

**Maricopa County Arizona  
Department of Public Health**

**Assessment of the Administrative Agency  
Ryan White Part A Grant  
Phoenix EMA  
July 2011**

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## Purpose of the Report

Knowledge Capital Alliance, Inc. (KCA) was engaged to conduct an assessment of the Administrative Agency (AA) for Grant Year 2011 as mandated by the Ryan White Care Act (Sections 2602 and 2617). The focus of the 2011 assessment was: 1) the efficiency and effectiveness of the provider invoicing and payment process, and 2) the Administrative Agency's ability to implement the directives of the Ryan White Planning Council (RYPC). In addition, the 2011 assessment compares the data collected to the similar data collected for grant years 2009 and 2010.

## Assessment Methodology

KCA conducted a three-phased evaluation process to perform this assessment of the Administrative Agency. The three phases were:

**Phase 1:** Interviews with the Administrative Agent and the Provider Relations & Contracts Administrator

**Phase 2:** Surveys of the Ryan White Service Providers and the Ryan White Planning Council

**Phase 3:** Reviews of Administrative Agency Processes, Reporting Mechanisms, and Performance Data

The three-phased evaluation process was conducted during June - July, 2011 in Maricopa County, Arizona.

## Findings

The findings of the 2011 Assessment of the Administrative Agency are reported in three parts:

Part 1: Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Service Provider Invoicing and Payment Process,

Part 2: Administrative Agency's Ability to implement the Directives of the Ryan White Planning Council

Part 3: Overall Survey Comments.

A complete listing of the Service Provider and RWPC survey questions, answers, and comments can be found in Appendices 1 and 2 at the end of this document. KCA received a response rate of 93%% of the RWPC and 100% of the active Service Providers.

## Part 1 Findings: Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Service Provider Invoicing and Payment Process.

This year the AA IT resource was unavailable to provide specific data points regarding the actual number of days to process invoices. However, the survey results (see below) identify that the turnaround time to process invoices continues to improve.

There are currently five measures of efficiency and effectiveness regarding service provider invoicing and payment processing. These five measures are reflected in the table below. The average time to process a Service Provider's invoice was 23 days in 2011, down from 31 days in 2010, and down from 43 days in 2009. It should also be noted that the number of invoices which are not being processed and paid within 60 days was significantly reduced from 36 invoices in 2010 down to 13 in 2011.

Survey Item	2011	2010	2009	2010-2011 Change	Notes
Average number of days to process a Service Provider's Invoice	23 Days	31 Days	43 Days	-8 days	
<b>Minimum</b> turnaround time of accurate invoices (<60 days)	100%	90%	100%	+10%	# of Svc Providers - <30=6, 30-60=7, >60=0, Don't Know=2
<b>Average</b> turnaround time of accurate invoices (<60 days)	92%	80%	92%	+12%	# of Svc Providers - <30=1, 30-60=10, >60=1, Don't Know=2
<b>Maximum</b> turnaround time of accurate invoices (<60 days)	64%	63%	42%	+1%	# of Svc Providers - <30=0, 30-60=7, >60=4, Don't Know=2
Accuracy of payments	82%	79%	71%	+3%	
Number of invoices paid in greater than 60 days	13	36	26	-23	

*Note: Because the AA does not, currently, have the data points to determine when the invoices were accurately submitted, it is not possible to determine which late payments may be the fault of the AA and which late payments may not have been the fault of the AA. The AA is currently implementing OnBase (an electronic document workflow and management system) for billing practices which is anticipated to reduce reimbursement turnaround times and improve reporting capabilities. Testing and training for OnBase is to occur in August 2011.*

As of July, 2011, the AA is current on all invoice payments with the exception of those submitted late by the providers. During the past two assessment years (2009 and 2010), it was noted that the County year-end process often caused delays in payments to providers. The AA is not anticipating any delays in payments this year.

Survey results indicate that turnaround times continue to improve and the positive working relationship that was noted in last year's assessment continues between the RWPC, the Service Providers, and the Administrative Agency.

