State of Community Mediation 2019

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Part I: Overview

Small m, mediation, based in the community, in the United States was embedded within the 1964 Civil Rights Act in an effort to address racial, ethnic, class, and gender inequalities throughout the courts and legal action. In an effort to provide neighborhoods with localized conflict resolution services, multiple organizations sprouted nationwide.[1] The National Association for Community Mediation (NAFCM), the national organization supporting the work of community mediation, today represents a national network of community centers and provides a platform for information exchange, skills development, innovation, and promotion of the impact the community centers and their mediators have in their communities.

While the growth Community Mediation Centers (CMC) and the practice of community mediation developed in the shadow of the civil unrest of the 1960s, CMC do not provide social justice as typically defined. The purpose of community mediation is not to determine one "truth" or to balance unequal power dynamics rooted in social status, race, or gender. Instead, community mediation endeavors to create a supportive and safe environment that encourages free and open expression of everyone's respective truths. By strengthening relationships and supporting collaborative solutions, NAFCM member organizations and associates address social challenges through dialogue and the peaceful development of interest-based solutions.

In 2019, the National Association for Community Mediation (NAFCM) and our members mark the 25th anniversary of the establishment of NAFCM as the hub and voice of our members. NAFCM echoes the call to live out the 1964 Civil Rights Act to aid communities and individuals in resolving disputes, disagreements, or difficulties relating to practices that impair the rights of persons in their communities and threaten peaceful relations among them.

To mark this milestone, the JAMS Foundation awarded NAFCM a grant to support the administration of a data collection and reporting process to assess the state of community mediation in the US and Canada. NAFCM partnered with George Mason University's School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (S-CAR) to develop a two-prong data collection process. First, an on-line survey was administered in the Autumn of 2018, following as closely as possible the questions and style of the on-line survey administered by NAFCM in 2010. Second, the On-Line Survey were invited to join a pool of CMC from which a sub-set was selected to host structured listening sessions in late March and April of 2019. This is the final report of the findings from both the on-line Survey and the listening sessions.

The presentation of the data collection results follows the 9 Hallmarks that are the guiding principles of NAFCM. The Nine Hallmarks bind CMC and community mediators together in philosophy and practice. Each CMC is at a different stage of embedding and actualizing the Hallmarks into the culture, structure, and communication of their centers. Established after NAFCM's founding in 1994 and designed collaboratively by CMC, the Hallmarks anchor new and longstanding centers with shared values rooted deeply in community and collaboration.

This report presents the overall status of these centers as a whole and does not provide an assessment of any individual center. The report describes the Hallmarks through three distinctive lenses. The first lens is organizational capacity. Organizational capacity is the ability of an organization to fulfill its mission through a blend of sound management, strong governance, and a persistent rededication to assessing and achieving results.[2] This review of the internal mechanisms of CMC focuses on Hallmark 1 to Hallmark 5.

The second lens is system capacity. System capacity is the ability of the organization to work with affinity partners to ensure safety and security through increased ability to mediate and resolve disputes between individual members

[1] Established first, embedded in the Department of Commerce by the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Chapter 10, the expansion both within and outside the federal government of mediation programs began to take root in late 1960s and 1970s. In 1976, a National Conference on the Causes of Popular Dissatisfaction with the Administration of Justice, known as the "Pound Conference," resulted in "Neighborhood Justice Centers" in Los Angeles, California Kansas City, Missouri, and Atlanta, Georgia. These centers allowed people to access dispute resolution services and actively participate in crafting faster, cheaper, and often, more appropriate resolutions than crowded and overburdened courts could provide.

[2] https://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/sites/default/files/assessorgcapacity-slides.pdf.

as well as among groups. This would include the capacity to identify problems and issues, develop solutions to those problems, and implement the solutions, as well as to instigate and facilitate processes in which individuals and groups with common interests collaborate to reach a common goal or goals.[3] This report provides a review of the connectivity of the community mediation center to other organizations, systems, groups, and agencies that also support or lead that address conflict. This focus covers Hallmark 6 and Hallmark 7.

The third lens is community capacity. Community capacity[4] reflects the community's potential for addressing current issues requiring community action for change in order to increase community connectivity and decrease cultural and systemic issues that marginalize community members. Dimensions of community capacity include participation and leadership, skills, resources, social and interorganizational networks, sense of community, understanding of community history, community power, community values, and critical reflection.[5] This capacity exists in a dynamic state and develops in stages of readiness. This report provides a review of how CMC inform those impacted by their services of the value that they add. Additionally, it shows how the work to increase the community's trust in the ability of their community mediation center helps them address deeper cultural and systemic issues that marginalize community members. This focus covers Hallmark 8 and Hallmark 9.

Summary

Fifty-five years after the establishment of the Civil Rights Act, this State of Community Mediation discovery process included a wage range of voices from across the United States and Canada. 127 CMC completed the initial survey. The listening sessions included feedback from over 200 individuals across[6] sixteen sites in the United States and Canada. Participants described community mediation as a connective(s), supportive, diverse, relationship building and together(ness)[7] resolution process.[8] Several themes emerged from these listening sessions about outcomes expected for those who engage the community mediation center services. These included the development of ***shared goals generating innovative solutions*** among the participants, experiencing a ***supportive, inclusive and generous process***, and opportunities for peer service providers to connect with the community mediation center in a manner that developed opportunities for ***networking, shared collective wisdom, and positive relationships.***[9]

The interconnectedness of vital CMC with the communities they serve goes beyond reciprocity and is more like synchronicity.[10] CMC have moved towards taking multicultural, complex, multifaceted, and multi-stakeholder issues to their communities and together forged a way where everyone can really listen and be heard. They have developed powerful problem-solving processes that are creative and beyond the binary or linear approaches that often divide communities. Those who are involved firsthand with the centers, especially the volunteers, noted how the efforts of the centers ripple out into their communities, creating waves of healing and solidarity around everything from "my neighbor will not cooperate" to school responses to teen suicide and college student dropout rates. Because of this ripple effect, various sectors are asking the CMC to bring these services into their organizations to train whole swaths of people trained in these skills. A growing number of CMC are being asked to help other organizations create the types of leaders that have empathy, compassion, and resilience. They have a community-building and community-strengthening agenda that provides CMC the place to act as intermediaries.

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[3] https://www.hq.nasa.gov/iwgsdi/Organizing_People.html

[4] *Excerpted from*: Goodman, Robert M., Marjorie A. Speers, Kenneth McLeroy, Stephen Fawcett, Michelle Kegler, Edith Parker, Steven Rathgeb Smith, Terrie D. Sterling and Nina Wallerstein. 1998. Identifying and Defining the Dimensions of Community Capacity to Provide a Basis for Measurement. *Health Education & Behavior*, Vol. 25(3):258-278

[5] https://oregonexplorer.info/content/what-community-capacity

[6] The JAMS Foundation funded the implementation of the NAFCM Listening Session ™ Protocol in 16 sessions with individuals representing 12 diverse sectors.

[7] From Listening Session Focus 1, Question 1 "*Please tell us ONE WORD that describes community?"*

[8] From Listening Session Focus 1, Question 2 "Please *tell us ONE WORD that* ***describes*** *mediation?")*

[9] QuestionFrom Listening Session Focus 4, Question 1*"What does collaboration look like for you?"*

[10]This summary was drafted based on the responses provided to Listening Session Focus 2, Question 2 "For those who have worked with the Community Mediation Center before, based on your experience how has the Community Mediation Center helped you, your agency, your community add value to those items that you just mentioned are important to you?"

Part II: Organizational Capacity

Organizational capacity is the ability of an organization to fulfill its mission through a blend of sound management, strong governance, and a persistent rededication to assessing and achieving results. This focus includes Hallmark 1 to Hallmark 5.

Hallmark 1: A private non-profit or public agency or program thereof, with mediators, staff and governing/advisory board representative of the diversity of the community served.

Brick and Mortar

Most CMC reported that they were nonprofit/charity entities (87%). 10.7% were government entities, 1.5% were college/university-based programs, and 0.79% were categorized as Other. This is similar to the categories reported in the 2011.[11]

As the graph below shows, the majority of responding centers (35.4%) had an annual budget of over $250,001. 11.2% had a budget of $200,001 to 250,000 annually, 8.8% had a budget of $150,001-200,000, 13.7% had a budget of $100,001-150,000, 16.9% of centers had a budget of $50,001-$100,00 annually, 8% had a budget of $25,000-50,000, and 2.4% had a budget of $1-25,000. 3.2% of centers reported no budget information.[12]

There were minor differences in the range of annual budgets among CMC reporting in 2011[13] and those reporting in 2018. Most notable was that the budgets in the $200,001-250,000 range increased by 4% and budgets in the $250,000+ range increased by 3.5% from the reporting in 2011 compared to the reporting in 2018.

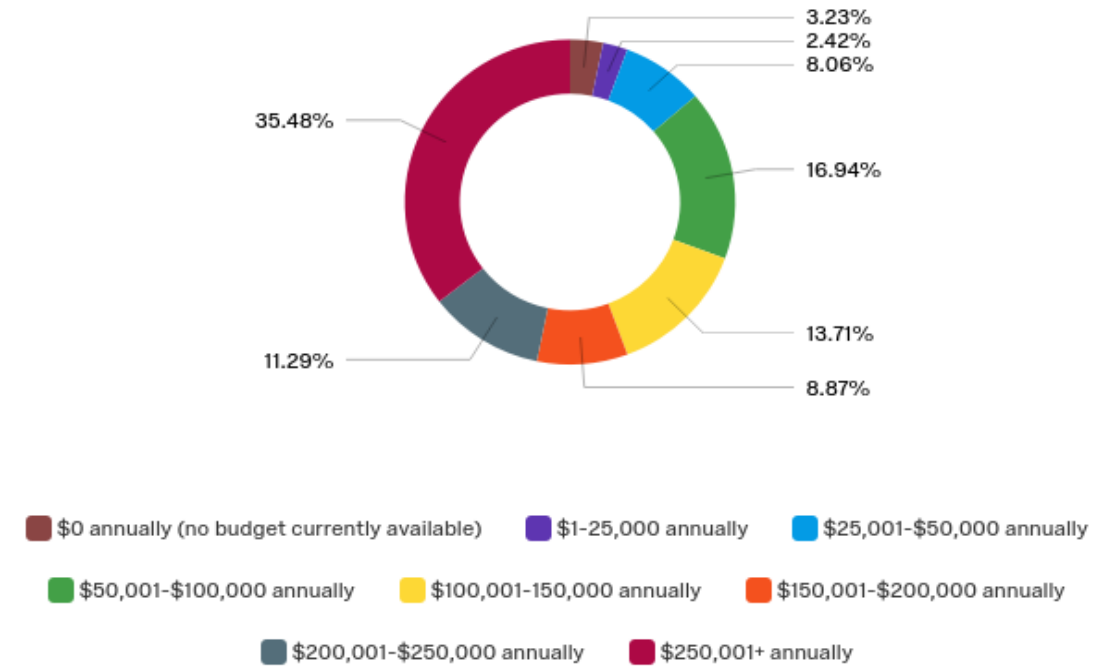


Figure 1: CMC Annual Budgets

[11] This was derived from responses to survey question 18 (Organizational structure)

[12] This was derived from responses to survey question 25 (Annual Program Budget)

[13] The 2011 report developed their statistical analysis by extrapolating the survey responses and estimated field size therefore the differences in responses between the 2011 and this report in 2019 cannot be a one for one comparison.

