

THE CHALLENGES OF SERVICE INTEGRATION EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS AND/OR COLLABORATION IN NAPA COUNTY

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INTRODUCTION

County Social Services Directors, politicians, other public and private entities acknowledge that it takes a Village to accomplish the goals of Welfare Reform. Social Services Agencies can not change a 60 year old program by themselves. The entire community must unite in partnership and/or collaboration to secure more and more quality training slots, create more jobs, expand child care capacity, improve and increase more accessible transportation, create more reasonable housing and more accessible counseling services. Even though our Social Services Agencies are huge, they still need the assistance and support from community based organizations, faith based organizations, private sector and other public agencies to eliminate duplication and maximize our resources for additional food, housing, jobs, and child care. Partnership and/or collaborative networking bridges together the maximum resources and supportive services for our CalWORKs' recipients to become independent of welfare and successful members of our society.

Even though Alameda County is on the right track in collaborating with public, private and community based organizations, we still have some distance to go. Therefore, it is worthwhile for Alameda County to observe and consider successful collaboration in other counties such as Napa County. Napa County has spent years in these efforts and has been very successful in developing partnerships and collaboration with public and private organizations which I

will describe in this report.

DEMOGRAPHICS

As Alameda County Social Services Agency struggles to achieve an outstanding partnership arrangement with the community, we must remind ourselves that we are a large cosmopolitan society compared to Napa's rural society. Each County's geography and demography are unique, and pose different challenges. For example, Alameda County's adult population is over 1 million compared with Napa's adult population of less than 93,000(see appendix 1). Alameda County's recipients on aid and receiving unemployment benefits are 83,569 compared with Napa's 3,835 (see appendix 2).

Counties should share their collaborative efforts with each other; however, each County must approach a method that works best for it.

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS IN NAPA COUNTY

Under the leadership of Terry Longoria, Health and Human Services Director, Napa County has been developing partnership and collaboration with other county departments and community based organizations. County Health and Human Services were merged in order to form multidisciplinary teams to serve our clients in a more comprehensive and holistic capacity. Units consist of a broad number of

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services such as alcohol and drugs, mental health, children protection, public health and others. The main issues focus around multiproblem families in one facility. It also allowed the County to financially streamline its administration department and redeploy the savings towards client services. The merger validates their core value which states “We foster team work, professional development, technology advancement, innovation and efficient use of resources”.

The Health and Human Services Department is not merged with Training and Employment Center (TEC). These are separate departments; however, they have jointly developed and operated the Get-a-Job program for Living Skills Project, FSET, and training for the chronically mentally ill.

In implementing Welfare Reform, the two agencies are redefining their roles and partnership. Currently, TEC provides all the case management activities and develops the work plans with the clients. For continuity and clarity, Human Services is proposing that the Eligibility Technicians provide eligibility, facilitate the Curtis Seminar, and work with the clients to develop a welfare to work plan; that the TEC staff provide more detailed ongoing case management; that adult education staff continue to provide the Job Club (adult education generates ADA reimbursement for each participant in Job Club).

Napa County has been very creative in developing an award winning Training and Employment Center called One Stop Career Center which offers comprehensive training services, adult basic education, GED certification programs, alternative high school programs, skills training, labor market information, vocational assessment, independent skills training, day care, and out-placement services for public and

private employers leading to a seamless service delivery system for the workforce. This model consists of seven state agencies and numerous local government, education, non-profit and business partners.

Directors of the various departments are assessing the ability to share clerical support, supplies, equipment, and possibly administrative staff to further reduce duplication.

Not only has Terry Longoria been able to develop mergers and partnerships within the County’s family, she has created an environment to develop comprehensive partnerships and/or collaboration with the community organizations for more than four years. She has been very fortunate to have the ex-Human Services Director, Dan Corsello, who formed several coalitions in the County of Napa to better serve their community by eliminating competition for funding and duplication of services. These coalition groups consist of public and private sector and elected officials.

