operations Committee of the Commission led the development, implementation, and analysis of the AAM for Ryan White Program Year 31. The purpose of this report is to present the findings of this assessment. Outlined in the sections below is the assessment methodology, and findings.

II. Assessment Methodology

The AAM covers 2 areas: 1) an assessment of the Commissioners’ understanding of the priority setting and resource allocation process and 2) harnessing feedback from contracted agencies on the efficiency of Los Angeles County’s administrative mechanisms (such as contracts, procurement, solicitations) to rapidly disburse funds to support HIV services in the community. The Operations Committee used an anonymous questionnaire via SurveyMonkey to elicit responses from Commissioners and contracted agencies. The Operations Committee of the Commission led the AAM and utilized the same questionnaire used for the previous AAMs as they have been tested and used in previous studies.

Online Survey of Commissioners:

Commissioners were invited to respond to the survey between April 4 to May 2022. At that time, there were 35 members (1 was on a leave of absence) and 8 alternates (1 was on a leave of absence) for a total of 41 possible respondents. Several follow-up emails were sent to ensure a high response rate. Nineteen responses were recorded at close of survey, generating a response rate of 46%.

Online Survey Contracted Providers:

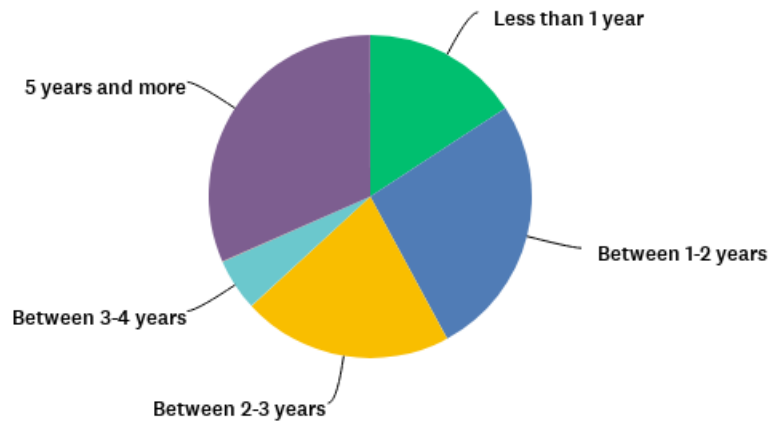
All 43 County-contracted HIV prevention and care providers were invited to participate in the AAM survey between August 18-September 15, 2022. 11 agencies completed the survey. Agencies were asked to provide one response per agency.

Limitations: The Operations Committee discussed and acknowledged the possibility of a low response rate for the Commissioner and provider surveys due to multiple local, statewide, and national surveys in circulation in 2022, including those related to the development of the federally required Integrated Plan. Another limitation of this AAM is the lag time between the program year cycle focus of the survey and the time of when the survey was released—this may have impacted memory recall of events and data presentations delivered to the Commission. Readers should not make broad interpretations with the results of the AAM but rather, use the information as a record of perceptions and responses from those individuals and agencies who completed the survey.

III. Assessment Responses

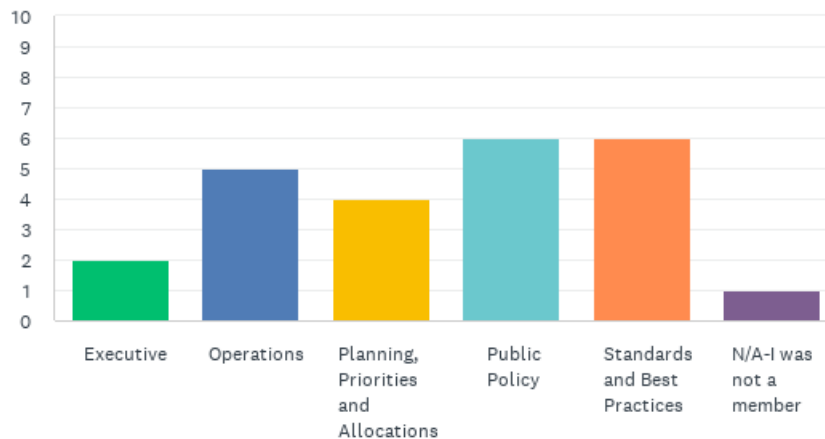
A. Survey of Los Angeles County Commission on HIV Commissioners¹

Q1. For how long have you served as a Commissioner and/or Alternate on the Los Angeles County Commission on HIV?



Of the 19 individuals who responded to the survey, 3 indicated they have been a member of the Commission for less than a year; 5 between 1 to 2 years; 4 between 2 to 3 years; 1 between 3 to 4 years; and 6 for 5 years or more.

Q2. During the Ryan White Program Year 31 (March 1, 2020-February 28, 2021) priority setting and resource allocations process, which committee(s) were you a member of?