61% of CMC reported they are exclusively focused on community mediation, whereas 39% have community mediation practices as a component of their overall community service programing, which is the same as reported in 2011.[14]

CMC operate in a range of locations. Some centers provide services in several counties in their state while others operate in large cities or across large geographical areas with small populations.[15]

> "We mediated a neighborhood issue, initiated by a city council person, regarding a wild peacock, which is a protected class of wildlife in certain parts of the city. Eventually, the discussion was broadened to a facilitative discussion involving more than 60 people. In essence, the wild peacock found a home within a tree that was on private property - it was an annoyance to the homeowner and to immediate neighbors over its loud midnight screeching and scratching of cars, etc. and these neighbors wanted the bird to be removed. Other neighbors saw the peacock as a mascot who roamed the neighborhood and brought joy during the day. Many other issues surfaced that were not otherwise apparent, including racism. In the end, after mediation, facilitated public discussion and table group discussion, a peacock management committee was formed to remove the peacock from its location to one more suitable."[16]

Center Diversity

Most staff members and Board members live in their center's service area. Across all centers, 72.4% of their staff and volunteers and 69.2% of their Board members live in the center's service area. Only 7% of centers reported that 50% or less of their staff and volunteers live in the center's service area. And only 8% of centers reported that 50% or less of their Board members live in the center's service area. 3% did not have data on where their staff live and 8.6% did not have data on where their Board members live.[17]

A significant majority of CMC are staffed with one or more full-time employees. More than a third of CMC have one to two full-time staff members. About 27% of the centers able to support three to five full-time staff, and 25% of the centers reported supporting six or more full-time staff. However, about 12% of the CMC are run either completely by volunteer staff or with only part-time staff person.[18] While comparing each number category of full-time staff people between 2011 and 2018 is not possible, due to differences in survey structure, there is a general trend of more centers employing six or more full-time staff in 2018.

Between 2015 to 2018, 68% of the centers either had no change in staff size or experienced a slight increase in paid staff numbers. While this is good news for the stability of these centers, a third of the centers had slight to significant decreases in staff size. While all CMC rely on volunteers to maintain and deepen their reach, having core staff to support the administrative and leadership functions of the center is essential, and constant concern about support staff should not be one of those major concerns.[19]

Reasons provided by listening session participants provided reasons that support the focus on a diverse a leadership, with volunteers and staff reflecting their own agencies reasons for seeking such diverse input. These included:

[14] This was derived from response to survey question 17 (Centrality of Conflict Assistance).

[15] This was derived from responses to survey question 19 (Service area).

[16] This is an example provided in response to survey question 47 (Service Recipient Vignettes)

[17] This was derived from responses to survey question 20 (Staff/Board members live in the center area).

[18] This was derived from responses to survey question 21 (Staff Size).

[19] This was derived from responses to survey question 22 (Changes in Staff Size).

"Not try to be the experts in everything. But reach out to those there, that have the expertise…be flexible" and

"I think our organization can be up front about when it doesn't know something and be a little bit humbler and know that it doesn't have all the answers and that answers are meant to be discovered in partnership with the community."

However, a significant reason many sectors or organizations provided for not volunteering at their CMC or helping the CMC obtain the level of diversity they desire was reported as the stress levels and feelings of being burnt out by a lack of time, funding, and skill sets needed to adapt to the demands of their lives that they and the community they serve. This situation increases levels of stress, helplessness, and growth impediment and therefore, a perceived lack of capacity to volunteer[20].

Summary

There are large ranges in the budgets for CMC across the U.S. and Canada. While a little over a third of centers had a budget that was at or exceeded $250,000, over half of the total centers that responded had budgets that were below $200,000. This budget difference may cause difficulty for centers who work with smaller budgets and need to do the same community mediation work as the higher budgeted centers, but struggle with limited funding and human capital to expand their programs and outreach.

The majority of the staff, volunteers, and Board members for participating centers live in the areas that their centers serve. Most centers had the equivalent of 2 or 3 full-time paid staff, and therefore did not rely exclusively on volunteers to design, implement, and sustain much of the work needed toward the success of these centers. Generally, staffing seems to be stable as 68% of all reporting centers had either no change in staff size or had a small increase in their staff.
As noted under Hallmark 1, while there are paid staff members in many of the centers, volunteers do the brunt of the work with the community.

Hallmark 2: The use of trained community volunteers as providers of mediation services; the practice of mediation is open to all persons.

Volunteers

CMC work to recruit and maintain a diverse pool of volunteers. Most volunteers are mediators, but may also serve in other capacities, such as Advisory Board members. Volunteers come from all walks of life and bring a wealth of talent, skill, and passion to their volunteer service, working closely with CMC staff to accomplish a great deal every year. Based on our survey, 80% of these volunteers are not attorneys. This is an important distinction because volunteers at CMC need to not only be from the community, they must also be representative of the community. This includes a variety of economic, educational, social, political, and communication backgrounds represented in any volunteer pool.

According to Corbett & Corbett (2013) and Harmon-Darrow & Xu (2018):

- ☑ Volunteer mediators mediate over 430,000 cases involving nearly 900,000 people annually and save communities, courts, and government $17 million annually.
- ☑ On average, volunteer community mediators volunteer for 4 years.
- ☑ The average program maintains an active roster of 50 volunteers who contribute an average of 35 hours per year mediating local conflicts.
- ☑ At the current professional valuation of $26.83 per hour, providing 35 hours per year, this totals an average in-kind donation of professional services of nearly $50,000 per program and a staggering $20 million in donated professional services throughout the United States and Canada.

[20] These responses were provided to Listening Session Focus 3, Question 5 "Impact of the lack of time, money, and the skill set on organizations' work."

"Our volunteers are the backbone of our program. They come from a variety of sources- retirees who want to give back to the community, student interns from colleges and law schools, and individuals who are interested in becoming professional mediators. They provide an interesting mix of people who enjoy the challenge of the work and the camaraderie of the experience. They are always asking for more training experiences to grow their skills as mediators."[21]

Many centers do rely on the generous *pro bono* nature of the legal system to obtain a significant amount of their volunteers and continue to work to expand their experience pool by reaching out in other forums to obtain a diversity of volunteers. 84.2% of centers had attorneys in their volunteer pool and, for most of these CMC, attorneys were a small percentage of their volunteers. However, for six centers (out of 127 center reporting), 45%-95% of their mediators were attorneys. For one center, the sole provider of mediation services was an attorney.[22]

"Volunteers are at the heart of what we do. They do about 80% of the direct service work with interns and paid staff making up the other 20%. Volunteers do community mediation, court mediation, family mediation. They act as coaches in our mediation training classes and mentor new apprentice mediators. Volunteers have participated in advanced facilitation training and join us in responding to the communities need for facilitation on contentious public issues. We recently had a volunteer visioning session utilizing World Cafe meeting techniques to ask volunteers to share what was "alive" for them at our center."[23]

However, as important as volunteers are to the viability and vitality of CMC the expansion of volunteer activity as part of the center has only increased by 30% between 2015 and 2018. 32% of the Centers reported a consistent number of volunteers. The remaining 38% of the centers reported fewer volunteers as part of their center's work in 2018 than they did in 2015.

The gap seems to lie in attracting volunteers. Everyday people may not know that their particular life experience would make them a great candidate. More could be done to make individuals aware that they will work with professionals to get the training that is needed for them to someday be the trainers. They will then be able to have a greater influence on the things that impact their communities.[24]

"All of our mediators are volunteers. They have completed extensive, rigorous training to become certified by the Virginia Supreme Court as mediators. Some are retirees, some are still raising children. They are dedicated to serving the community by promoting peaceful resolution to conflict. Many of our course trainers and all of our co-parenting teachers are also volunteers. What they all

[21] This was derived from responses to survey question 50 (volunteers)

[22] This was derived from responses to survey question 23 (Number of Volunteer Mediators)

[23] This was derived from responses to survey question 50 (volunteers)

[24] These comments come from responses provided to Listening Session Focus 2, Question 2 For those who have worked with the Community Mediation Center before, based on your experience how has the Community Mediation Center helped you, your agency, your community add value to those items that you just mentioned are important to you?

have in common is heart--a genuine, selfless desire to give back to the community and offer an alternative to difficult, painful, and often expensive approaches to dispute resolution. We also have a volunteer board made up of community members who work in various capacities from city government to university faculty to private counsel and more. We gratefully acknowledge to our volunteers that they are the heart of our organization."[25]

Perhaps because of the increased realization of the value and need for mediation and restorative practices, many organizations are seeking and hiring individual mediators. Centers have found that their volunteer pool–those willing to provide services at no cost–has greatly diminished. Although this is good news for mediators and those who benefit from this opportunity to resolve their conflicts, it adds increasing financial pressure to CMC. "Our number of volunteers has fallen significantly due to the increasing need for mediators and restorative facilitators to be at our referral sites on a regular basis and to handle increasingly complex cases. We now hire many of our best volunteers as part time staff at courts and schools."[26] NAFCM and these centers should explore this decrease in the percentage of volunteers upon which centers rely, determine its causes, and develop and implement strategies to reverse the decline.[27]

Volunteers from every sector find great hope in their communities because the CMC are teaching them to listen mindfully to the voices of others while quieting their own voices, pre-set stories, and biases. The mindful listening skills reciprocate back into the communities, helping individuals to influence whole communities.[28]

Open to all persons

The CMC who responded to the on-line survey in the autumn of 2018 varied greatly in their reported annual service recipients (how many people they serve per year) and in their annual case volume (how many cases they handle per year). Of the 121 centers reporting, the average number of annual service recipients was 5,208 and the median annual service recipients was 1,500. For the 113 centers reporting, the average number of annual case volume was 1,362 and the median annual case volume was 650.[29] The list of types of mediation services provided are on pages 17-19 of this report. The total number of annual services recipients across all the centers reporting was 626,614, the total annual case volume was 138,965.

There were varying results reported by the CMC regarding case referrals and requests. For nearly half of those who answered, their case volume between 2015 to 2018 increased. However, for one out of five centers, the number of cases has remained stagnant and one out of three centers experienced a decrease in cases, with one center reporting that it no longer offers mediation as part of its services.[30] While some centers may be decreasing the number of mediation opportunities, many are offering other services. For example, 64% of the reporting centers presently offer Restorative Justice services. The variety of services centers offering this service is detailed later in the report. This change from mediation to other types of services (facilitated dialogues, restorative justice practices, individual coaching, among other services) may demonstrate a stronger match between the disagreement, the desires of those involved, and the process that creates the safest space for honest and transparent conversation.

[25] This was derived from responses to survey question 50 (Volunteers)

[26] This was derived from responses to survey question 50 (Volunteers)

[27] This was derived from responses to survey question 24 (Changes in volunteer roster size).

[28] This summary is derived from the response provided to Listening Session Focus 2, Question 2 "For those who have worked with the Community Mediation Center before, based on your experience how has the Community Mediation Center helped you, your agency, your community add value to those items that you just mentioned are important to you?"