There are several collaborative groups in Napa County but the oldest and the most successful group is the Food Coalition. The Food Coalition group demonstrates how a community can eliminate duplication and maximize their resources in serving their community. This group has raised money to feed the needy individuals and families. They have developed a high level of faith and trust among themselves, whereby they can objectively put a large amount of money in the center of the table and determine the most needy facility to allocate the funds. It is amazing how they supported each other organizationally. For example, a community based organization (CBO) received \$70,000 to provide meals-on-wheels. The CBO contracted with the State Correctional facility (who is part of the coal-

tion) to prepare the meals. During the coalition meeting the CBO complimented the Correctional facility staff on their excellent meals and stated how fortunate they were to have them as a partner. They have definitely streamlined the system and have demonstrated a more effective way to deliver services.

The other coalition groups are transportation, education, employment/training and health.

Dan Corsello, the Executive Director of the Non-Profit Coalition attends all the coalition committee meetings. As Human Service issues develop, Dan Corsello provides advance notice to Terry Longoria. She is well prepared at the coalition meetings, whereby she is able to offer funds to offset activities such as day care costs or better automation system. Terry Longoria is fortunate to have the county the size of Napa and to have the internal and external staff support.

SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP AND/OR COLLABORATION

During my observation of the meetings and my interviews with staff in Napa County, the following skills were observed for a successful collaborative partnership:

1. **Leadership:** There must be a leader who can create and communicate an inspiring image of the future and enroll others in its pursuit. People work with greater commitment when they are guided by a vision and believe their efforts can make a difference. However, the pressures of daily work often distract people, narrowing their focus and restricting their view of what is possible. By sharing their vision and values, leaders keep the mission out front, like a beacon, guiding people toward greater achievement. Alameda County has excellent skills in this area. We are able to inspire others with our vision, values and mission.
2. **Facilitator:** The group needs a facilitator to help people stay focus on the task at hand and create and maintain a safe environment for participation and working together. Occasionally, Alameda County does not have a nonparticipatory facilitator for the meetings and we seem to loose focus of the task at hand and as a result we accomplish very little. If the facilitator participates in the discussions, he/she must keep the group focus.
3. **Staff Support:** Each project needs someone to be assigned the on-going responsibility of scheduling the meetings, minute taking, and other support services for the group. This function is a necessity. Alameda County has struggled with this concept but realizes the need to have adequate staff support. Frequently, one of the participants takes minutes and provides other support services.
4. **Continuity:** It is important for the same team members to attend all meetings for continuity. Alameda County has designated the same person to participate on a committee, for continuity. Occasionally, the same person does not attend the meeting from the community and this has created problems.
5. **Investment of Time:** The participating agencies must be willing to free up people to devote time to the project. A collaborative effort requires the participants to have the authority to speak for the agency they represent, and who share the vision. Sometimes that requires contri-

bution of money even if small amount. Recently, we have found that you have stronger ties if you merge funds for a joint project.

6. **Building Trust and Ownership:** In order to move from a group of people with distinct identities who happen to have a common interest, to a partnership with a collective identity and a mission, it is first necessary to build trust. In order to downplay competition among members, and to establish a committed partnership, trust must be two-ways, and must continue to grow throughout the life of the program. Alameda County continues to struggle in this area. We continue to compete and to maintain our individual ownership of the programs and resources. We must continue to remind ourselves that trust is a two-way stream and we must allow ourselves to trust one another and allow ourselves to grow together throughout the life of the program and activity.
7. **Give and Take:** Each participant must be prepared to “bring something to the table”, and must be aware that each will not always take something back. A collaboration must be focused on the mission—and what each member can offer—rather than on the individual needs of the members. Napa County is excellent in this area. The County as well as other organizations are willing to find extra resources to support a program. Alameda County must be willing to give and take as we seal our partnership relationship with others.
8. **Involvement in the Community:** Participants must become visible in the community. It is important to attend meetings of other groups, including social functions, so that members are identified as being involved with—and caring about—the people of the community. This is

what makes the project real, both to the people who live there, and to the project participants. This is where the passion for the mission comes from. Napa County is very involved with their community. Many workers are on private, public and community board of directors. They also participate in fundraising activities during the day, evenings, and weekends. Alameda County must become more visible in the community during non-work hours. We must be more committed and involved in other agencies activities and policy development.

