2-1-1 California: Changing the Way Californians Find Help

2-1-1 is a free phone number and online database that connects Californians quickly and effectively to existing health and human service programs, joblessness support and disaster response information in their communities. It is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and in 150 different languages. The goal of 2-1-1 California is to ensure all California residents have access to 2-1-1 through a connected, statewide network. Currently, 92 percent of the state’s population has access to 2-1-1. Nationally, 2-1-1 covers 80 percent of the US population.

Examples of the Types of Services People Can Access by Calling 2-1-1

- **Food and Housing Resources**: CalFresh, rental and mortgage assistance.
- **Health Services**: health care for the uninsured or under-insured and prenatal care.
- **Mental Health and Crisis Support**: counseling, substance abuse assessment and treatment.
- **Income Support**: Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), job training, and education programs.
- **Help for Seniors and Disabled**: Meals on Wheels, home health care, and transportation.
- **Resources for Children and Families**: child care, after school programs, and family resource centers.
- **Emergency and Disaster Response**: information on evacuation routes, shelters, volunteering and charitable contributions.

The 2-1-1 Experience: Who is Calling and the Professionals Who Help Them

**The Callers:**
- 1.6 million Californians called 2-1-1 in 2009, 70 percent of whom were seeking health and human service needs.
- In Los Angeles in 2009, three of four callers were female, 56 percent were Latino and 70 percent had children in the family, half of whom were under 12 years of age.

**The Call Specialists:**
- 2-1-1 information and referral service providers connect people to trained specialists who can help them. Going beyond simply answering calls, they know how to communicate, glean information from the caller, probe for additional needs and make the appropriate referrals.

Benefits of Statewide, Connected 2-1-1 System

**Greater Efficiency and Cost Savings**
- Having one central number for state and local agencies streamlines referral process and reduces costs associated with multiple 800#s.
- Directs non-emergency calls away from 911 during times of disaster, allowing first-responders to better focus on emergency response.

**Critical Information Gathering**
- Local 2-1-1s track all calls received and are able to provide state and local agencies with critical information about on-going needs in the state broken down by geography, ethnicity, income and other factors.

**Costs of Building out 2-1-1 Network**
- Achieving statewide 2-1-1 coverage will require approximately $4 million investment in infrastructure, data integration, networking and training. Total annual operating costs estimated at $30 million.