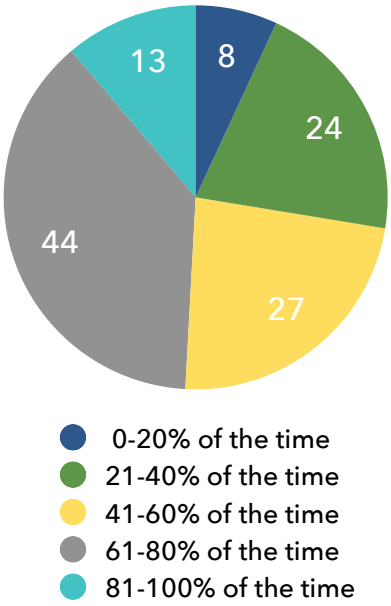
[29] This was derived from responses to survey questions 41 (Annual Service Recipients) and 42 (Annual Case Volume). This question included all services (not only mediation).

[30] This was derived from responses to survey question 43 (Changes in Annual Case Volume).

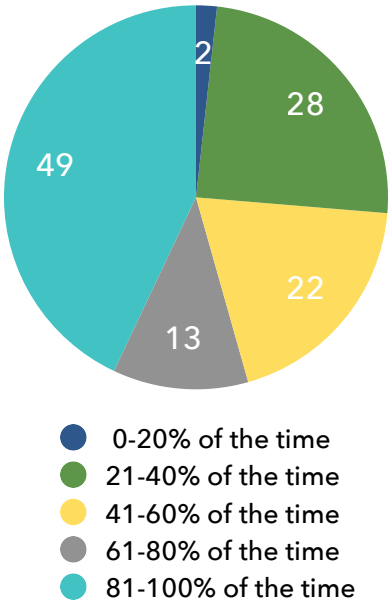
Most centers (80% or more) reported that only a small amount (0-20%) of the time were they unable to contact parties, the request was withdrawn by an initiating party, no parties agreed to address the concern, parties did not arrive at scheduled time, or found that the issue was inappropriate/ not amenable for service.[31]

However, when community mediation services began, a full agreement was the outcome of community mediation services over 60% of the time; a partial agreement was the outcome of community mediation services less than 40% of the time; and no agreement was reached less than 20% of the time. The following three graphs illustrate this below. For a full breakdown of the outcomes for community mediation service see Appendix I.

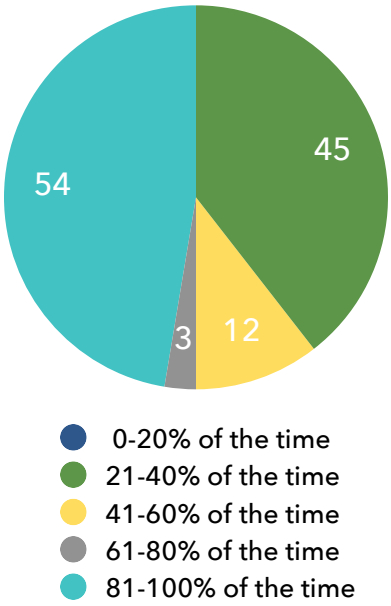
Community mediation service concluded with full agreement



Community mediation service concluded with partial agreement



Community mediation service concluded without agreement



[31] This was derived from responses to survey question 44 (Case Flow and Conversion).

"We have a fast-changing cultural demographic in our city. In the past 8 years we have gone from an 85% white community to a 52% non-white/non-Hispanic community, largely made up of SE Asian immigrants, primarily Chinese. There is a huge change in the way we address conflict; we have changed our approach to be sensitive to collective culture mores, and we are having to address the prejudice of old residents of newer residents, as well as cultural biases. We also have an increasingly wealthy and privileged community on the surface who can often mistreat people with low income needing services, particularly housing."[32]

Summary

Similar to annual program budgets, a third of centers saw no change in their volunteer size and just under 20% either had a small increase or decrease in their volunteer sizes. Attorneys play an important role as community mediators and within the scope of work in CMC, evident by the large percent of centers whose volunteers include attorneys.

Case volume followed the percentages of budgets and volunteers with nearly 20% of centers either having no change in their annual case volume or experiencing a small increase or decrease in their case volume.

Hallmark 3: Providing direct access to the public through self-referral and striving to reduce barriers to service including physical, linguistic, cultural, programmatic, and economic.

"Volunteers work tirelessly to help separating parents develop parenting plans that put their children first. Volunteers work with victims of crime, offenders and their support persons. When a volunteer helps people at very difficult times in their lives, the message that is conveyed, although implicit, is powerful: 'If this volunteer mediator/ restorative justice facilitator is willing to put aside their lives to help us, then there is hope."[33]

[32] This was derived from survey question number 47 (Service recipient Vignettes)

[33] This was derived from responses to survey question 50 (Volunteers) -Piedmont Dispute Resolution Center

Referrals

There are many ways participants are referred to their local community mediation center. The following are the many places from which centers receive referrals:[34] [35]

local district courts, attorneys, mental health clinicians, therapists, website and on-line searches, Juvenile Court, mayor's office, self-referrals, local and state agencies, community organizations, veterans' organizations, houses of worship/faith-based organizations, libraries, schools, Probate Court, District/Small Claims Court, individual inquiries, organizations (i.e. workplace issues), housing authorities, police departments, youth programs, word-of-mouth, individual outreach, local partner organizations, local tribes, housing communities, internet searches, legal aid organizations. Law school clinics, Social media, Area Council on Aging, Presentations to service and professional organizations, Conference workshops, Special needs parents/ support organizations, Community centers, Neighborhood organizations, Department of Human Services, Community boards, Referrals from past clients, Stakeholder Meetings, Homelessness Diversion Training, Customer Service Training, Conflict Resolution for HR Specialists, Military Conflict Resolution Training, print literature, radio, landlord/tenant call line, United Way's 211, city/county ombudsman offices, self-help center at the county court, Human Relations Commission, federal government refugee sponsorship support program, local "Conflict Clinics" in several neighborhoods in partnership with the public housing provider, Animal Control, Neighborhood Associations, Clergy, management companies, healthcare professionals and organizations, Community Centers, Senior Centers, Department of Social Services-Child Welfare Services, Councilmembers' Offices and Constituent Services, Realtors, Homeowner Associations, Medicaid appeals, Assistant District Attorney's office, advocacy groups, Public Defender, Youth Bureaus, Universities, Circuit courts, state Foreclosure avoidance program, Contract schools, state department of justice, and animal control.

However, most case referrals (66%) came from:

- self-referrals,
- court programs,
- governmental agencies,
- a local nonprofit/charitable organization,
- a legal service organization,
- legal representation/attorney,
- mediation/ADR network,
- school system/organization, or
- housing agency.[36]

[34] This was derived from responses to survey question 31 (Additional Sources of Case/Conflict referrals).

[35] Several centers did not answer survey question 31 because they thought the question was unclear.

[36] This was derived from responses to survey question 37 (Source of Case/Conflict referrals)

The main types of case referrals has not change much since the 2011 SOCM report. One difference is that mediation/ADR networks are being used more today as a means to direct conflicting parties toward mediation to try to resolve their conflict.

Below is a graph of the sources of case referrals.

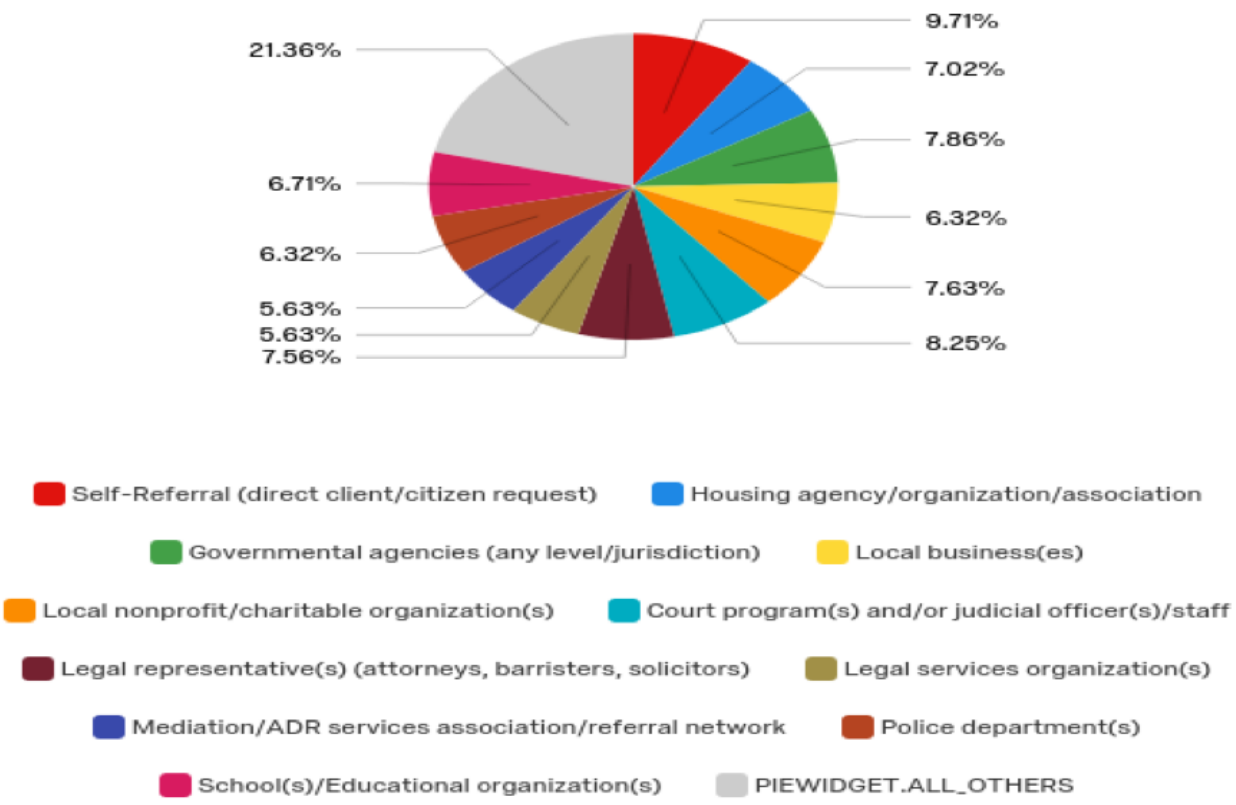


Figure 2: Sources of Case Referrals to CMC

Reduce Barriers to Services

Most centers (60.9%) had no participant restrictions/ requirements while 20.5% had a residency qualification and 4.2% had an income qualification. 14% had an unspecified client qualifications.[37] [38]

Summary

While the majority of the referrals for CMC come from some part of the judicial system, all the centers are open to creating and discovering additional referral sources. There are a fair number of self-referrals to centers, suggesting that the residents who are aware of the community mediation center are comfortable accessing services provided in their center. Additionally, the centers appear to have worked to develop partnerships with a wide range of organizations and institutions to create a variety of entry points for residents to become aware of and receive community mediation services. Moreover, most centers did not have any qualification requirements while 20% had a residency requirement. This further displays the centers' commitment to accessibility and reducing barriers that may prevent access to their services and focusing on the concern of their communities.

