



An Invitation to Join Together

This issue is dedicated to helping AAIR provider organizations work more easily with the AAIR program.

- First, by offering suggestions to help you and your staff get greater value from their participation in the AAIR program, by focusing on how Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) reports can help save programs and staff positions in this era of budget cuts and funding shortfalls.
- Second, by announcing a new electronic book written especially for AAIR providers. The book focuses on key issues related to substance misuse in American Indian/ Alaska Native communities, and offers articles, provider and client success stories, useful tips, referrals, and links to additional resources and organizations.

Where do you Stand on Completed GPRA Client Reports?

Using the AAIR voucher management system (VMS), you can get a Discharge and Follow-up GPRA Due Report, an easy-to-access report that includes due dates for follow-up client interviews.

The "GPRA Report Honor Roll" table lists AAIR providers who completed GPRA reports on nearly every AAIR client they saw. These providers include large and small organizations, as well as residential and outpatient facilities.

SAMHSA requires a completion rate of at least 80 percent for the 6-month GPRA follow-up interview. Providers are expected to contact all AAIR clients and complete the follow-up interview between 5 and 8 months after the date of initial client intake

If you have trouble locating clients for the follow-up interview, SAMHSA recommends gathering additional contact information during intake, such as phone numbers of relatives in regular contact with the client. When a provider falls behind the 8-month time limit for completing client follow-up interviews, the VMS prevents them from enrolling new clients.

Please check your Discharge and Follow-up GPRA Due Report on the Provider Reports section of the VMS. If this report indicates you have items pending, please complete them as soon as possible.

The GPRA Report Honor Roll

Provider Organization	Aggregated Follow-up Status	
	Completed	Other
dba Amity Foundation (Epidaurus)	1 100%	0 0%
First Nations Counseling Center	9 100%	0 0%
Klamath Community Treatment Center	21 91.3%	2 8.7%
Mendocino County Primary Purpose	3 100	0 0%
Native Directions, Inc.	17 94.4%	1 5.6%
San Diego American Indian Center	45 100%	0 0%
Tarzana Treatment Centers Main Office	7 100%	0 0%
Tule River Indian Health Center	47 95.9%	2 4.1%
United Indian Health Services	51 87.9%	7 12.1%
Whiteside Manor, Inc. Men's Residential	94 97.9%	2 2.1%
Women of Worth Recovery House	7 87.5%	1 12.5%

**Data source: 6 month follow-up GPRA reports filed by AAIR providers through April 30, 2009. Includes only clients enrolled in the AAIR program more than 6 months.*



Using GPRA Data to Market, Manage & Improve Your Programs

GPRA reports can help you improve access to and quality of treatment and recovery support services for AI/AN people. GPRA reports are collected at three points during contact with an AAIR client: at intake, at discharge, and six months following the initial intake. These reports produce detailed information about client experiences and provider performance in several important areas:

- Drug and alcohol use
- Employment and education
- Criminal justice
- Family and living conditions
- Social support
- Records management

The GRPA outcome reports can help you sustain, market, manage, and improve your programs more easily. Thanks to an arrangement with SAMHSA and CSAT (Center for Substance Abuse Treatment), AAIR providers can now receive individual outcome reports on their organization.

These reports will tell you at a glance how well your clients are doing. You'll also find out if clients are falling through the cracks. If that happens, staff may benefit from coaching to help them understand the importance of collecting GPRA data.

No "extra" staff work

Your staff and the clients are given a monetary incentive for successful completion of the

6-month follow up interview. You can conduct this follow-up interview between 5 and 8 months following initial intake.

Reach more people

How much do you know about the people you serve? Are they employed? Involved with the criminal justice system? Isolated? Homeless? GPRA reports provide answers to these and other questions.

When you look closely at the challenges your clients face today, you may identify new ways to reach more people or to be more effective with existing clients. You may also discover more effective approaches to reach the underserved, to provide them with needed care.



Manage your program

In these uncertain times, people may feel so busy and so stressed out, that it's hard to keep priorities in mind. It's not always easy to know what services are being provided most frequently. New staff may not know all they need to know to serve clients well, and at the same time, complete GPRA reporting requirements. That could mean lost opportunities for staff, clients, and your organization.