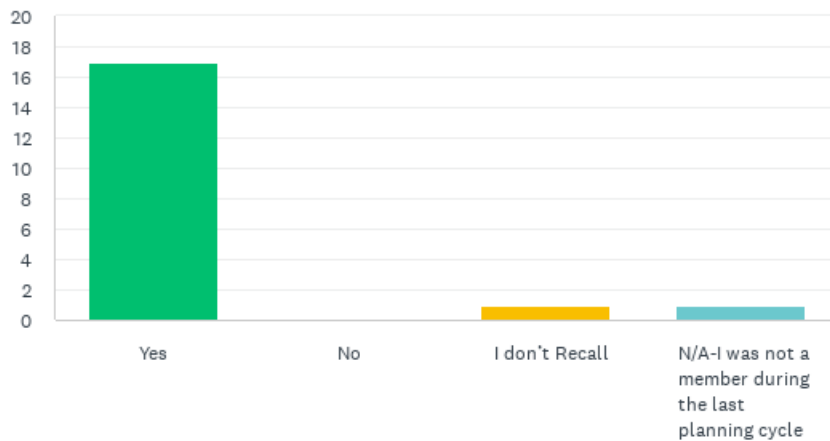


During the PY 31 priority setting and resource allocation (PSRA) process, 2 individuals indicated that they

¹ N=19

were assigned to the Executive Committee; 5 were members of Operations; 4 were members of the Planning, Priorities and Allocations; 6 were assigned to Public Policy; 6 were assigned to Standards and Best Practices; and 1 noted that they did not have a committee assignment at the time of the survey - this individual may have just been recently onboarded to the Commission and was awaiting confirmation of their committee assignment at the time that the survey was conducted.

Q3. During the Ryan White Program Year 31 (March 1, 2020-February 28, 2021) priority setting and resource allocations cycle, did the Commission on HIV review/study an appropriate amount and type of data on an ongoing basis to determine community needs?

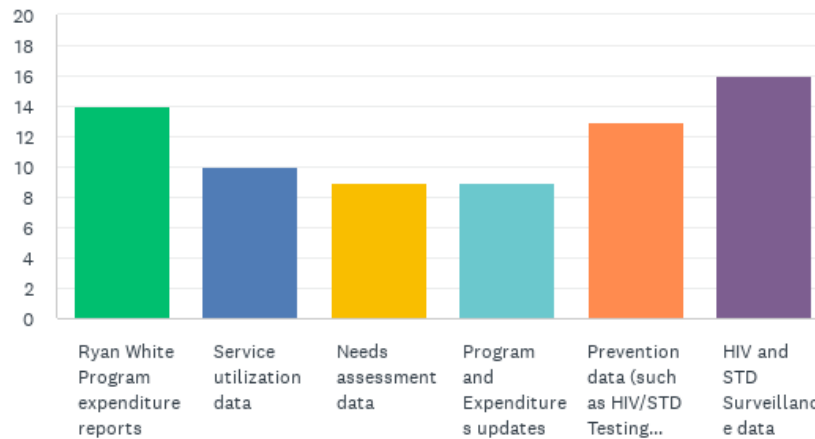


During the PY 31 PSRA planning cycle, 17 individuals who responded to the survey agreed that the Commission reviewed an appropriate amount and type of data on an ongoing basis to determine community needs; 1 indicated “I do not recall”, and 1 responded that they were not a part of the planning cycle.

Comments:

- I think a greater amount of data/service resource and funding direct from the independent CA Health Jurisdictions in LA County.

Q4. During the Ryan White Program Year 31 (March 1, 2020-February 28, 2021) priority setting and resource allocations cycle, do you recall any of the following DHSP reports being provided as a part of the priority setting and resource allocations process?

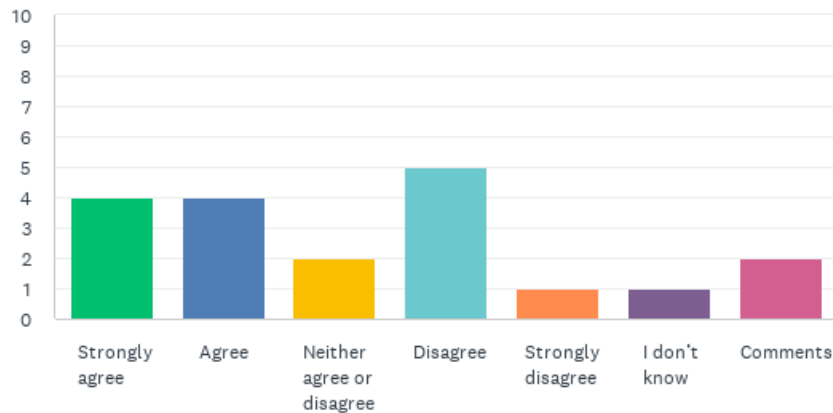


The data types most remembered by survey participants in ranked order were 1) HIV and STD surveillance (84.21%); 2) Ryan White Program expenditures report (73.68%); 3) prevention data (68.42%); 4) service utilization (52.63%); 5) needs assessment and program/expenditures updates (both at 47.37%). Prevention data included HIV/STD testing services; National HIV Behavioral Surveillance; LAC Apps-based survey; contracted biomedical services; contracted HIV education and risk reduction services; contracted vulnerable populations services).