"We partner with various community libraries to offer facilities for off-site and after-hours mediation. The benefit is to those in the community that are unable to attend mediation sessions during the day without missing work or interfering with daytime childcare."[39]

[37] This was derived from responses to survey question 32 (48 qualification requirements).

[38] Some centers reported in more than one category for client qualification requirements.

[39] This was derived from responses to survey question 47 (Collaboration)

Hallmark 4 Provide services to clients regardless of their ability to pay for these services.

Reducing Economic Barriers

"More than 70% of our clients are people who otherwise could not afford to access high-quality mediation services, so our organization serves an important role in increasing access to justice for underserved populations." [40]

Payment for services received by participants varied throughout CMC in the United States and Canada. For example, 27% of the CMC had clients pay according to their financial status or ability to pay while 17.3% had rates based on the service provided and 15.7% had only selected services offered without a fee. Still, 7.3% of the CMC offered all services without a fee. 25% of centers based their rates on the complexity of the service requested, the number of staff/ volunteers required, on alternative criteria, or a flat rate below market price. 6.7% reported other, an unspecified category.[41]

Summary

Most clients should be able to easily access community mediation services in the U.S. and Canada because of a very low bar, if any, to receipt of services. CMC are committed to reducing economic barriers with 60% of all services offered by CMC either free or available on a sliding scale to those in the community.

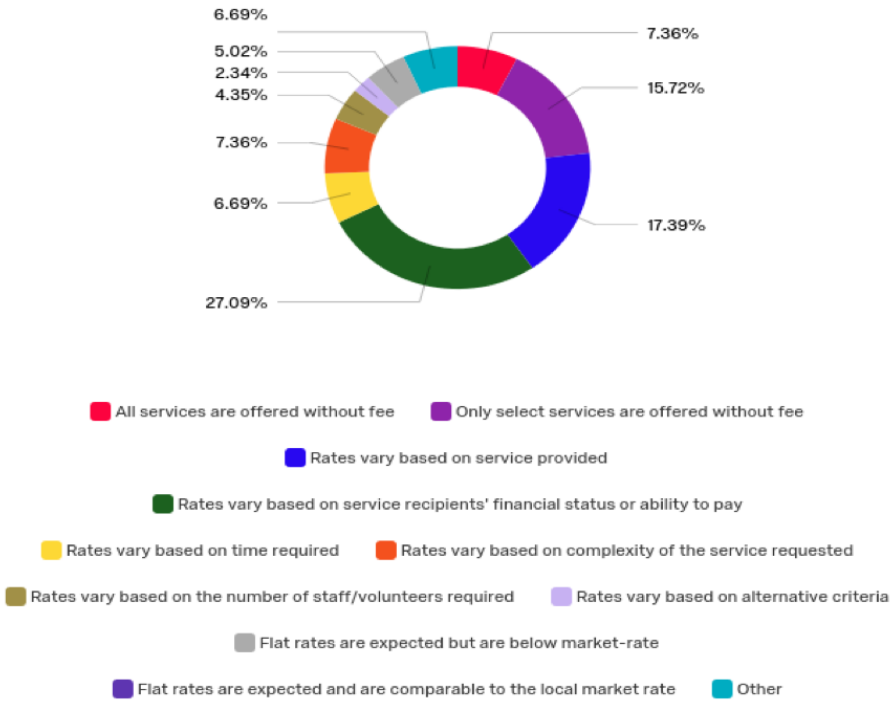


Figure 3: Fee Structures for Services

[40] This was derived from responses to survey question 47 (Service recipient Vignettes)

[41] This was derived from responses to survey question 33 (Fee structure).

Hallmark 5 Providing service and hiring without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, disabilities, national origin, marital status, personal appearance, gender identity, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, or source of income.

Reducing Political, Social and Communication Barriers

The most common languages spoken by clients in most of the CMC were English and Spanish.
Other spoken languages were:

- French,
- Mandjacque,
- Wolof,
- Diola,
- Mandingue,
- Creole,
- Chinese,
- Cantonese,
- Arabic,
- Turkish,
- Hungarian,
- Hebrew,
- Somali,
- Gujrati,
- Persian,
- Portuguese,
- Ukrainian,
- Korean,
- Urdo,
- Farsi,
- Russian,
- Mandarin,
- Serbo/Croatian,
- American Sign Language,
- and others via interpretation services.[42]

"The population in Bronx County is highly Hispanic. Although our disputants are bilingual (English/Spanish) they prefer to communicate in their native tongue. Cultural awareness has been very helpful in facilitating disputes between and among parties to interpersonal disputes. The influx of Spanish speaking participants has been evolving throughout the years." [43]

[42] This was derived from responses to survey question 39 (Language Capacity)

[43] This was derived from responses to survey question 47 (Service recipient Vignettes) - Institute for Mediation and Conflict Resolution, Inc. (ICMR)

Below is a graph illustrating the different technology-facilitated services used by CMC. 47% of the CMC used teleconferencing as part of their community services and programs and36.6% used video/web. 8.4% used disability-assistance technologies, 4.9% used other unspecified technologies, and 2.8% used online chat rooms as part of their services and programs.[44]

Summary

CMC are receptive to the language needs of their communities and have used technology to assist them in reaching out to potential recipients of their services. Many centers noted that when they did not have a volunteer or staff members that spoke the language of a person or group in need of services, they hired an interpreter to make sure all persons had access to community mediation. The centers continue to strive to reduce physical and communication barriers in their communities so that all persons are served, a salient call of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

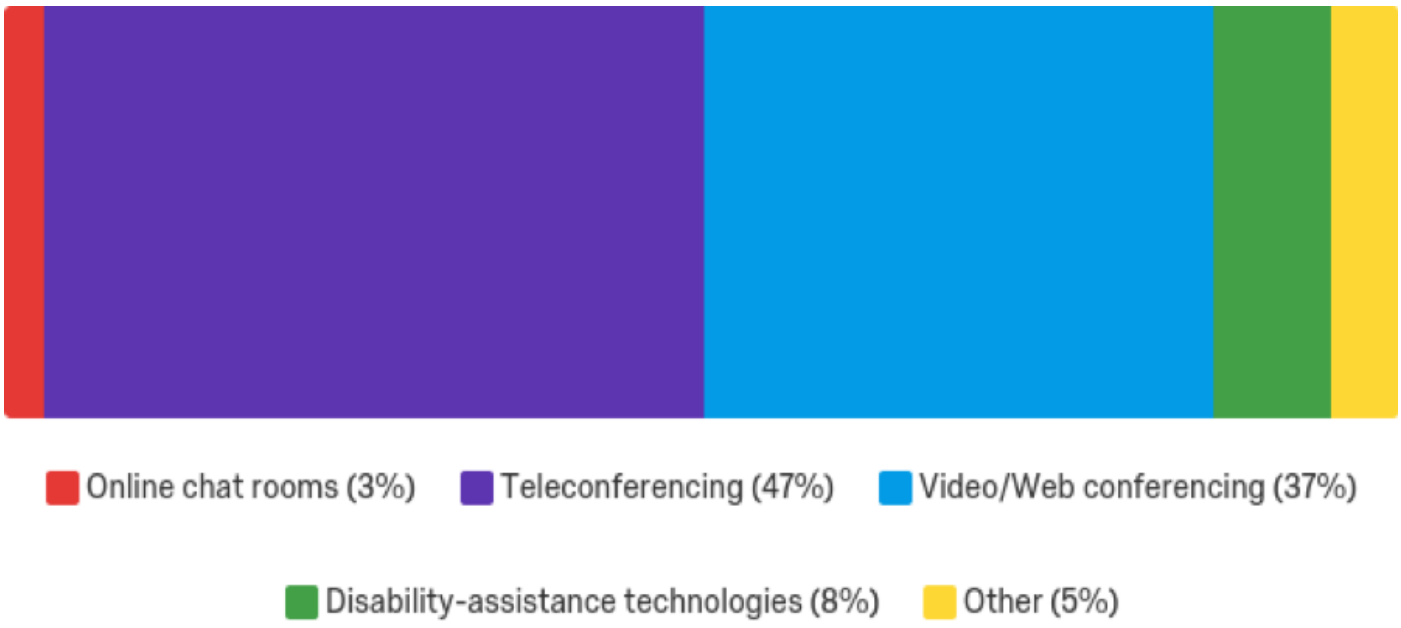


Figure 4: Technology Use by CMC

[44] This was derived from responses to survey question 40 (Technology Facilitated Services). Some centers reported for multiple categories for question 40.

Part III: Systems Capacity

System capacity focuses on the ability of the organization to work with affinity partners to ensure safety and security through increased ability to mediate and resolve disputes between individual members as well as among groups. This includes the capacity to identify problems and issues, develop solutions to those problems and implement the solutions as well as to instigate and facilitate processes in which individuals and groups with common interests collaborate to reach a common goal or goals.

Hallmark 6 Providing a forum for dispute resolution at the earliest stage of conflict.

Scope of Activities

There is a great variety in the services offered by U.S. and Canadian CMC. These services - in addition to mediation (10.4% of total services) - include small group facilitation (8.3%), and pre-established trainings (8.1%). To a lesser degree, some centers also provided customizable trainings, public presentations, large-group facilitation, restorative justice processes, and public forum facilitation. The most common types of services offered (listed above) has remained the same since 2011.[45]

Among the numerous types of mediation cases listed in the online survey, the most common types of mediation cases were landlord-tenant (2.5%), small claims (2.19%), consumer/merchant-service provider (2.1%), custody-visitation (2%), parenting plans (2%), homeowner/condominium association (2%), and elder issues (2%). Other cases for community mediation were parent (guardian)/child, family business, animal/pet-related, automotive, commercial, divorce, domestic relations, and support plans. The following graph shows some of these categories.[46]