OBSTACLES

The main obstacle the County faces in its efforts to accomplish collaboration is shortage of time; time must be invested in forming coalitions; developing and maintaining trust in the participants; creating a shared mission; building and sustaining relationships. Another obstacles are the location and appropriation of funds, the investment and ownership of the mission and the difficulties associated with the implementation of the collaborative groups.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Alameda County needs

- Facilitators to help group members stay focus on their tasks.
- Staff Support to assume responsibilities such as scheduling of meetings, minute taking, and other support services for the groups.
- Team members to attend meetings and be aware of what is happening in their committees.
- To give team members the authority to make

decisions and commit funds for joint projects, if needed.

- To build trust by downplaying of competition among members and sharing ownership of the programs and resources.
- To become involve and visible in the community.

APPENDIX I

Average Bay Area Aid And Unemployment Insurance Recipients
 Napa County
 1996-1997

County	Total Adult Population	Total Aid and Unemployment Recipients ⁽¹⁾	Labor Force ⁽²⁾	Percentage Of Labor Force	Percentage Of Total Aid and Unemployment Insurance Recipients			
					AFDC	General Assistance	Unemployment Insurance	Food Stamps Only
Alameda	1,046,285	83,569	690,900	12.1	37	10	18	35
San Francisco	630,555	41,344	407,475	10.1	26	32	20	22
Solano	271,310	16,363	175,583	9.3	49	4	30	17
Santa Cruz	193,042	12,177	142,375	8.6	28	1	49	22
Contra Costa	682,350	31,461	461,600	6.8	45	7	31	17
Napa	92,745	3,835	58,217	6.6	31	1	36	32
Sonoma	327,445	14,560	233,267	6.2	38	4	31	27
Santa Clara	1,255,895	53,076	913,167	5.8	44	6	28	22
Marin	193,490	5,231	132,054	4.0	25	5	37	33
San Mateo	555,105	13,400	381,996	3.5	28	7	40	25
Bay Area Total	5,248,222	275,017	3,596,633	7.7	37	11	26	26