Comments:

- Not sure on the one item. It may well have been done, I just don't remember.
- We could use more INTERSECTIONAL data on HIV HOUSING, HIV mental health, HIV SUBSTANCE USE INCLUDING HARM REDUCTION, especially related to methanol hatsmine (sp) use, AND a significant update on LGBTQI stigma/discrimination, and data that better shows the increasing needs of Seniors infected with HIV.
- I don't remember the specific reports. We were still receiving LACHAS reports and gearing up for the EHE. I don't remember a lack of data.
- Seen reports but not sure on time frame; also not sure how No 1 and 4 differ.

Q5. Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statement: There is adequate consumer participation and input in the planning, priority setting, and resource allocations process.

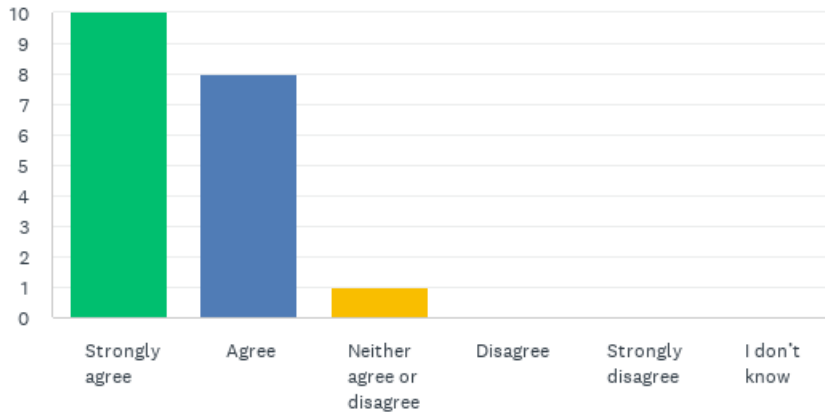


Regarding adequate consumer participation in the PSRA and planning process, 4 individuals “strongly agreed”; 4 “agreed”; 3 “neither agreed or disagreed”; 5 “disagreed”; 1 “strongly disagreed”; 1 replied “I don’t know”; and 2 provided comments (listed below).

Comments:

- “Adequate” however is insufficient, and consumers need much more support to participate especially elderly and long-term survivors, and people of color – especially Native American Representatives
- Agree, but we could do more with consumer involvement.

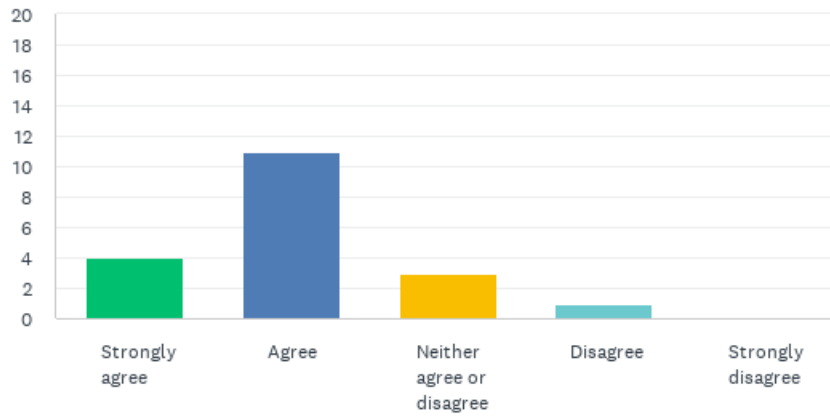
Q6. Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statement: During the last planning cycle, I was adequately notified of planning, priority setting, and resource allocations activities and meetings.



When asked to rate their agreement/disagreement with the statement, “during the last planning cycle, I was adequately notified of planning, PSRSA activities and meetings”, 10 individuals “strongly agreed”; 8 “agreed”; and 1 neither agreed or disagreed.”

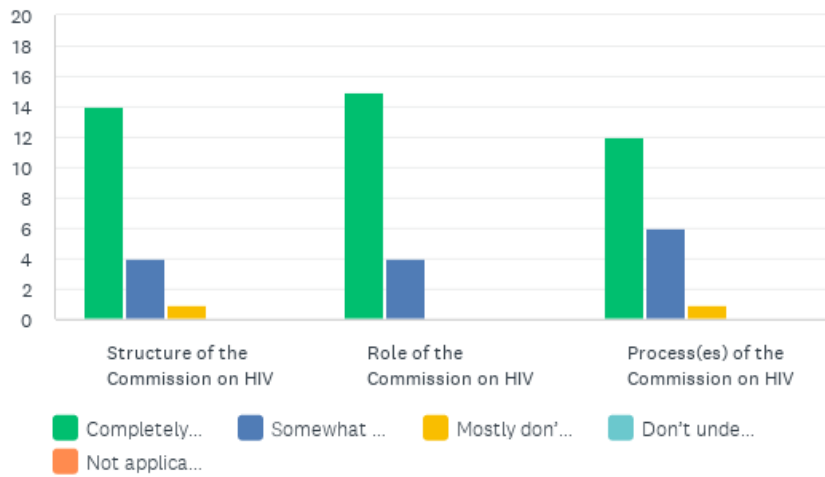
Comments: none

Q7. Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statement: In terms of structure and process, the Commission on HIV is effective as a planning body.