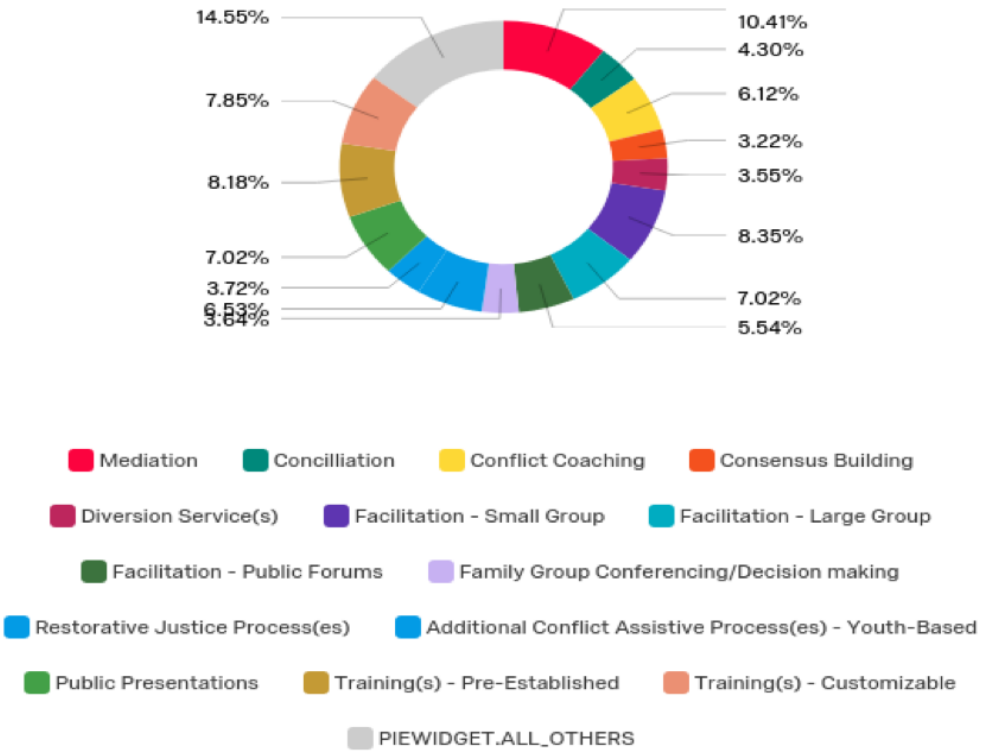
"Two farmers were good friends until a fence between their properties broke. One farmer's goat and pregnant cow wandered into the other's yard and destroyed a valuable Japanese maple tree and many rows of plants. To make matters worse, the cow delivered a calf right under the picture window of the neighbor's house, all while the neighbor's wife was holding a luncheon party. The case nearly went to litigation with one farmer seeking restitution for damages. They decided instead to go to PDRC. In mediation, the farmers agreed to rebuild the fence together. Their wives agreed to pick out a new Japanese maple tree and plant it together. The owner of the cow and goat agreed to buy new plants in the Spring and help the other farmer plant them. Together they rebuilt the fence and the friendship."[47]

[45] This was derived from responses to survey question 34 (Services Offered).

[46] This was derived from responses to survey question 35 (Mediation case types served).

[47] This was derived from responses to survey question 51 (Other examples)

Figure 5: Services Provided by CMC



Since the 2011 SOCM report offered the frequency of each type of service provided by CMC and with over ninety categories represented on the online survey, hinders the ability to compare the most common *percentage* of mediation services currently offered to the reported *frequency* of mediation services reported in 2011. Nonetheless, areas where new growth was reported by CMC from 2011 to 2018 are in the area of conflict coaching and consensus building approaches.

Additional services and programs provided were:

- Prisoner re-entry mediation
- Veterans mediation
- Training Active Bystanders
- Retreat and meeting facilitation
- Conflict coaching
- Organizational development
- Tribal partnerships
- Resource mapping
- Jail Re-entry programs
- Mediator basic and continuing education P a r e n t i n g classes
- Diversity Training
- Behavioral Health Ombudsman
- Restorative Circle
- Community education
- Conflict Awareness Training
- Women's Prisons
- Family reunification
- Peer Mediation Training
- Conflict Circles
- Re-entry circles
- Consumer-Debt Options Counseling
- Harm Circles
- Collaborative Divorce
- COS (Coordination of Services) programs for County Juvenile Services
- Skype Mediation
- Re-entry mediation
- Parents of at-risk youth
- Anger Management
- Medicaid service denials
- Caregiver Conflict Clinics for in-home care providers for older adult clients

Scope of Connection with Affinity Agencies

Many centers have also worked with affinity agencies to support their ability to intentionally infuse learned mediation skills in their own efforts. Some examples of these efforts to provide additional conflict related assistance through other agencies include:

- City has one staff member assigned to each ward to respond to a myriad of resident issues;
- City counselors handling escalating complaints regarding "nuisances";
- Health department staff interact with residents and their neighbors;
- Social agencies working with seniors and families.[48]

However, the majority of the participants during the local listening session process discussed how there is little to no sustained growth in their respective organization's learning due to various factors like high turnover rate, enormous pressure to perform on a low budget, inability to innovate, and so forth.[49] For agencies not directly connected to the judicial system, this inability to sustain the knowledge about the CMC presents a significant barrier to the benefits of dispute resolution approaches and engaging clients early in the dispute process by partnering with the local community mediation center.

This lack of real experience with CMC gave many agencies the impression that engaging with the CMC would not result in adequate, sustainable resolutions to their problems. Many did not appreciate that, while their local judicial system may have lengthy delays in responding to filed complaints, the CMC has the ability to respond quickly and at limited or no financial cost for those who are the most vulnerable. For the majority, the listening session format was the first time they came to realize community mediation can be more than "simply putting a band aid on a stab wound."[50]

> "Our work is never done and never will be done. You can finish a project initiative, what have you. There's more on the backside waiting. So, you could have all the money or resources in the world. There's still 24 hours in a day, and it can't be done, and that's not the reality. So, then your elected leaders, your directors, they have to prioritize what's important…" [51]

This is a significant pressure point for each community mediation center - to challenge preconceived biases of what a CMC is and is not and then to create space for hope and curiosity about what a CMC is and can do for their agency and their community. If the community leaders and service providers really wanted to break the cycle of "too much to do," then they need to reach out to their community mediation partner who has skills and orientation to help them accomplish that change.

> *"Burnout's not working too hard, burnout is working where nothing's happening."*[52]

[48] This was derived from responses to survey question 38 (Additional conflict-assistive services).

[49] This reality was presented by respondents to Listening Session Focus 3, Question 5 "Impact of lack of time, money, and the skill set on organizations' work"

[50] This quote and summary of reflections comes from the response provided to Listening Session Focus 3, Question 5 "Impact of lack of time, money and skill set on organizations' work."

[51] Ibid.

[52] This quote, said in various ways across the various sites came from a response provided to Listening Session Focus 3, Question 5"Impact of lack of time, money and skill set on organizations' work."

Summary

CMC provide a unique space and opportunity to talk through difficult conflicts in ways that increase communication, build relationships, and promote stability for everyone involved. CMC enable people to become involved in the conflict resolution process at the earliest possible stage and each subsequent stage. Based on ongoing evaluation, those who participated in community mediation without going through the judicial system reported that they were satisfied that their concerns had been addressed through the mediation process and that they were able to reach an agreement with the other participant(s).

Hallmark 7 – Provide an alternative to the judicial system at any stage of a conflict.

A reason presented by those associated with the judicial system as to why CMC are not connected more effectively with their systems is well summarized by the following quote by one of the listening session participants:[53]

"...we don't see the litigants enough and have too many cases to be able to give it that kind of focus. So, there are real operational reasons why it's hard to pinpoint that time and be able to do something,"

Partnering with the present judicial system

Sometimes mediation is used when participants and community mediators believe the judicial system might do more harm than good. The following are examples given by survey where community mediation may be a more effective solution than the judicial system.

Example 1: "Occasionally, we mediate cases that cannot be prosecuted. An example relates to a woman and a man (both in their thirties) who established a very graphically descriptive, sexual relationship over the internet. Eventually, she invited him to her apartment. When he arrived, she greeted him in only her robe, which she immediately removed. After having sex, he left. Three hours later, her caretaker arrived and found her in a fetal position. As it turns out, the young woman had the intellectual capacity of a 12-year-old. Based upon what she had written in her e-mails, there was no way for him to have known about her diminished capacity. The prosecuting attorney had a problem. If charges were filed against the young man, she would have to testify, and cross examination could potentially devastate her. Additionally, it would be difficult to prove that they young man had done anything wrong. After all, he had no way of knowing about her mentality. The e-mails were proof of that. Long story short, we mediated this case between the mother and the young man. Obviously, it did not make the incident go away, but it had healing power for the mother, and the young man, who was on a path to nowhere, has found direction in his life."[54]

Example 2: "Mark long dreamt of remodeling his house. After years of saving he hired a contractor. During the job the contractor took much more time than estimated and some days, he didn't show up at all. This was becoming a disruptive project for Mark's family and costs were piling up. He was frustrated. After the project was completed, things started to fall apart. It was clear to Mark that the job was not done properly. After attempting to communicate

[53] Ibid.

[54] This was derived from responses to survey question 47 (Service recipients' Vignette).

with the contractor with no response, Mark felt forced to take the contractor to Small Claims court to recoup his costs. This was supposed to be a dream come true. Instead, Mark felt taken advantage of and the event had taken its toll on his wallet and his family.

"Jason was diagnosed with cancer a year ago and was in a fight for his life. Barely able to breathe financially with the mounting medical bills, he felt forced to continue working as much as he could. Jason was exhausted trying to keep his business and life afloat. After all, running a General Contracting business on your own is tough task when healthy, let alone sick. Jason had just started a remodeling job when the doctors told him his cancer had spread and there was nothing more than they could do. Faced with the daunting realization that he could count his remaining months on both hands, Jason was forced to consider what he valued in life. He wanted more than anything to leave with a positive reputation. Coming out of a daze, Jason discovered he had not been as attentive to his work as he would have liked to when he was served with a notice of Small Claims."

Jason and Mark used our mediation services in a powerful mediation where they were able to share openly their individual experiences in this shared event. They created an agreement that allowed Jason to pay off his debt in a way that preserved his name and resolved the financial burden that was left on Mark. This is one of hundreds of stories that come through our doors every year. The DRC makes it possible for individuals in our community, like Mark and Jason, to bridge gaps of understanding and plant seeds of constructive communication creating a more peaceful place for all of us to live."[55]

Example 3: "We serve an area that is economically depressed and challenges by a variety of complex social problems (including addiction, higher than average suicide rates, poverty, and homelessness). Due to (our) County having higher rates of juvenile detention than average, our Center was called upon to deliver programming that could serve as an option to detention. As a result, our youth programming has seen significant growth in the past few years."[56]

Example 4: "Most of our clients are people who feel that they have tried in so many ways to resolve their disputes and still been left with very few resources to do so. Unfortunately, mediation is often close to their last resort, after they've reached court. We see a lot of clients who are extremely grateful to have the chance to talk about and resolve their dispute through a process that is more private and less intimidating than appearing in front of a judge. One of our best programs is our Juvenile Victim-Offender and Family Mediation program. In this program, we work with court-involved youth and their families and victims of crimes like battery, criminal damage to property, trespassing, harassment and theft. The conversations that come out of this program are life-changing for participants. Youth are able to see and hear first-hand how their choices have impacted other people in their communities and in their families. Victims are able to explain how they were affected and to ask questions. Both parties, and their families, are able to participate in a conversation about how to address harm, and you are able to express what they need from their communities and families in order to help them achieve their goals and avoid further involvement with the criminal justice system. Through this program, families can problem-solve and make plans for improved communication."[57]

Summary

CMC have enabled people at every stage in a given conflict to seek mediation. These Centers are committed to using a variety of services to resolve conflict, both inside and outside of the judicial system.

[55] This was derived from responses to survey question 47 (Service recipients' Vignette).

[56] This was derived from responses to survey question 47 (Service recipient Vignettes)

[57] This was derived from responses to survey question 47 (Service recipient Vignettes)

Part IV: Community Capacity

Community capacity reflects the community's potential for addressing present issues that may need community action for change in order to increase community connectivity and decrease cultural and systemic issues that marginalize community members. This focus covers Hallmark 8 and Hallmark 9.