## Part 2 Findings: Administrative Agency’s Ability to implement the Directives of the Ryan White Planning Council.

A survey of the Planning Council gathered perceptions from the membership in two areas: 1) Did the Administrative Agency Implement the Directives of the RWPC in an accurate and timely manner? And, 2) Did the Administrative Agency accurately contract the funding allocated by the RWPC?

*RWPC Survey Results – Implementing Directives:* The RWPC strongly believes that the Administrative Agency has implemented the directives in an accurate and timely manner. The survey results showed that 90% of the RWPC members responding believe that the directives were implemented in a timely manner. This was up from 84% for the 2009 grant year and 1% lower than in 2010. The survey results also showed that 92% of the RWPC members responding believe that the directives were implemented in an accurate manner. This was up from 84% for the 2009 grant year and 1% lower than in 2010.

*RWPC Survey Results – Contract the Funding:* 91% of the RWPC members responding strongly believe that the Administrative Agency has accurately contracted the funding allocated by the RWPC. This figure is up from 80 % in 2009 and 88% in 2010.

*RWPC Survey Results – Adequate Notification and Information:* 92% of the RWPC members responding strongly believe that the Administrative Agency provides adequate notification for the reallocation of funds. This figure is up from 80 % in 2009 and the same as in 2010. Additionally, 91% of the RWPC members responding strongly believe that the Administrative Agency provides adequate information regarding the reallocation of funds. This figure is up from 86% in 2009 and down from 92% in 2010.

Survey Item	2011	2010	2009	2010-2011 Change	Notes
Timely implementation of PC directives	90%	91%	84%	-1%	27 out of 28 respondents rated implementation as timely as always or almost always
Accurate implementation of PC directives	92%	93%	84%	-1%	19 out of 21 respondents rated accuracy as always or almost always
AA provides sufficient information to PC	91%	93%	82%	-2%	26 out of 28 respondents rated providing sufficient information as always or almost always
Accurate contracting of allocated funds by PC	91%	88%	90%	+3%	
AA provides adequate notification for reallocation of funds	92%	92%	80%	0%	
AA provides adequate information for reallocation of funds	91%	92%	86%	-1%	22 out of 24 rated adequate information as always or almost always

## Findings: Overall Survey Comments

In addition to the findings above, the RWPC and the Service Providers were asked to comment on a number of items related to the performance of the Administrative Agency such as the effectiveness of the AA's communication process and the current relationship between the Service Provider's organizations and the AA. The survey responses were very favorable indicating the positive relationship between the RWPC, the Service Provider organizations, and the Administrative Agency noted in last year's assessment continues to improve. Also, it is quite clear from the survey responses (see below) that the Administrative Agency continues to work very hard to establish an effective communication process. The renewed sense of collaboration between all parties which was evident beginning in 2009 continues to show improvement.

Survey Item	2011	2010	2009	2010-2011 Change
Communications between PC and AA	93%	91%	90%	+2%
Understanding of the role of the AA	98%	91%	87%	+7%
Understanding of the role of the PC	99%	96%	95%	+3%

## Recommendations

KCA provides the following recommendations:

1. The Administrative Agency should continue to use its comprehensive approach of 1) provider training, 2) group and individual workshops, 3) policy enforcement, and 4) operational support and assistance. These training activities and targeted technical assistance are producing significant results in both provider performance and enhanced communication between providers and the Administrative Agency.
2. The RWPC should continue to provide a comprehensive orientation regarding the roles and responsibilities of its members.
3. The Administrative Agency provide reminders to the Providers that there are two cycles where traditionally longer payment cycles due to matters beyond the AA's control (the July accounting close out from the County each year and the March Grant Year delay in receiving funding).
4. The Administrative Agency should complete the implementation of the OnBase billing process and work with the Grantor and the Maricopa County Finance Department to streamline the Grant and Fiscal Year-end payment cycle anomalies.
5. The Administrative Agency should continue to incorporate the experience of the "compliance-focused" Management Assistant to improve communication and understanding of expectations of performance for providers as well as members of the AA's staff.
6. The Administrative Agency should continue to provide workshops for its staff to help them understand some of the management limitations of some of the Service Providers. The current weekly team meeting structure provides the forums necessary to address these issues.
7. The RWPC continues to use a tool such as Survey Monkey to assess the Administrative Agency.
8. The RWPC and the AA should continue using year-over-year data review as a methodology for identifying trends and determining opportunities for continuous improvement.

