

COUNTY SERVICE CENTER GROUP

CSCG MISSION STATEMENT:

The County Service Center Group is committed to maintaining a membership organization which promotes continuous learning and the exchange of information and ideas between California County Medi-Cal/Food Stamp Service Centers. We partner in an ongoing effort to improve work processes and deliver quality service in a professional, timely and efficient manner.

CSCG Member Counties:

- Contra Costa
- Sacramento
- San Francisco
- San Mateo
- Santa Barbara
- Santa Clara
- Santa Cruz
- Solano
- Sonoma
- Tulare
- Orange
- Monterey
- Riverside

Managing Quality AND Quantity

InTelegy has had the good fortune to work with 13 of the 58 counties in California. That is 22% - a statistically valid sample. There is no doubt that each of you cares about serving your customers and ensuring that they properly receive the benefits that they are entitled. This issue tackles the issue of managing Quality AND Quantity of work produced. They are not mutually exclusive - either /or. Quality and Quantity can both be accomplished. In fact, managing Quality is the more difficult business process. Once you start to manage quantity of work produced on an individual level, the quantity of work produced starts to manage itself.

Managing quantity of work on an individual basis is, however, a different mindset and CHANGE is hard. Most service centers have succeeded in measuring call service levels, abandonment rates, average talk times, tasks assigned and tasks completed and the other *Call Center 101* measurements. But this is not enough. WHY? Because these economic times require that we get the most with the limited resources we have AND maintain high quality levels. Every service center should be tracking and reporting the quantity measures in calls and tasks completed by EW for an interval of time (hour, day, week, month).

The good news is that in a service center environment, measuring and managing the quantity of work at the individual level is not hard. The reporting mechanisms are in place and the organization structure supports this kind of daily and weekly measurement. On the next page read about how Tulare County doubled productivity by implementing these measurements. You will find the results outstanding and the effort to get those results minimal. It is worth it, give it a try.

To hear more about managing to the numbers join us for the next CSCG quarterly conference call on Tuesday, November 17th at 11:00 am. ~Vail Dutto, CEO

IN THE NEWS: COUNTY SERVICE CENTER UPDATES

Sacramento—The Department of Human Assistance’s Imaging Project has now completed the imaging of 153,000 continuing cases – 3 months ahead of the original schedule, under budget and with good quality. The next phase is to implement the imaging of all mail in a central location. We are also assessing the cost effectiveness of some options for additional imaging.

Santa Clara County—is gearing up to add Food Stamps to their Service Center in November. Their name will change from Medi-Cal Service Center (MCSC) to Benefits Service Center (BSC). Cross training for Medi-Cal Eligibility Workers in Food Stamps is underway and the current facility is being expanded to handle the additional Food Stamp staff.

San Francisco County—In June, the San Francisco Food Assistance Service Center launched BenefitsSF.org offering online Food Stamp applications in English, Spanish and Chinese. During the first 2 months, BenefitsSF.org saw 1964 visitors, completed 1442 screenings, and 741 applications were submitted.

Riverside County—Please help us welcome Riverside County’s Department of Public Social Services to the CSCG Membership! Riverside County launched their service center project in September 2009 and is currently in the Strategy and Planning phase. Riverside hopes to have a service center operation up and running in the summer of 2010. Riverside County will be the largest CSCG member to date.

These are the measurement categories that every service center should be measuring. Identify the specific goals for your center, communicate the expectations to the staff and report against these measurements daily, weekly and monthly.

Service Measurements:

- **Service Level:** % of calls answered in a set amount of time
- **Abandoned Rate:** % of calls "abandoned" or hung-up before being answered
- **Avg. Speed of Answer:** what is the average speed in which all calls are taken?
- **Tasks Assigned vs. Tasks Completed:** is the organization completing enough tasks to keep up with flow of work
- **Critical Task Backlog:** what backlog, if any, is there of critical tasks including re-certifications and quarterly reports

Efficiency Metrics:

- **Calls/EW/Logged in Hour:** how many calls each phone EW takes during their time logged into the ACD?
- **Tasks Completed/EW/Week:** How much work is each individual EW completing every day, every week

Essential Reporting-

- **ACD Reports-Daily & Weekly-** statistics at the individual eligibility worker, unit and service center levels
- **Daily Task Management Reports-** Daily statistics at the individual eligibility worker level including tasks assigned, tasks completed, tasks overdue
- **Weekly Dashboard Report-** Day by day trends in phone and task statistics, unit summaries and averages
- **Monthly Dashboard Summary-** Summary of daily statistics for the center, trends from previous months and high level outcome measurements

Supervisors Management Practices have changes—

One of the biggest changes in a service center is the way in which the eligibility supervisor manages their staff. Before the service center supervisors were focused on the case work; client escalations, case reviews and helping eligibility workers with complex benefits questions. In the times when staff numbers were high, this focus was OK. We are not in those high budget, high staff times. What the service center operation has brought to the supervisor's role is the management of individual productivity and overall efficiency management. This new role allows service center organizations to manage increasing workloads with their existing staff.

One great example of this focus on metrics management, with amazing results, is Tulare County. In just under two years since they launched in December 2007 their caseload has almost doubled and there has been a gradual decline in staffing due to the County's hiring freeze.

What changed? The way in which Supervisors managed their staff. The focus on individual and team accomplishments ensured that when the workload increased (both for tasks and phone calls) and staff decreased, the service center could still meet and exceed their client's expectations.

So what did Tulare do? They implemented what every service center should have in place; reporting and supervisor practices that focus on the right things every day. Tulare developed a Productivity Calculator that enables easy "apples to apples" comparisons of productivity at both the individual and team level – for both case maintenance tasks and phone calls. With task management the supervisors are managing the number of tasks completed per worker, every day. The results are in and tasks completed by EWs have increased by 36% in the last 7 months, with an average of approximately 200 tasks/EW completed each month. On the phones the supervisors are managing calls/EW/Day averages as well as average handle time (talk time + after call work) to ensure the most efficient call handling with superior client service. Phone EW staff are now handling 18% more calls per hour worked than 8 months ago. Wrapped around this productivity management is a thorough quality review process which includes call review today and, soon to come, task review for every worker. Phone Supervisors use ACD reports daily, Case Maintenance Supervisors use weekly and monthly task reports and all supervisors communicate individual results to their staff on a weekly and monthly basis through focused one:one meetings that are metrics driven.

The results- Tulare averages 90% of calls answered in 20 seconds, they have no backlog of case work tasks and have achieved consistently good quality assurance ratings (in both a recent state audit and in internal QA reviews).

~Carole Dotson
Director of Consulting

UPCOMING CSCG NEWS:

CSCG Quarterly Conference Call — Mark your calendars for the next CSCG conference call, Tuesday, November 17th at 11:00am. We will discuss Managing to Metrics. Your invitation and conference call access information will arrive in your email inbox. Contact [Margaret Condie](#) if more information is needed.

Are you a non-service center client?— InTelegy would be happy to meet with you to discuss how we can help you improve your client services. Just follow this link: Intelegy.com

We welcome member participation. Feel free to share your ideas, author a column, or refer a new member. Contact CSCG group administrator, Margaret Condie at: margaretcondie@intelegy.com or 925-786-8431.