Hallmark 8 Initiating, facilitating and educating for collaborative community relationships to effect positive systemic change.

CMC work to assist communities and centers with system change. An overarching theme across sectors was the perceived need for members of a community to come together, to see, know, and acknowledge one another in a way that was harmonious while still acknowledging and respecting difference. Healthy communities with positive peaceful relationships work together through difference to accomplish a common good that meets collective needs. Multiple participants expressed the need for more intentionality in community engagement. Globally, participants expressed a desire for more opportunities for community engagement and mutual problem solving.[58]

The following sections under Hallmark 8 are a series of quotes from either the on-line survey CMC representatives in October -November 2018 or from the community listening sessions facilitated by CMC in March-April 2019 on the role of CMC in the community.

Creating Systemic Educational Change through Collaborative Relationships

"Schools became subject to the Dignity for All Students Act in 2012. Our center committed resources to see that trained staff were available to schools to implement the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program. By 2016 it was apparent that schools were having difficulty coming up with the resources (time and money) required to implement Olweus. We responded by expanding our Restorative Practices program to cover whole-school culture change -- the same goal sought by Olweus -- with resources commitment the schools can handle."[59]

"Our program is constantly striving to meet the needs of those we serve by developing individually tailored training programs and mediation services which meet the needs of community members. For example, when we found out that bullying was a major problem in community schools, we initiated a Conflict Resolution Day Bookmark Art Contest which encourages and celebrates students who resolve conflicts peacefully or say "no" to bullies. The contest started with 640 students participating the first year and now has at least 2,007 students in 55 schools (including home schools) participating."[60]

"All our Community Forums are done in conjunction with partners. We provide the process, the neutral facilitators, and expert support in creating a dialogue that meets the needs of the partner community. Here is a sample of the past year: For high school youth, we partnered with (Local Magnet High School) to provide neutral facilitators for over 400 youth as part of the March 14th March for Our Lives. The topic was Safety & School Shootings. We had a combination of high touch for the Circles and used high tech through Poll Everywhere for the suggestions from the over 45 small

[58] This summary was developed based on the responses to Listening Session Focus 2, Question 1 What does a healthy community look like to you?

[59] This was derived from responses to survey question 47 (Service recipient Vignettes)

[60] This was derived from responses to survey question 47 (Service recipient Vignettes)

groups. The … School District Superintendent stayed the full two hours and addressed every suggestion made by the groups (2 per group). Another recent partnering was with the … County Health Department and the Culture of Peace Alliance, to conduct Dialogue Circles for 350 youth from High Schools throughout (the city) during the 7th Annual Youth & Peace Conference. We have an upcoming partnership with the Metropolitan Education Commission to provide Dialogue Circles for the 24th Annual Teen Town Hall (Nov 9) - an influential gathering of youth and adult leaders in all realms to prioritize the issues youth are facing in our community. We proposed and are now teaching a semester-long curriculum for City High School, … on conflict resolution. We've worked over the past two years with the school to support Connection Circles, teach and conduct Restorative Circles and help the students in the Restorative Practices Class to increase their skills to offer services to the rest of their school community"[61]

"We are currently collaborating with 2 different school districts at 5 school sites to assist in the development Restorative Schools. Each school site has a Restorative Practices Specialist on-site 30-40 hours per week to work with staff, students, and parents focusing on building community and utilizing restorative justice approaches to resolve conflict and traditional school discipline issues. The program also incorporates elements from trauma-informed care and social-emotional learning."[62]

Creating Sustainable Change to Addressing Conflict

"City Council members are approached to solve problems on a regular basis. One of our City Councils heard regularly from a group of irritated residents regarding the unhealthy effect of burning debris piles. They insisted the City pass an ordinance banning the practice. (The) Dispute Resolution Center was called in as an ombuds service to organize the conflict and partner with City officials, DEQ, and local fire departments to identify the specific policies in need of improvement. We brought in an air monitor and connected the group with the local hospital board to develop a public education campaign."[63]

"We have two programs that have been quite successful. One is our facilitation cadre. We train our conciliators and mediators in table facilitation skills. They help with large public meetings around contentious issues where we break people into small groups for listening, input, decision-making, problem-solving, and brainstorming. We have helped city council and planners with developing code for homeless shelters, figure traffic mitigation for incoming light-rail, the outlay of the affordable housing plan, neighborhood area planning for the comprehensive plan, and public safety for immigrants, and other issues. The public has come to trust they will be heard when we facilitate. We refuse to participate if there is no real heeding of what people say; we don't facilitate as lip service."

"The other project is teaching the community The Art of Listening in partnership with the library system. The 4-week workshops are always waitlisted, and we have a movement to make (our town) 'The Listening City.'"[64]

"We often collaborate with the Latinx and tribal communities in our area to design and deliver services that are relevant to

[61] This was derived from responses to survey question 48 (Collaboration)
[62] This was derived from responses to survey question 48 (Collaboration)
[63] This was derived from responses to survey question 48 (Collaboration)
[64] This was derived from responses to survey question 47 (Service recipient vignettes)

each community. In that, we partner closely with relevant tribal departments, members of the Latinx and tribal communities, and service providers to each of those communities. As an example, in March 2018, in partnership with …Family Services, we offered our very first tribal edition of our We're in This Together program …Taholah, Washington (restorative community-based program for youth). In the process, we discovered the need for an earlier intervention for youth. We have identified an initiative encouraged by a tribal elder and together with curriculum shared by the Thurston DRC, we will be developing a program for …tweens, our youngest demographic directly served to date."[65]

Creating Systemic Housing Change through Collaborative Relationships

"We are currently working to identify community partnerships with various groups to provide on-site services, conflict coaching and targeted outreach. Examples include a homeless day shelter, the public housing authority that manages HUD housing and Section 8 Voucher program. The goal is to eliminate barriers to service, provide services to vulnerable and low-income residents, and to intervene in earlier stages of a conflict."[66]

Summary

When focusing on Hallmark 8, CMC need to focus on how to best aid their communities through a pursuit of better relationships with community members and the formal systems of conflict resolution/management. There was notable consensus that better educating people in dispute and improving systems designed to handle those conflicts may divert more cases from more formal mechanisms, thus offering opportunities to create healthier, sustainable relationships between communities and systems/institutions like the police and the courts.[67]

Sector representatives acknowledged a lack of collaboration across sectors and a cleaving to each agency's way of doing things. They also recognized that these unproductive practices were not helpful for them to meet their long-term vision. For example, one Social Services representative shared that the community needs to "stop working in silos and recognize that another sector might have a really good answer to something." Further recommendations included, "giving up this kind of institutionalized idea of education and how the process goes and what families should look like and should do and how students should interact with our system." A Higher Education representative identified one barrier as "a sense of elitism, of we have the right answers, and really open up particularly to students and to other community members." Addressing the legal sectors, two representatives concurred that they "would have to give up the assumption that individuals are incapable of resolving disputes on their own and have to have a lawyer or judge to help," and further: "I think our legal system might need to be more open. They might need to give up a little bit of control."[68]

Several respondents spoke to the opportunity for cross sector collaboration in achieving better outcomes, expressing the need for "ditching the adversarial approach and that's not to say that that's only lawyers. That's kind of ingrained in our society…this win or lose mentality and why can't we all be on the same team?" Also acknowledged was the way that collaboration and innovation might need to impact current operations: "some of the people within the organization would need to let go of some of the roles and allow other people to do them the way they do them and not expect them to duplicate."[69]

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[65] This was derived from responses to survey question 48 (Collaboration Vignettes)

[66] This was derived from responses to survey question 48 (Collaboration Vignettes)

[67] These conclusions are offered based on responses provided to Listening Session Focus 1, Question 5 "What services are you offering?"

[68] This was derived from Listening Session Focus 3, Question 3 "What would your sector or organization have to not do (give up) to create this environment?"

[69] Ibid.

The other dominant theme was a perception of structural barriers to peaceful relationships. Inherent in responses was a perception that the status quo (structure, assumptions, organization, funding) would need to be challenged in order to achieve progress. Importantly, respondents from many sectors stated that there was either nothing they needed to not do, or give up, or nothing that they could give up due to strict processes, rules, policies, etc. This suggests a sense of powerlessness to make changes. A total of 8 different sectors/ organizations mentioned ***the inability to change***, which makes this one of the most dominant themes for this question. [70]

Hallmark 9 Engaging in public awareness and educational activities about the values and practices of mediation.

People and institutions pay for what they believe they need to obtain what they want. What we value we work to keep.

"We have experienced fiscal challenges, with revenue short-falls; expenses exceeded revenues for the past 4 years. This presents sustainability challenges. 'Champagne taste of a mission with a beer pocketbook of a budget.'"[71]

"Our Center has experienced an up-and-down flexing of the number of mediations we schedule. This is an unpredictable, erratic pattern that has affected our budget this past year and seems to be continuing in 2018. Conversely, we have just reached an agreement with the District Court in the second county we serve, to assist with their small claims court for which we will receive some additional funds through their court fees. That just went into place in August, so we are waiting for our first payment of those court fees. Our biggest challenge is to be able to broadcast that our services exist and are available on a larger scale. We have a very small marketing budget and do not pay to advertise or promote our non-profit. It sometimes seems we are an unintentionally well-kept secret."[72]

When the listening session participants reflected on how the local CMC added value to their lives, they did not talk in terms of self, but in terms of us, we, and the community. Those who have used services offered by the CMC expressed gratitude for being given the tools to impact their communities, their schools, and their places of employment, even when no one from the center is in their presence. They also expressed comfort with and trust in their local CMC and the hope that other agencies, organizations, and individuals would begin to tap into the support the CMC can offer them.[73] Overwhelmingly clear, based on the responses, is that the CMC are increasingly becoming the place where communities seek shelter and seek ways and tools to take on the problems of the world. For many places, the centers and the communities are as one; as one grows in strength and resilience so does the other.

The sources of revenue have changed significantly since 2011. At that time the main sources of revenue for many centers were the government (national/state/local), fee-for-service, foundations, training revenue, and charitable giving. While training revenue and fee-for-service remain the top sources of funding, CMC currently have a more diverse range of funding sources, including the categories in 2011 and the additional categories of in-kind contributions, corporate support, and publication/resource sales revenue.

[70] Ibid.

[71] This was derived from responses to survey question 49 (Annual Budget Vignettes)

[72] This was derived from responses to survey question 49 (Annual Budget Vignettes)

[73] These summary of thoughts are a composite of the answers provided to Listening Session Focus 2, Question 2 "For those who have worked with the Community Mediation Center before, based on your experience how has the Community Mediation Center helped you, your agency, your community add value to those items that you just mentioned are important to you?"

So that they may remain solvent to accomplish their missions many centers have diversified revenue sources.
Most of the centers reported that 1-25% of their revenue comes

- training revenue (75.4% of centers),
- fee-for-service revenue (72.9% of centers),
- local charitable (personal) giving (66.1% of centers),
- in-kind (non-financial) contributions (56% of centers),
- local foundation funding (42.5% of centers),
- local government funding (36.5% of centers), and
- state government funding (26.5% of centers).

Less than 10% of the centers reported any revenue from the following:

Publication/resource sales revenue (2.7%),
National foundation funding or investment revenue (9.0%), and
Federal government funding (9.8%).

