

APPENDIX A: SURVEY SAMPLING AND ATTRITION

The sampling design for this study was complex. It involved surveys of four different types of staff in welfare offices in five counties. In some counties there were multiple offices. Separate samples of AOD and MH providers, and clients who had been served by them, were drawn in four of the counties. Because many AOD clients are not discharged, but “maintained” on methadone, a subsample of methadone providers was necessary. Separate samples were required for discharged DV clients. At each of the AOD/MH/DV providers, a separate sampling of clients who were currently in service was necessary for client satisfaction surveys.

In conducting each of these surveys, we tried to balance needs for representative sampling and low attrition with the needs to protect staff from excessive demands. The demands were both on line level staff who had to fill out forms and on supervisors who had to arrange time and logistics to make it possible. We are grateful to all of the staff that participated! More detail on sampling is available in the supplemental report available from CIMH entitled *Survey Results*.

The strengths and weaknesses of the sampling can be seen more clearly if we discuss for our samples the four types of errors that occur in surveys:

- **Coverage error** – When a sample does not include all elements of a population of interest, it is termed coverage error. In this study there were several sources of coverage error. First, although a study of six counties, only five welfare departments were surveyed, for reasons explained below. Second, AOD and MH data were solicited in only four of the counties. Third, although DV agency was solicited in four counties, only two were able to participate. Finally, in sampling AOD and MH clients we chose for logistic reasons to sample only clients in larger providers, so if clients attending services in small providers are different in some way, our sample design does not reveal it.
- **Sampling error** – All surveys involve some random sampling error. The most important factor in sampling error is sample size. And, since much of our interest is in the differences between counties, what really counts is the sample size in each county. These ranged considerably in the different surveys, as seen below. In addition, because we were not always able to make the size of the sample proportionate to the size of the population (which in some instances was unknown), the “total” column for each table may over- or under-represent particular counties.
- **Bias** – Survey instruments themselves may create bias in the way in which they ask questions or even the order in which questions are asked. Bias may also occur due to misunderstanding about the sponsorship of the study (in this case, some clients obviously thought the agency where they received services was the sponsor). We have attempted to minimize these sources of error by multiple revisions of the survey instruments in consultation with county representatives and by standardized instructions for how client surveys were to be administered.
- **Attrition error** – If not everyone who is selected for the sample returns the survey form, bias may occur. This is not inevitable, but usually people who do not return surveys

differ in some relevant way from those who do. The tables below show the sample size and response rate for each of the surveys. The most problematic was eligibility workers in Los Angeles, as the method of distributing surveys to staff in each office was not standardized.

Sample Sizes and Response Rates

Kern County¹

	Returned	Sampled	Percent Returned
Eligibility Worker	111	284	39.1
Eligibility Supervisor	21	40	52.5
Employment Counselor	66	104	63.5
Employment Supervisor	7	21	33.3
Behavioral Health AOD Discharge	41	46	89.1
Behavioral Health MH Discharge	26	114	22.8
Behavioral Health AOD Satisfaction (Open cases)	25 ²	46	54.34
Behavioral Health MH Satisfaction (Open cases)	55	114	48.24

Stanislaus County

	Returned	Sampled	Percent Returned
Eligibility Worker	130	188	69.1
Eligibility Supervisor	18	18	100.0
Employment Counselor	54	75	72.0
Employment Supervisor	2	17	11.8
Behavioral Health AOD Discharge	33	45	73.3
Behavioral Health MH Discharge	18	40	45.0
Behavioral Health AOD Satisfaction	26	45	57.8
Behavioral Health MH Satisfaction	51	65	78.5
DV Discharge	21	21	100.0
DV Satisfaction	21	21	100.0

¹ The domestic violence program did not participate.

² There were 79 returned surveys that indicated AOD or MH services. There were 25 AOD and 38 MH surveys but 11 showed both MH and AOD services being received, and it was impossible to determine in which system they belonged. Another six did not indicate either. We have assigned these cases to MH. This is a reasonable assumption because the main CalWORKs program is in Mental Health but explicitly serves persons with a dual diagnosis; it also fits the sampling proportions.

Monterey County

	Returned	Sampled	Percent Returned
Eligibility Worker	89	94	94.7
Eligibility Supervisor	19	20	95.0
Employment Counselor	20	23	87.0
Employment Supervisor	4	4	100.0

Los Angeles County

(These figures are for the two of the six service regions that were in our study.)

	Returned	Sampled	Percent Returned
Eligibility Worker	426	1354	31.5
Eligibility Supervisor	110	157	70.1
Employment Counselor	172	255	67.5
Employment Supervisor	26	37	70.3
AOD Discharge	114	150	76.0
AOD Satisfaction	176	237	74.3
MH Discharge	105	150	70.0
MH Satisfaction	119	212	56.1
Methadone Discharge	36	40	90.0
DV Discharge ³	58	150	38.7
DV Satisfaction	59	170	34.7

³ Because there was no list of CalWORKs eligible in DV programs from which to draw a sample, this number of surveys was distributed to the DV agencies. This represents the maximum size of the sample; the number of eligible found by staff may have been smaller.

Shasta County⁴

	Returned	Sampled	Percent Returned
Eligibility Worker	45	47	95.7
Eligibility Supervisor	7	9	77.8
Employment Counselor	29	30	96.7
Employment Supervisor	5	5	100.0
MH Discharge	9	30	30.0
MH Satisfaction	29	30	96.7
AOD Discharge	15	30	50.0
AOD Satisfaction	31	31	100.0

⁴ Two DV satisfaction forms were also returned.



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