When asked to rate their agreement/disagreement with the statement, “in terms of structure and process, the Commission on HIV is effective as a planning body”, 4 individuals “strongly agreed”; 11 “agreed”; 3 “neither agreed or disagreed”; and 1 “disagreed”.

Q8. Please indicate the degree to which you understand the following:



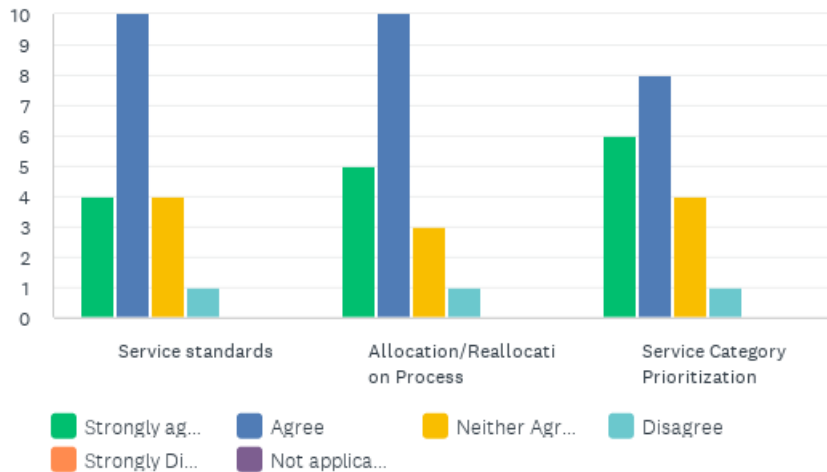
Regarding the Commissioners understanding of the structure, role and processes of the Commission, survey participants responded in the following manner:

- Structure of the Commission – 14 answered “completely understand”; 4 “somewhat understand”; and 1 “mostly don’t understand”
- Role of the Commission – 15 answered “completely understand” and 4 “somewhat understand”;
- Process(es) of the Commission – 12 answered “completely understand”; 6 “somewhat understand”; 1 “mostly don’t understand”

Comments:

- We participate in creating plans. We don’t lack for plans. Success in the metrics we use is incremental. We can’t keep doing the same things and expect different results.
- The COH has done an excellent job helping me learn and understand my role as a commissioner.

Q9. Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statement: The Commission on HIV has prepared me to make decisions related to:



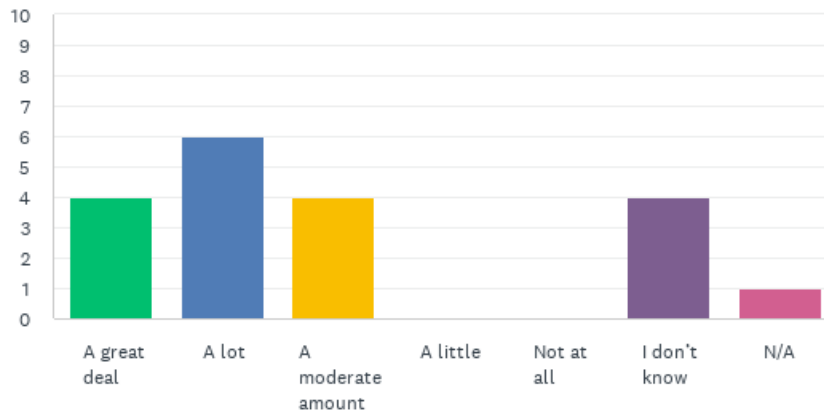
When asked to rate the degree to which the Commission has prepared members to make decisions related to service standards, PSRA and service category prioritization, survey participants responded in the following manner:

- Service standards – 4 “strongly agreed”; 10 “agreed”; 4 “neither agreed nor disagreed”; and 1 “disagreed”
- PSRA process – 5 “strongly agreed”; 10 “agreed”; 3 neither agreed nor disagreed”; and 1 “disagreed”
- Service category prioritization – 6 “strongly agreed”; 8 “agreed”; 4 neither agreed nor disagreed”; and 1 “disagreed”

Comments:

- As part of the Commission, I believe there is always room for improvement and increased knowledge.
- We have the knowledge and experience around the table. We need more direct consumer feedback and involvement.

Q10. Please indicate the degree to which you believe the priorities and allocations established by the Commission on HIV in Ryan White Program Year 31 (March 1, 2020-February 28, 2021) were followed by DHSP.



When queried to rate the degree to which the priorities and allocations established by the Commission for the Ryan White PY 31 were followed by the DHSP (the grantee), 4 responded “a great deal”; 6 “a lot”; 4 “a moderate amount”; 4 “I don’t know”; and 1 “N/A”.