## Appendix 1 – Service Provider Survey Results

#	Question	2011	2010	2009	2011 Comments
1	What is the minimum, average and maximum turnaround for payment of invoices accurately submitted to the Administrative Agency for your organization?	Minimum - <30=6, 30-60=7, >60=0, Don't Know=2 Average - <30=1, 30-60=10, >60=1, Don't Know=2 Maximum - <30=0, 30-60=7, >60=4, Don't Know=2	Minimum - <30=5, 30-60=4, >60=1 Average - <30=3, 30-60=5, >60=2 Maximum - <30=1, 30-60=4, >60=3	Minimum - <30=3, 30-60=9, >60=0 Average - <30=0, 30-60=11, >60=1 Maximum - <30=0, 30-60=5, >60=7	- Have only recently submitted 1st invoice for services.
2	How accurate are the payments of invoices by the Administrative Agency?	Accuracy = 82%	Accuracy = 79%	Accuracy = 71%	- Have only recently submitted 1st invoice for services.
3	In the last 12 months, how many invoices have taken greater than 60 days to process?	Total invoices > 60 days = 13	Total invoices > 60 days = 36	Total invoices > 60 days = 26	
4	Do you feel that the information you have to provide to the Administrative Agency for monthly billing purposes is:	About Right = 75% Too Much = 25%	About Right = 47% Too Much = 47%	About Right = 33% Too Much = 67%	- Our agency is paid at a per service rate not an expense reimbursement. Unfortunately, we still have to submit documentation as if we are being paid on an expense reimbursement basis. At times, it feels like double the work.
5	Changes were implemented in 2010 in the amount/type of documentation required in monthly billings. How would you rate these changes compared to the monthly billing requirements in 2009?	Question not asked in 2011	Much Better = 3 Better = 7 About the Same = 3		
6	Do you receive adequate technical assistance from the Administrative Agency for you to provide complete billing packets?	Adequate Technical Assistance = 90%	Adequate Technical Assistance = 79%	Adequate Technical Assistance = 81%	
7	Please rate your satisfaction with the availability, communications and technical assistance from the Administrative Agency.	Availability - 90% Communications - 88% Technical Assistance - 88%	Availability - 79% Communications - 79% Technical Assistance - 82%	Availability - 87% Communications - 77% Technical Assistance - 88%	-

#	Question	2011	2010	2009	2011 Comments
8	How would you describe the relationship between your organization and the Administrative Agency?	Relationship - 73%	Relationship - 84%	Relationship - 81%	
9	How would you describe the Ryan White Part A contracting process?	Ease of understanding RFP - 62% Time allotted for response - 62% Negotiation process/final contracting - 67% Awareness of reporting requirements, etc. - 67% Contract Monitoring (Site Visit) – 69%	Ease of understanding RFP - 67% Time allotted for response - 67% Negotiation process/final contracting - 65% Awareness of reporting requirements, etc. - 73%	Ease of understanding RFP - 62% Time allotted for response - 67% Negotiation process/final contracting - 73% Awareness of reporting requirements, etc. - 71%	
10	Do you need additional technical assistance or information from the Administrative Agency regarding any issues related to this survey?	1 "Yes" response, but no contact information entered.			
11	If you answered "yes" to the previous question and you would like us to provide your contact information to the Administrative Agency, please provide the following information".	No contact information	No one requested technical assistance.	No one requested technical assistance.	