And only 15.2% reported receiving state foundation funding, and 24.2% reported receiving corporate support.[74]

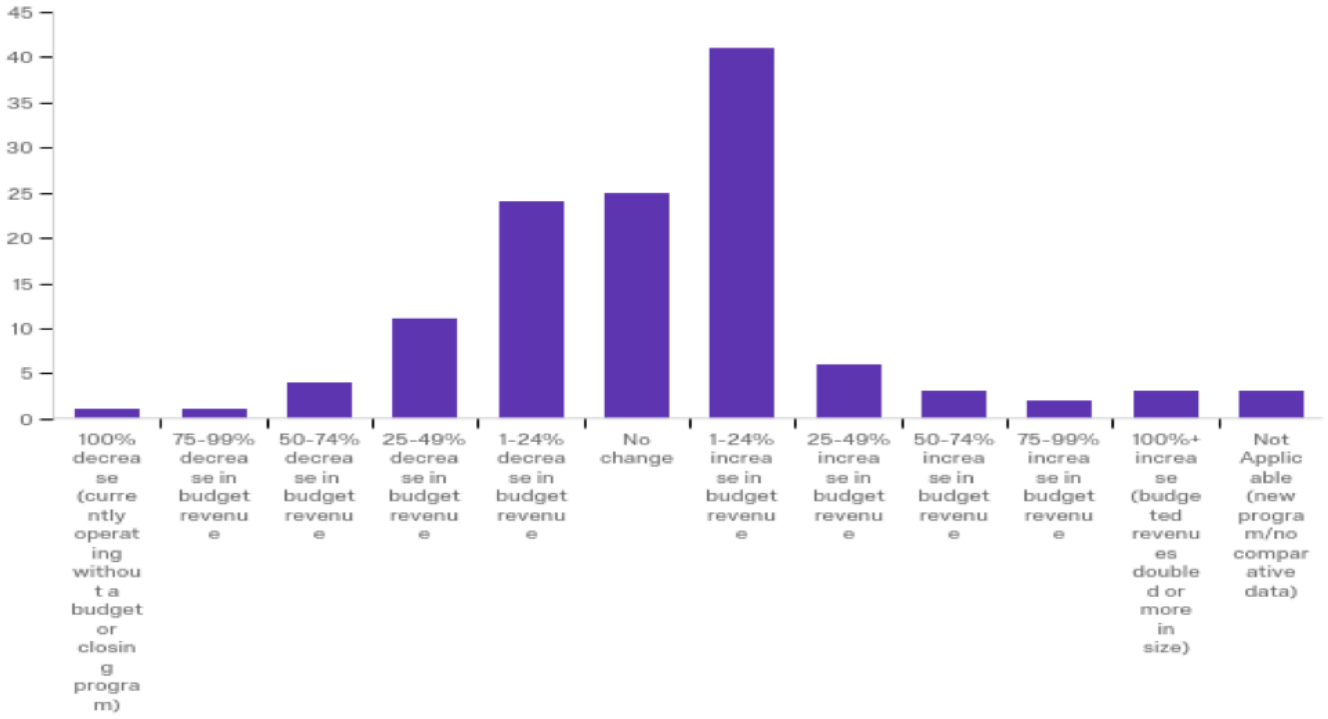

Figure 6: Budget Changes for CMC

[74] This was derived from responses to survey question 26 (Sources of Revenue). Some centers cited multiple categories for this question.

More than 2 out of 5 centers noted an increase in their budget between 2015 and 2018. This shows a growing investment in their services. However, nearly 2 out of 5 centers are now operating on less resources, while the need for services have increased. The remaining 20% of the centers reported no change in their annual budget between 2015 and 2018. These budget challenges make outreach more difficult and more important.

"(The) County reduced our budget by 40%. Since this was a huge hit for us, we had to get out into the County, make connections, be more visible, and stretch our wings and search for grants and apply. Because of this we were awarded two grants, one was Best Starts for Kids and the other was Veterans, Seniors and Human Services Levy which was significant. We learned we couldn't rely on one resource any longer. Anything can happen."[75]

"Six months ago, we received a $17,000 grant from a private foundation to fund a half-time outreach person for a year, which has resulted in a significant increase in requests for service, just in the last 4 months. That amount of money every year, to fund outreach (social media, constituent contact, etc.) would make a huge difference to us. Our actual survival currently depends on the small amount of state funding we receive, which is questionable each biennium. That makes effective long-term planning always a guessing game."[76]

A salient value of the community mediation center is not just to provide a service, but to be a partner for organizations and agencies in the community. One respondent expressed, "I think the Center has really helped train my role within the organization as mentioned before, through training, so they trained me but they also took the time to go into my classroom a whole semester and trained the class, so now we have all the mediators that are ready to go out or still be in the school. But I think also like whenever there is a crisis like I know like I can call [on them] and they will respond, and they will help, and they will like even to go and they'll figure it out themselves if I feel insecure about it. So, I think, like showing up that way really strengthens my role because now the principal and the CEO know that I have an organization, a community-based organization authentically backing me up."[77]

[75] This was derived from responses to survey question 49 (Annual Budget Vignettes)- Dispute Resolution Center of King County, Patti Dinsmore

[76] This was derived from responses to survey question 49 (Annual Budget Vignettes)- Northwest Mediation Center, Leslie Ann Grove

[77] These comments come from a response provided to Listening Session Focus 4, Question 2: The way community mediation center helps strengthen the participants' role and relationship with their perspective community to achieve their agencies' missions; and is representative of many similar responses provided.

Among the 200-plus community responses, several areas of focus for branding work by CMC become apparent. In addition to the obvious platforms of education and raising awareness, the respondents focused on the need for training that focused on listening and coaching, the need to create intentional time to develop trust with community members, and the need to expand the work of incorporating the principles of restorative justice within the umbrella of processes for resolution.[78] Here are those foci with brief descriptions:

- Education/raising awareness: many participants offered that, even though community mediation has been "formally" around for over 50 years, many people do not know what that term really means, what the centers offer, or even that centers exist that can help people before escalating issues to the judicial system. Helping people know their options will, in turn, help them use the centers. Using the Internet as a platform can help spread the knowledge to people from all generations.

- Listening and Coaching training: centers can be most helpful in training people in different sectors in conflict resolution and mediation skills. This would help start conversations that will in turn create a more open and safer environment. Creating a safe space to talk about conflict can help create a better environment to focus on disputes. There also needs to be space for everyone, especially those marginalized by the community or the system, such as the poor, the homeless, and the elderly.

- Trust: participants believe that in order to create a more open and safer environment, people need to have trust in the CMC, their ability to help, and their processes.

- Restorative justice: Many noted that the work their centers are already doing regarding victim offender mediation can help victims of abuse and others to be able to heal from the past and move on with their lives. But colleagues they meet or talk with in other communities either do not have a center or do not have a center that offers this service.

Other comments of particular interest included:

There needs to be a "tool practicing space" where interested parties, of all ages, could come to the center and develop their mediation skills. One participant likened this process to "[training] people in CPR." On several occasions, participants emphasized the empowering nature of such an education.[79]

Many individuals who do not directly work with the Community Mediation Center fail to recognize and appreciate that there are ways that the mediation center is collaborating behind the scenes. "I think those are ways that they're impacting one child, one family at a time, but a ripple effect of positivity into the community because of the safety that that brings to the child.[80]"

[78] These comments come from responses provided to Listening Session Focus 3, Question 1 What would your organization or the sector you represent have to do to help create an environment so that disputes, disagreements or difficulties relating to practices that impair the rights of the persons in your communities may be surfaced?

[79] This came from an individual representing the Education Sector and in response to Listening Session Focus 4, Question 2 "How, if at all, could the community mediation center increase a) others' respect and recognition of your work, and b) the impact of the results and being rewarded for your work?"

[80] This came from an individual representing the Social Service Sector and in response to Listening Session Focus 4, Question 2 "How, if at all, could the community mediation center increase a) others' respect and recognition of your work, and b) the impact of the results and being rewarded for your work?"

Summary

CMC are funded with a diverse range of state, local organization, foundation, and self-reliant support. While many centers have not had a change to their budget revenue or have seen a small increase in revenue, many others struggle to secure reliable and/or increased funding to support expanding projects or the growing needs of their communities.

CMC continue to grow into go-to centers for all types of problems and conflicts. They seem to be doing increasingly well at reaching out to other organizations to assist others in resolving conflicts. Respondents who reported that they have volunteered at their local CMC overwhelmingly expressed great gratitude for the opportunity to see their community in a different light.

The thematic analysis of the responses for this question reflected great appreciation for CMC by the participants. The responses praised efforts of the CMC and suggested ways in which CMC can further affect agencies in a positive way. There were similarities in terms of the Macro level and Micro level. At both levels community mediation centers can strengthen agencies' mission by continuing to be a ***source of knowledge*** and a ***professional hub***. The discussion involved the mediation centers and how they provide ***improved support*** to their agencies. They also talked about the importance of ***advertising the services*** offered by community mediation to familiarize people with their services, which ties into another common theme - ***raising awareness.***

Even though ***Online Services*** was an outlier, these modalities for services were suggested by some, during the listening session in 2019, for better and easier communication between the agencies and the centers and the clients' abilities to use such services. This also falls under the theme of ***improved support*** in terms of using technology that allows services to be delivered in fast and efficient manners. There were two additional themes in Macro level that were outliers: ***Problem Solving Platform*** and ***Resource Sharing***. The first of the two themes describe the role of mediation centers while the second describes their benefit.[81]

[81] This particular focus was found in a response to Listening Session Focus 4, question 2 "The way community mediation center could help strengthen the participants' role and relationship with their perspective community to achieve their agencies' missions."

Overall Conclusions

Community Mediation Centers have the ability to impact both the systems and the residences of their communities by helping each to embrace self-reliance, empowerment, support for other sectors, inclusion, and mending relationships. Two common themes were evident throughout the listening sessions. First, the importance of CMCs being visible by educating the public about services offered and becoming more accessible to the community and networking with other institutions to improve awareness, etc. Second, increasing mobilization by encouraging centers to get support from other sectors of the community, through partnerships and creating and expanding upon programs that follow from community involvement.[82] CMC would be advised to assess community resources and needs to match services to the core needs of the community.

The sectors expressed positive remarks on CMC availability outside the court system; knowledge and expertise of restorative justice with the schools, courts with community members; and communication with sectors. Several participants responded regarding the importance of the CMC being involved at the earliest stage of dispute resolution:

"…a program that has been in existence in this community for over 30 years now. A program that has saved residents of the community, literally tens of millions of dollars. It has saved the court system at least a million hours of court time…"

"the program is a huge symbolism of not only peacemaking but repairing and enhancing people's lives…giving them the opportunity to hear each other, when they're willing to take that opportunity to hear themselves, to hear each other."