Comments: none

Observations and Recommendations

While this study has limitations such as low response rate and the likelihood of poor memory recall due to the lag in time frame from date of the priority setting meetings and the date of the study, the responses from the Commissioners offer insights on opportunities for improvement, training and learning. Key observations and recommendations are listed below:

Key Observations:

- There appears to be recognition and recall of the range of programmatic, fiscal, surveillance, service utilization and care continuum data provided to the Commission and its committees during PY 31. A participant noted that they would like to see more data on the intersection of HIV with morbidities such as mental, substance use, seniors and social conditions such as stigma and discrimination. More data sharing from the independent health jurisdictions (Long Beach and Pasadena) was also noted by a respondent.
- There is a need for a more robust, direct, and highly visible participation and engagement of consumers in the Commission’s priority setting, resource allocation process and decision-making.
- Eighteen of the 19 respondents strongly agreed/agreed that they were “adequately notified of PSRA meetings and activities during the PY 31 planning cycle. The response may be due to the Commission’s open meetings which allows for broad community participation. In addition, data presentations are disseminated in advance to the PP&A Committee and materials are posted on

the Commission's website.

- In terms of structure and process, 15 respondents indicated that they strongly agreed/agreed that the Commission is effective as a planning body; while 3 responded neither agreed or disagreed and 1 disagreed. The continues cycle of planning may also be factor in the desire to execute different approaches to community planning.

Key Recommendations:

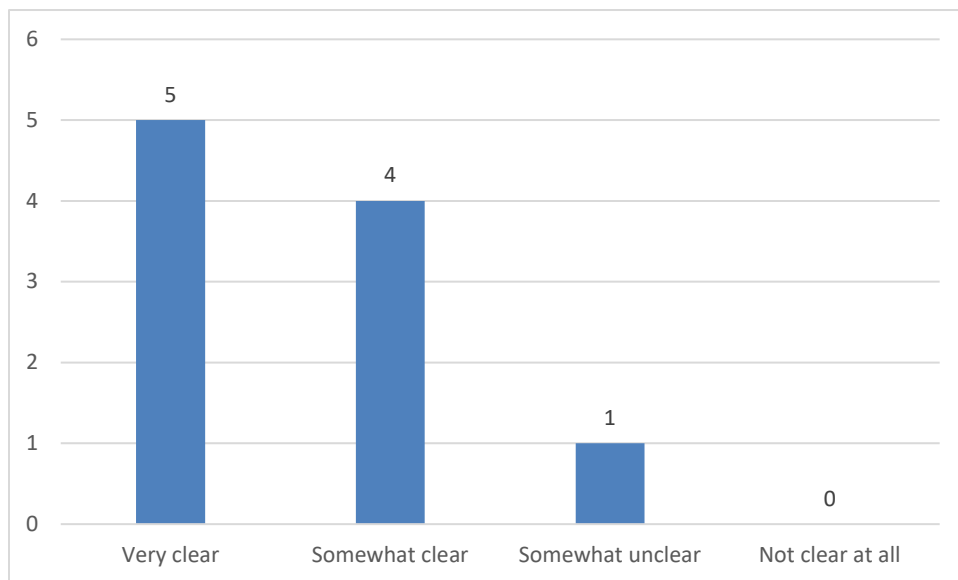
- Facilitate a more structured collaboration process for the Operations Committee and Consumer Caucus to develop customized a training and coaching plan for consumers on how decisions are made on the Commission and make data presentations more accessible to consumers.
- In order to better prepare Commissioners with planning and decision making, the Commission should continue efforts around ongoing education and training on COH structure, role and processes. In addition, the Commission should consider periodic assessment/review of its structure, processes (such as service standards development, allocations/reallocations, and service category prioritization) and define desired outcomes and examples of what an “effective planning body” constitutes.
- Collaborate with the Consumer Caucus to identify strategies aimed at increasing ongoing participation of consumers in PP&A discussions, especially among consumers who identify as people of color, elderly, long-term survivors, Native Americans, and other communities disproportionately affected by HIV.

B. Assessment with Contracted Providers Responses²

Q1. Please describe the level of guidance you get from DHSP with respect to invoicing, budget development and budget modifications.

1. The process involves a lot of back and forth and detail that is unusual, and the spreadsheets are cumbersome.
2. Ongoing oversight on all dimensions. Usually high level of guidance provided, medium level during the COVID Era.
3. We receive sufficient guidance regarding invoicing, budget development and budget modification.
4. We've received very good, clear guidance from DHSP on budget development and modifications. They are highly responsive regarding invoicing, so there has been some lack clarify around invoicing for PFP portion of contract.
5. Our DHSP Program Managers and Finance Managers have always been accessible and more than willing to assist our program when needed.
6. Our DHSP team is most prompt and helpful when needed.
7. My project officer has been very helpful with all bud mods and invoicing
8. DHSP program managers are always available to assist and provide guidance.
9. DHSP gives adequate guidance in this area when needed.
10. Minimal
11. Guidance is generally provided when something needs to be revised. Over the years the budget process has become more tedious compared with funds that come directly from a federal source (HRSA, CDC, SAMSHA).

Q2. With respect to the process of program monitoring, how clear are you on the expectations prior to the site visit and monitoring?



Comments:

1. No information regarding audit has been provided yet.
2. Usually preparation materials are sent in advance.
3. There could have been clearer outlining of expectations prior to the site visit. Additionally, the site visit did not occur until the beginning of year 3, which was problematic.
4. Program managers convey expectations clearly prior to monitoring.
5. It seems that things are always changing. One year you get a great audit score and the next its terrible.
6. Seems like each year the expectations change. Moreover, not clear why a program that is in compliance needs to be reviewed every year. Moreover, there is a constant change in Program Managers. This creates a disconnect with understanding how a program operates. Program Managers need to go out into the field and witness programs in action.