Improve your programs

You can use GPRA information as evidence of the value of services and programs you offer and proof of their effectiveness. Potential clients will be interested. So, too, will potential partner organizations and referral sources.

High GPRA follow-up rates show your ability and commitment to your clients. Positive GPRA outcomes demonstrate the success of the services your staff provides. Less-positive outcomes help you identify areas of your program that need improvement and may suggest areas for Technical Assistance & Training to address the changes needed.

GPRA reports can help you leverage your accomplishments and build relationships to sustain needed services beyond the life of the AAIR grant. GPRA opens doors to those who are committed to improving the lives of those they serve.

Tracing the pathways

GPRA data give us the ability to trace the pathways of recovery, as clients rebuild their lives. In an era of budget shortfalls and declines in funding, your positive GRPA results can help convince funders to continue support of your programs. Providers who track and report GPRA outcomes will gain a serious advantage with funding agencies today and in the years to come.

The AAIR program is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and administered by the California Rural Indian Health Board, Inc. (CRIHB). To learn more about AAIR, call toll-free: (866) 350-8772 or visit: www.crihb.org/AAIR

Tracking Client Outcomes to Support Provider Programs

What's working? How well is it working? GPRA data provide us with solid answers to these questions. GPRA results provide accurate measures of the impact of services on clients. That's why provider organizations have a vested interest in GPRA outcomes—to help them save funding, preserve programs, reduce staff cuts, and attract increased support so they can continue to operate. Their survival may depend on it.

GPRA data: good for clients & providers

Funding agencies, provider organizations, staff, clients, families and communities all want mental health and substance abuse prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation services to work—to make a positive difference in clients' lives.

One of the most direct ways to hold onto funding in these tough times is to improve GPRA results and use these results as evidence of program effectiveness. GPRA offers:

- A means to measure progress toward goals;
- Insight into areas needing improvement;
- Direction as to where to focus changes;
- Lessons about what works and what doesn't.

GPRA gives us an effective tool for strengthening programs and for moving toward formation of a sustainable network of service providers and cultural programs that will continue this important work when AAIR ends in September 29, 2010.

We know AAIR providers have made a difference in clients' lives thanks to GPRA follow-up reports. These reports show that the services provided have had a positive and measureable impact on clients' lives. How much of a difference? The "Improvements Reported by AAIR Clients" table shows us exactly how much clients benefitted from the help they received.

Interventions provided to these clients led to dramatic increases in the number of people abstain-

ing from substance use and in the number who found employment—nearly 40 percent in each category. The number of clients finding housing also showed improved significantly, almost 30 percent. These outcomes show clearly how the AAIR program has improved the lives of 2452 AI/AN people as of July 17, 2009.

Falling through the cracks

Now, let's turn to another GPRA outcome:

- Completion rate of the six-month follow-up GPRA report for AAIR clients...under 50%

What does that tell us? The connection between AAIR providers and clients breaks down more than half the time. More than 5 of every 10 AAIR clients loses touch with their provider within 6 months. How do providers stay in contact with clients? Locator information is often important. Ongoing contact could also be critical to clients striving to stay clean and sober in areas with few aftercare services.

In an era of funding cuts, your positive GPRA results can help convince funders to continue support of your programs. Those who track GPRA outcomes will gain a serious advantage with funding agencies today and in years to come.

Improvements Reported by AAIR Clients in their Follow-up Interviews*

GPRA Indicator	Improvement
No substance use	increased 37%
No arrests	increased 5.5%
Found employment	increased 36.5%
Social connectedness	increased 4%
Housing	increased 28%

* Taken from aggregated GPRA reports gathered as of July 17, 2009.

Changes to Dental Voucher

Only 1 (one) Dental services voucher may be requested for each eligible client. Dental vouchers may be combined with one outpatient voucher or one recovery support services voucher, if needed, and used concurrently or consecutively within a single episode. The Dental voucher (valued at \$1,000) is valid for 90 days from date of issue. All other vouchers are valid for 60 days.