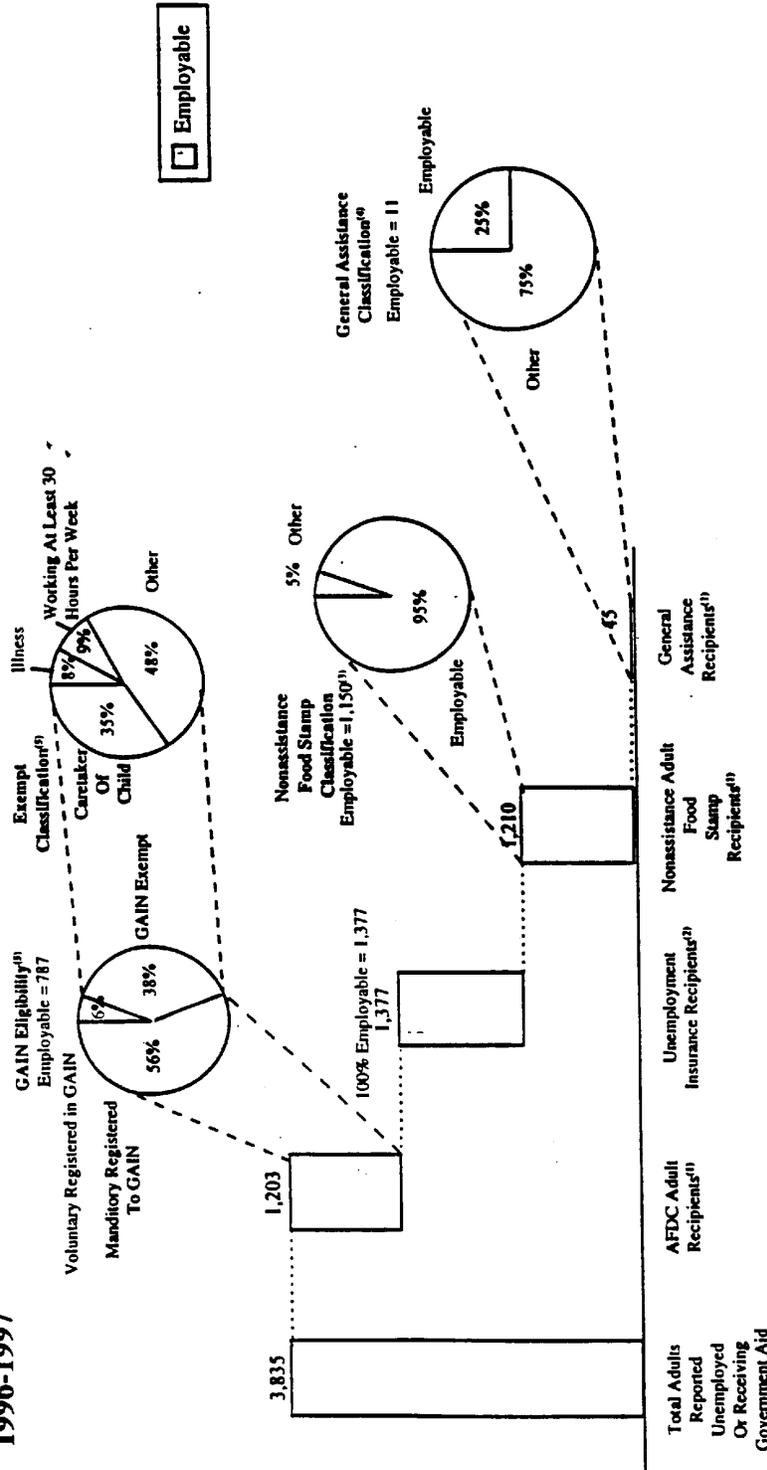
Source: (1) State-reported County Social Services data, County Social Services data, Employment Development Department UI Claims Activities Report; A.T. Kearney analysis

(2) LMID average for fiscal 1996-97; June 1997 estimated by averaging of two prior months

A.T. Kearney 19/5757/8A 9

APPENDIX 2

**Employability Of Aid And Unemployment Insurance Recipients
Napa County
1996-1997**



- Notes:**
- (1) State-reported County Social Services data for fiscal 1996-97; June 1997 for AFDC and GA estimated by taking average of two prior months; NAFS adults estimated by taking 70% of total nonassistance recipients less GA recipients, who are assumed to be receiving both GA and food stamps. December 1996-April 1997 NAFS persons estimated by 1.5 times county-reported NAFS households
 - (2) E.D. UJ Claims Activities for fiscal 1996-97; estimated by Intrastate Weeks Claimed divided by number of weeks in month
 - (3) Estimate assumes majority of those receiving food stamps only are employed
 - (4) Estimated 25% employable; other includes permanent and temporary disabled and exempt
 - (5) County Social Services percentages reflect breakdown for March 1997

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APPENDIX 3

Individuals Interviewed

Terry Longoria, *Director of Health and Human Services*

Donna DeWeerd, *Director of Training and Employment Center*

Teresa Zimny, *Program Manager*

Judy Brain, *Supervising Eligibility Technicians*

Ismail Akman, *Staff for Health and Human Services*

Dan Corsell, *Executive Director of the Non-Profit Coalition*