Q3. Does DHSP regularly provide feedback on your performance? If so, is the feedback helpful? What is helpful about the feedback?

1. Feedback is always helpful. The more specific it is, the better.
2. Yes, DHSP provides feedback on performance that is helpful.
3. There is not regular feedback on the performance.
4. Our DHSP Managers regularly provide feedback on our performance. The feedback has always been helpful to improve our program policies and procedures.
5. We get regular communication from our program monitor. Updates and questions from finance are asked as needed.
6. Yes. The quarterly report is very helpful
7. Yes, DHSP provides helpful feedback to improve in areas of less strength. Also, if there is any programmatic issue, the feedback allows us to get back on track to achieve contractual goals.
8. DHSP provides feedback and about performance, goals etc.
9. No, and I think it would be nice to have a working relationship with all the program managers.
10. Feedback is generally provided in written form following a program review or if a grievance was submitted to DHSP.

Q4. Do you get feedback or technical assistance from DHSP on barriers and challenges reported on progress reports? If so, is that feedback or TA helpful? Please elaborate.

1. Yes, DHSP has been providing feedback and assisting us when we have questions. In particular, DHSP invited us to an MCC meeting where most providers were present so we could discuss our services and the referral process.
2. Needs to be on an ongoing basis. During the COVID period staff were redeployed to address the COVID Pandemic.
3. I don't recall a specific incident. However, I do believe they have been supportive regarding barriers and challenges.
4. No feedback is given on any challenges or anything specific that's reported in the monthly reports.

5. Feedback from our monthly progress reports is usually discussed during our annual program reviews. DHSP Program Managers often give examples of what other community facility programs with similar barriers and challenges are experiencing and how they are improving.
6. Our program monitor is most supportive and helpful.
7. None
8. Yes, we get feedback. DHSP always offers TA when needed, especially after a programmatic review, to address any issues identified.
9. Yes, TA is provided when requested. It has proven to be helpful taking a deeper dive into the contract expectations and clarify areas where we may have questions.
10. no- no feedback or suggestions.
11. Despite repeated requests for TA, no. One particular program continues to be challenged with reporting on one of the domains, and although we have requested TA, there has been no follow up.

Q5. With respect to the development of your DHSP contract, how would you describe the level of technical assistance and support provided by your assigned program manager and fiscal representative? (Please reference which RFP or service category you are referring to).

1. As it pertains to the fiscal portion, the process involves a lot of back and forth and detail that is unusual, and the spreadsheets are cumbersome. In addition, we had a lot of back and forth with the prior program manager. The service category is HIV Legal Services.
2. Education and Prevention-High TCM-Medium
3. Both assigned program manager and fiscal representative have been helpful. RCFCI service category.
4. N/A Were not involved in the development of the contract
5. XXXX* currently has three DHSP contracts: Medical Care Coordination Services, Ambulatory Outpatient Medical Services and Transportation Services. The transportation services contract is fairly new and was implemented during the pandemic. Unfortunately, we experienced a lack of guidance and/or communication with DHSP when trying to set up individual contracts with Metro. At the time, we didn't know who our assigned Transportation Program Manager was and could not get any response from calls and emails. We later found out that several managers had been temporarily reassigned to work on COVID-19 projects and/or were working from home. We currently have an amazing, supportive Transportation Program Manager!
6. We have an HE/RR contract and have had that contract for many years. The level of technical assistance is beneficial when needed - especially around audits.
7. I appreciate the offer of TA
8. At the beginning of 2022, we submitted our proposal for the HIV Biomedical PrEP Prevention RFP. During the application process, DHSP provided TA through webinars, provided an email address to submit any questions related to the RFP, and then posted the answers. Those tools allowed us to have a better understanding of submitting our proposal.
9. Technical assistance has been provided surrounding Benefits Specialty Services and has been helpful for frontline staff in delivering services, as well as managing the contract.
10. XXXX*- non existent but ok during audit XXXX*- minimal PH003772- great XXXX*- current is great, past was non existent XXX*- great

11. Most contracts have been in place for a number of years. Program Managers adhere to a strict definition of the contract language, but not very little how a program actually operates.

**XXXX = used to replace contract numbers to maintain anonymity.*

Q6. Do the RFPs provide clear instructions, directions, and/or guidance? If yes, how so? If no, in what ways are they unclear? What was your role in developing the application in response to the RFP? Please elaborate.