Does It Work? How to Measure Client Outcomes (and Why)

We all want to provide services effective to clients. But provider organizations often have a hard time showing that they “do a good job.” Finding evidence of successful programs is increasingly important to attract and sustain funding for drug and alcohol clinical treatment and recovery support services for American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) people.

Has your organization felt the impact of budget cuts? The AAIR program has.

Low client enrollment and low completion rates of the 6 month GPRA follow-up reports have led to a cut of \$250,000 from AAIR’s Year Three budget. To faraway decision makers, underutilized services suggest a program is not needed by the people it was meant to serve. At a time when nearly every healthcare program is searching for more money, it’s hard for funding agencies to understand how available funding goes unused.

Earlier this year, \$250,000 was cut from AAIR’s Year 3 budget. As the recession causes deeper cuts in treatment and recovery programs nationwide, provider organizations will compete with one another for fewer and fewer dollars for the foreseeable future.

Finding funding for Native programs

How can you increase the chances your organization will attract the funding and community support needed to fulfill its mission? Here are some tips to keep in mind when going after funding.

Need, alone, is not enough to convince funding agencies to make a grant award. Funders must be convinced that a program is **worth** funding.

Whether you are applying for grant money, competing for a contract, or appealing for community or corporate support, you increase your chances of success when you focus on the results your work produces—how well your organization does what it does. Follow these guidelines to increase your success when communicating about your organization:



- **Speak and write simply and clearly.** Assume your audience knows little about the issues involved.
- **Answer the question, “So what?”** Look for simple ways to show and tell people why they should care about your cause and how people are directly affected by what you do.
- **Use strong visuals and themes.** Photos, drawings, and metaphors bring your message to life and make your mission memorable to people inside and outside your circle of staff, volunteers, clients, and supporters.
- **Remember that numbers count.** Which of your programs

is *most* successful? How do you know? GPRA reporting makes it possible to be specific about the impact of your work on the lives of your clients.

- **Focus on success stories.** Stories emphasize the human side of an issue. Gather client stories about how they overcame obstacles and improved their lives through recovery. Stories remind clients, staff, and funding agencies alike that they CAN help themselves and others, too.

More than anything else, potential partners, allies, and funding agencies want to know about the results of your work.

When you tell strong stories about the people you’ve served and how their lives improved, and support these stories with evidence from GPRA outcomes, you make the best case for the value of your work. You’ll greatly increase your chances to make a positive impression on the people you want to reach.

Gathering solid GPRA data from clients and former clients gives you the ability to state specifically how well your programs perform. This ability is a key part of stating your case effectively in the search for continued funding.

If you have questions about completing GPRA reports or about using GPRA data to manage or improve your programs, be sure to contact AAIR administration at (916) 929-9761 or email: Randal.Vardan@crihb.net.

A New Resource for AAIR Providers

Many Pathways: The Access to American Indian Recovery (AAIR) Program Planting Seeds for Communities in Recovery

This book was written specially for AAIR providers, staff, partners, and allies. Here's an excerpt from the introduction:

An Invitation...

In this era of shrinking budgets and healthcare reform, Access to American Indian Recovery (AAIR) recognizes that ultimately we are all accountable for the health and wellness of our communities. We all have a role to play. With that idea in mind, we believe that working together is essential and that forming partnerships and collaborations among organizations is critical. This reference book is intended to support those efforts.

The book is built around the metaphors of healthy growth: planting, cultivating, harvesting and sustaining.

- It documents key activities of an Access to Recovery Tribal grantee and addresses the critical needs AAIR faces in Year Two of this grant program: meeting client targets and increasing expenditures by motivating existing providers to enroll more clients and recruiting new providers to the program (planting);
- It includes materials that supplement training and technical assistance opportunities for providers (cultivating).
- It honors the achievements of AAIR provider organizations and their clients (harvesting).
- It provides links to key ideas and to a host of resources—many of them free or low-cost—for those engaged in the work of promoting community wellness and healing (sustaining). For none of us walks this path alone.

The book will be published electronically and distributed free of charge to all AAIR providers. You can then print a copy or save the file for future reference.