## Appendix 2 – Planning Council Survey Results

#	Question	2011	2010	2009	2011 Comments
1	Please indicate your membership status on the Planning Council (please select all that apply).	General Public - 37% Institutional Member - 22% Service Provider Rep - 37% Not Sure - 4%	General Public - 38% Institutional Member - 24% Service Provider Rep - 34% Not Sure - 3%	General Public - 40% Institutional Member - 24% Service Provider Rep - 32% Not Sure - 4%	
2	Are the directives issued by the Ryan White Planning Council implemented by the Administrative Agency in a timely and accurate manner?	Timely - 90% Accurate - 92%	Timely - 91% Accurate - 93%	Timely - 84% Accurate - 84%	<p>Sometimes the feedback to the Planning Council regarding how well a directive can be implemented could be better. There have been times when a Directive was, in retrospect, unrealistic and the Council did not receive timely feedback.</p> <p>There have been times that a directive suggested at PRSA by a consumer/planning council member is not a viable option, but the way the process is set up, if a consumer/planning council member makes a suggestion for a directive and it is put on the board it has to be acted on. This has resulted in directives being implemented that were not necessary and were costly.</p> <p>As we all know, a planning council can direct at will; but HRSA guidelines and provider interest/availability need to be taken into account as we rate these answers. The AA</p>

#	Question	2011	2010	2009	2011 Comments
					<p>has always reacted appropriately to directives.</p> <p>The AA's office always does an excellent job in seeking guidance from the council or letting us know about impending changes that are coming forth .</p> <p>We're very fortunate to have the support and assistance of the AA's office.</p>
3	Does the Administrative Agency provide sufficient information to the Planning Council to allow them to monitor the implementation of the Planning Council directives?	Provide sufficient information - 91%	Provide sufficient information - 93%	Provide sufficient information - 82%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Again, this too has never been a problem .</li> <li>- Sometimes the feedback to the Planning Council regarding how well a directive can be implemented could be better. There have been times when a Directive was, in retrospect, unrealistic and the Council did not receive timely feedback.</li> </ul>
4	Do you feel that the Administrative Agency accurately contracts the funding allocated by the Planning Council?	Accurately contracts funds - 91%	Accurately contracts funds - 88%	Accurately contracts funds - 90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Whenever there are concerns, the AA's office comes to the Executive Committee first to ask that the full Council is made aware so that issues will be voted on .</li> </ul>
5	Does the Administrative Agency provide adequate information and notification to allow reallocation of funds to other categories if necessary to ensure that grant funds are managed according to Planning Council directives?	Provides adequate notification? - 92% Provides adequate information? - 91%	Provides adequate notification? - 92% Provides adequate information? - 92%	Provides adequate notification? - 80% Provides adequate information? - 86%	This has never been a problem .
6	As a Planning Council member, please rate the communication between the Planning Council and Administrative Agency.	Communications - 93%	Communications - 91%	Communications - 90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Needs to be aware of new members on the planning council and articulate the words for all acronyms</li> </ul>

#	Question	2011	2010	2009	2011 Comments
					<p>used to identify the various agencies and organizations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As one who almost always has a question of some sort, I think that the AA listens &amp; answers or seeks guidance from HRSA on how things should work.</li> </ul>
7	Do you understand the roles and responsibilities of the Administrative Agency and Planning Council?	Administrative Agency - 98% Planning Council - 99%	Administrative Agency - 91% Planning Council - 96%	Administrative Agency - 87% Planning Council - 95%	-
8	Please share any additional comments or information about the relationship between the Planning Council and the Administrative Agency.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The RW Planning Council is very fortunate to have an Administrative Agent and team that are so dedicated and knowledgeable for our community.</li> <li>- They are responsive, respectful and thoughtful.</li> <li>- I feel that the relationship is at a good place and I feel comfortable working with the PC and the AA</li> <li>- In my experience the Planning Council does not have enough participation from the general public and consumers. Most decisions are made in Committee meetings that are overwhelmingly attended by service providers and presented with limited discussion at the full Planning Council Meeting. The Council really needs to improve participation from the community.</li> </ul>

#	Question	2011	2010	2009	2011 Comments
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No coment at this time</li> <li>- Most are very respectful and polite. A few act as if they are doing a favor releasing the funds to the providers of service.</li> <li>- The Phoenix EMA AA is excellent. I especially appreciate their proactive attitude and would be very surprised if, when compared to other AAs nationally, our AA is not recognised as a model to be strived for by many.</li> <li>- Good job done by all .</li> <li>- Professional dedicated staff; Good interface</li> </ul>