1. We did not reply to an RFP. We were asked to assume the delegation of duties from a current contract.
2. Multiple year funding, directions have been similar over the years. Was the lead on the application, and worked with staff on all stages of the submissions.
3. I do not recall. I was part of an in-house team that responded to the last RFP.
4. Did not develop the application. Were not employed with the organization at that time.
5. To my knowledge, the RFP instructions, directions and/or guidance seem to be clear. As the Program Manager, my role includes reporting, client numbers, etc.
6. N/A We have maintained the HE/RR contract for many years.
7. The administrative guidance and task are extremely cumbersome and take way too much time from our time
8. The RFP provided clear instructions regarding the staff required to implement and roll out the program and priority populations. However, it did not explain how the goals would be calculated. It was the program manager who explained that goals are calculated based on the assigned FTEs.
9. Yes, RFPs provide clear instructions. I have provided support in developing RFP application responses.
10. The RFPs are clear. The auditing is not consistent especially in BSS and MH. I was the main contact for the response.
11. As noted above, many contracts have been in place for many years. In my capacity at our organization, I wrote most of the applications. I have found the RFP's to be generally very clear.

Q7. Do you feel the county's process of awarding contracts for services is fair? Please explain.

1. Yes. It is transparent and provides due consideration of experience with the clients and area of service.
2. Yes. I believe there is an outside, independent County review panel.
3. Yes. In my experience for RCFCI services the RFP appeared fair.
4. Don't have sufficient information to answer this question.
5. I feel the process is fair. Contracts and funding are usually awarded to those areas and SPAs that need it.
6. Understanding what difficulty it must be to streamline processes and use pre-authorized agencies, it seems fair.
7. Yes. DHSP, in this last cycle has been fair.
8. I understand there is a review committee that evaluates each proposal. However, I am unaware

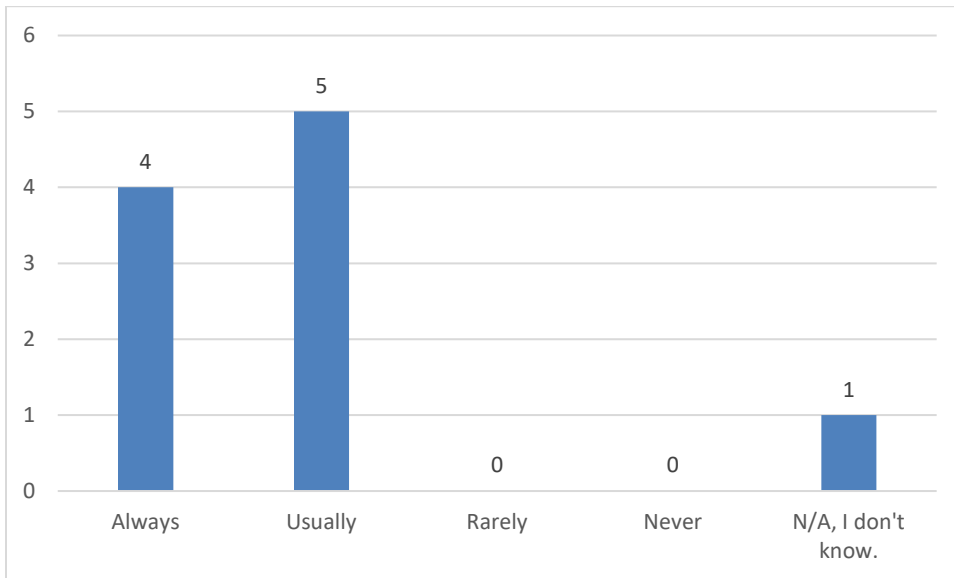
of how the review panel is chosen and how someone becomes part of it. I consider it should be more transparent to ensure there are no biases.

9. Yes, to my knowledge our agency has experienced fairness in awarding of contracts.
10. Yes
11. Yes; however, there continues to be some agencies funded that have a history of under-performing.

Q8. What are the most effective practices implemented by your agency to ensure that Ryan White program funds are spent efficiently? Please elaborate.

1. The team is established and is ready to receive referrals on trains, partners and the community.
2. Regular supervision meetings. Our award amount has remained basically the same for the past 14 years without a cost of living increase.
3. Ensuring that we have a full house and are able to bill for all available beds.
4. Internal controls on grant money spent provide a framework to ensure efficient use of program funds. These include internal approval processes, monthly financial reporting and accounts payable controls.
5. In-house audits.
6. The HE/RR contract is very specific. The guidelines are clear and reporting for both programming and financials are direct and easy to complete.
7. Targeting the right populations
8. Our agency has compliance tools that are reviewed quarterly to ensure all practices are followed, and funds are spent according to the contractual guidelines. Additionally, we submit our invoices and request feedback from the program manager or fiscal representative. If a discrepancy is identified, our accounting and program administrator correct the issue.
9. Continuous Quality Improvement efforts, through program monitoring, communication with DHSP, agency administration, management (finance, director etc) and frontline staff.
10. We have a dedicated fiscal manager. Programmatically we conduct internal audits.
11. Having finance and program administration staff who understand the contract, allowed expenses, and who work as a team to monitor expenses and respond in a timely manner with submitting budget mods.

Q9. DHSP issues payments within 30 days following submission of complete, accurate invoices, and submitted in a timely manner as stipulated by the DHSP contract.



Comments:

1. Payments are generally received in 45-60 days.
2. Much better than in the past.
3. However, it takes forever to receive an executed contract; often well-beyond the 90-days an agency is expected to "float" a program.

Q10. Are there other comments or feedback you would like to share about the County's procurement, contracting, and invoicing process? Please provide specific examples and suggestions for improvement.

1. No/None
2. Honor the agencies' individual Negotiated Indirect Cost Agreements (NICRAs). A 10% ceiling is too low.
3. N/A
4. I know that sometimes the payment takes longer than 30 days, regardless of submitting the invoice on time.
5. DHSP staff often inform an agency that they have 24-48 hours to respond to a request; however, it often takes DHSP many months to execute a contract or approve a budget modification. There have been occasions when a budget mod was approved after a contract ended. Agencies should be allowed to submit a final budget mod, with parameters, upon submission of a final invoice. DHSP staff need to go out into the field and gain an understanding of the programs they monitor. Most program staff at funded agencies returned to the office in 2021, yet DHSP staff continued to work at home. The optics of this was/is not great. This further demonstrates the disconnect with what happens in the field.

C. Key Themes

Sufficient to Very Good Guidance on Invoicing, Budget Development and Budget Modifications

With regard to the level of guidance received from DHSP around invoicing, budget development and budget modifications, comments ranged from “sufficient” to “very good” and “clear guidance.” Some respondents also appreciated the accessibility and assistance from program and fiscal managers for questions and technical assistance.

Mixed Reactions around Communication of Expectations Prior to Site Visits and Program Monitoring

While some of the responses noted that program managers conveyed expectations clearly prior to site visits, there were also comments that alluded to the need for clearer communication of expectations for program monitoring prior to the site visit and better explanation for changes in expectations from year to year. Some participants commented that frequent changes in program managers “create a disconnect on how a program operates.”

Contractors Receive Regular Feedback on Performance and Technical Assistance (TA) on Barriers and Challenges

In general, the majority of the comments, appear to show that DHSP regularly provides feedback on contractor performance and that the feedback is helpful in improving program policies, procedures, and assisting the agencies meet their contractual goals.

Some participants noted that the TA provided by DHSP has been helpful; an example was cited where an agency was able to interact with other providers to identify solutions to challenges and barriers.

A few participants indicated that they have not received TA or feedback on challenges they have reported in progress reports at the time when the survey was conducted.

Inconsistency with the Level of TA and Support Provided by Assigned Program Manager and Fiscal Representative

While many respondents described receiving helpful TA from their program/fiscal managers, some described inconsistencies with regard to guidance and communication. Some agencies with multiple service contracts are assigned different program managers.

Experience with the County’s Request for Proposals (RFP) Process

Several participants noted that their contracts have been in place for several years and remarked that the County’s RFP instructions appear to be clear, however, directions regarding auditing could be more uninformed across service categories and how service target goals are calculated for contracts could be better explained to agencies.

The County's Process for Awarding Contracts for Services is Fair

Overall, the participants noted that the County's process of awarding contracts is fair and transparent.

Agencies Have Established Internal Practices to Ensure that Ryan White Program (RWP) Funds are Spent Efficiently

Based on comments provided under question #8, it appears that contracted agencies have developed organizational and administrative practices to ensure that RWP funds are utilized efficiently. These practices include internal audits and compliance tools, continuous quality improvement efforts, regular supervision meetings, and targeting the right client populations.

Payments within 30 Days Have Improved

Respondents noted that DHSP issues payments in general, within 30 days, following the submission of complete and accurate invoices; one comment indicated that the payment turnaround time has improved.

Suggestions for Improvement

The survey participants offered the following suggestions for improving the County's procurement, contracting and invoicing process:

- Continue to improve payment turnaround cycles within 30 days.
- Expedite or shorten the length of time it takes to execute a contract or approve a budget modification.
- Ensure uniformity in the information communicated by program and fiscal managers to contracted agencies.
- Ensure timeliness and consistency of technical assistance provided to agencies regarding programmatic and fiscal challenges and questions.

The general comments collected from this AAM reflect the recurring themes from previous AAMs, such as consistency of information received from DHSP, setting clear expectations for audits/site visits; and lengthy RFP process. It is important to note that the lengthy RFP process cited by some survey participants is a County-wide issue. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (BOS) has charged the Quality and Productivity Commission, in consultation with the Small Business Commission, and Citizen's Economy and Efficiency Commission, to seek innovative ways to streamline the County's contracting process, assist businesses, and identify potential cost savings to County operations. As a short-term response, the County's *Doing Business* site was revamped to make it more community friendly and the County hosts quarterly technical assistance events for the public and vendors.

In addition, DHSP has an ongoing collaboration with the Commission on HIV's Black Caucus to address and strengthen the organizational capacity of Black-led and Black-serving agencies so that

they can be better prepared to successfully compete for and maintain HIV prevention and care contracts with DHSP. DHSP has also established a partnership with a third-party administrator, Heluna Health, to issue HIV prevention RFPs. This administrative process may offer additional opportunities to expedite Ryan White CARE RFPs and contracts. Despite the bureaucratic challenges associated with a large municipal government the size of Los Angeles County, DHSP continues to improve various administrative mechanisms to ensure that life-saving services reach people living with HIV in a timely and efficient manner.

² n=11 providers