The impact or potential impact of community mediation

- Community involvement. Comments often praised CMC for giving (potentially oppressed) communities a "voice" through representation and support. Moreover, participants frequently recognized the success of CMC providing proper help to those in need prior to conflict resulting in violence.
- Empowering community. Another positive result of having CMC present is the ability of centers to empower communities to address localized issues on their own rather than referring to the legal system (participants specifically mentioned freedom from "legal systems"). Participants spoke about the power of using local resources to provide support and create more desirable/comfortable environments for mediation to take place.
- Building personal strength. Another common theme among answers indicated that practices that impair the rights of persons in their communities are often related to personal challenges or obstacles such cultural bias approaches and harboring deeply rooted racist views. This seems to be a place for using the skills of the CMC.
- Clear connection to civil rights. Many did not appreciate the connection between the community mediation and the call to aid communities and individuals in resolving disputes, disagreements, or difficulties relating to practices that impair the rights of persons in their communities.

A broad theme that emerged among numerous centers was the issue of equity and power. As future next steps, CMC need to focus attention on navigating issues around the unequal distribution of power and the silencing of certain voices, perhaps by bringing people together in a safe, secure, and dignified forum. For centers to be able to bring people

[82] These conclusions came from responses provided to Listening Session Focus 4 Question 2 "What do you need to do or have from us to help that change happen?"

together, protect equity, give power to the voices of the disenfranchised, and promote the distribution of power and voice, CMC staff, volunteers and leadership must have the proper training and the necessary attitude to do this type of work.

One of the most powerful points made was from the Education sector, "I think it's important for the folks who are performing the mediation to have a deep understanding of dynamics of oppression and privilege so that we do not keep perpetuating the oppression that folks are experiencing." This is a poignant comment to make because all too often the efforts made to solve a problem are culturally ill-informed and end up fixing something in the short-term, but often have the potential to make things worse in the long term. Or, efforts simply contribute to perpetuating the unequal distribution of power and/or entrenched positions that divide the power to begin with. CMC have a very large role to play according to many participants from the listening sessions, but most importantly CMC need to take a delicate, educated, and informed approach to the issues that stand to divide communities in the most significant of ways.

The core value of community mediation

Participants who identified items of value of community mediation focused on fairness, peacemaking, and violence prevention.

Fairness. Even participants who were not familiar with community mediation focused on how mediation can impart fairness in dispute resolution, which does not always seem fair, especially in the legal system. At the most basic level, the primary value of community mediation was understood to be "having a neutral, third-party person in the room sometimes and help sort of reinforce ground rules and making sure everyone participates and can be heard."

Many spoke to the way in which community mediation can empower people from disadvantaged communities and give them a fair shot at a fair resolution to their conflict, when they would otherwise not have access to such process or outcomes through the legal system. Community mediation could "[empower] communities that legally or culturally or economically were disadvantaged to be able to participate" in keeping with other goals of the civil rights movement, like building a "responsive" legal system for all.

By providing a safe space for honest dialogue that asks individuals to recognize their own biases, community mediation can bridge the gaps that allow oppression and marginalization to exist. There is a strong belief that when people are trained to see others as they are, and not as what they believe, stronger community relations are possible.

Peacemaking, Another overarching theme is that communities want to live in a peaceful, nonviolent society and CMC have the mission and skills to help contribute to this type of society. "I think that your work is peace-making; and that's what mediation stands for…. the more communities and individuals and families have the skills and the mindset that you folks advocate for and help people build the capacity for, the more that we can get to peace …, and that's how we can have move cohesive communities."

This peacemaking attribute is so vital to the center's core work in part because the center is not an extension and subject to the will of a sitting judge. "I believe that it's true that one reason why there needed to be a system that was not the judicial system, the legal system, of the government at the time, because there are communities whose needs are not met by the existing system, and so there needs to be a parallel thing."

Violence Prevention. Many cited examples of deep social conflict that could have turned violent -- from controversial new gun legislation to Confederate flag displays -- but recalled times that community mediation prevented violence in the community. For example, one participant noted that individuals need to "express their first amendment rights in a civil way, without getting beyond that civil into the criminal or, you know, the salting and destroying property and that

kind of stuff." Participants feel more secure when knowing that many people have the skills, opportunity, and knowledge to work on societal issues before they turn violent and/or enter the legal system. People need to reach out to their CMC "when there is a brewing problem, and even explosive problems."

Going Public with Value. Finally, many participants responded to this question by noting that larger communities may not understand the value of community mediation because their centers' services are not adequately publicized. There is the sense that CMC are failing to show the general public how to access their services or what services are available, and the community values knowing what resources are available to help them work towards peace and healing. Sadly, for many, CMC remain a "well-kept secret." CMC have such a tremendous impact on their communities even for those who may never have had any experience with the centers because of the ripple effect of the CMC work. Someone from law enforcement even remarked that after hearing how others are benefiting from the center, they feel that the center could come in and help with their internal affairs disputes.[83]

[83] This response came when asked Listening Session Focus 2, Question 3 "For those who have not worked with the Community Mediation Center before, based on what you have heard from others, not from direct experience, how has the Community Mediation Center helped you, your agency, your community add value to those items that you just mentioned are important to you?"

Appendix I

Hallmark 2, Community Mediation Service outcomes

Question	0%-20% of the time	# of respondents	21%-40% of the time	# of respondents	41%-60% of the time	# of respondents	61%-80% of the time	# of respondents	81%-100% of the time	# of respondents	Total # of respondents
Unable to contact parties	81.03%	94	13.79%	16	4.31%	5	0.86%	1	0.00%	0	116
Inappropriate/not amenable for service(s)	92.17%	106	7.83%	9	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	115
Dismissed by initiating party	87.27%	96	12.73%	14	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	110
No parties agreed to address the concern	87.04%	94	10.19%	11	2.78%	3	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	108
An insufficient number of parties agreed to mediate	74.07%	80	14.81%	16	9.26%	10	1.85%	2	0.00%	0	108
All parties agreed to address the concern	4.50%	5	18.02%	20	28.83%	32	36.94%	41	11.71%	13	111
Resolved using conciliation/alternative service(s)	51.85%	56	14.81%	16	16.67%	18	11.11%	12	5.56%	6	108
Community Mediation service scheduled	10.62%	12	21.24%	24	25.66%	29	23.01%	26	19.47%	22	113
Parties did not arrive at scheduled time	89.19%	99	7.21%	8	2.70%	3	0.00%	0	0.90%	1	111
Community Mediation service commenced	10.71%	12	16.96%	19	25.89%	29	31.25%	35	15.18%	17	112
Community Mediation service concluded without agreement	47.37%	54	39.47%	45	10.53%	12	2.63%	3	0.00%	0	114
Community Mediation service concluded with partial agreement	42.98%	49	24.56%	28	19.30%	22	11.40%	13	1.75%	2	114
Community Mediation service concluded with full agreement	6.90%	8	20.69%	24	23.28%	27	37.93%	44	11.21%	13	116

Appendix II

Listening Sessions

In January 2019, community mediations centers throughout North America were asked by NAFCM to volunteer to host listening sessions in their communities to gain a deeper understanding of their impact at the local level. While many centers submitted Letters of Intent, 16 centers were selected to host listening sessions in their communities in March and April 2019. These centers represented a range of geographical diversity (all regions of the United States and a center in Canada were represented), large and small centers in both staff/volunteer size and budgets were represented, as were centers in large metropolitan areas, suburban areas, and rural areas. These listening sessions included many (but not all) representatives from the following sectors: Government, Community Development, Legal, Higher Education, Service Organization, Law Enforcement, Health Care, Social Service, School Systems, and Other Community Resources.

These listening sessions proved valuable not only to the community mediation centers for feedback from current and protentional community partners, but in many cases created new relationships with new community partners that were not aware of the services being provided at the mediation centers.

Informed by:
Better Agreements, Inc., Blacksburg, Virginia
Central Susquehanna Valley Mediation Center, Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations, Charlotte, North Carolina
Center for Conflict Resolution, Chicago, Illinois
Community Justice and Mediation Center, Bloomington, Indiana
Community Mediation Center, Bozeman, Montana
Conflict Resolution Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Good Shepherd Community Mediation Program, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
East Metro Mediation, Gresham, Oregon
Ku'ikahi Mediation Center, Hilo, Hawai'i
Community Mediation Services, Vancouver, Washington
Midlands Mediation, Columbia, South Carolina
Oakland Mediation Center, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
Orange County Human Relations, Santa Ana, California
Center for Community Dialogue & Training, Tucson, Arizona
St. Stephen's Community House, Toronto, Canada

Appendix III

NAFCM On-Line Survey

In 2018, an on-line survey was completed by dozens of community mediation centers in North America. The data provided throughout this report was provided by centers who shared the current state of mediation services in their communities. The data detailed centers' volunteer and staff sizes, centers' budgets and services provided, and specific narratives about how they have positively impacted their communities.

While most centers were thorough in their answers, some questions were not answered by all centers, which is noted in footnotes throughout the report.

Informed by:[84]

Missouri Valley Region

(Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota)
Community Mediation Center, Bozeman, Montana
Community Mediation Services of St. Louis, Missouri
Conflict Resolution Center, St. Louis City, Missouri
The Mediation Center, Lincoln, Nebraska

New England Region

(Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont)
Community Dispute Settlement Center, Inc, Cambridge, Massachusetts
Greater Brockton Center for Dispute Resolution, Inc., Brockton, Massachusetts
Home Share Now, Barre, Vermont
Martha's Vineyard Mediation Program, Vineyard Haven, Massachusetts
Mediation Services of North Central MA, Inc., Leominster, Massachusetts
Metropolitan Mediation Services, Brookline, Massachusetts
MetroWest Mediation Services, Framingham, Massachusetts
Quabbin Mediation, Orange, Massachusetts
The Mediation & Training Collaborative, Greenfield, Massachusetts

Southland Region

(Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Kentucky, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas)
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations, Charlotte, North Carolina
Community Mediation Services, Clinton, Tennessee
Dispute Resolution Center of Montgomery County, Inc., Conroe, Texas
Dispute Resolution Services of North Texas, Inc., Ft Worth, Texas
Mid-South Mediation Services, Hohenwald, Tennessee
Midlands Mediation Center, Columbia, South Carolina

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[84] In cases where duplicate surveys were completed by the same center, the survey with most completed answers was chosen. When two complete surveys were submitted by the same person, the most recent survey was used.

Piedmont Mediation Center, Statesville, North Carolina
Southeastern Dispute Resolution Services, Jackson, Mississippi
The Mediation Center, Asheville, North Carolina

Colorado River Valley Region
(Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming)
Center for Community Dialogue & Training, Tucson, Arizona
City of Albuquerque Community Mediation Program, Albuquerque, New Mexico
City of Fort Collins Mediation Services, Fort Collins, Colorado
Community Mediation Concepts, Denver, Colorado
Conflict Resolution Center of Santa Cruz County, Santa Cruz, California
County of Riverside Community Action Partnership , Riverside, California
Creative Mediation at Wilshire Community Services, San Luis Obispo, California
Inland Fair Housing & Mediation Board, Ontario, California
Jefferson County Mediation Services, Golden, Colorado
Korean American Coalition Alternative Dispute Resolution Center, Los Angeles, California
Loyola Center for Conflict Resolution, Los Angeles, California
Mandell Gisnet Center for Conflict Management, Monterey College of Law, Seaside, California
Neighborhood Justice Center, Las Vegas Justice Court, Las Vegas, Nevada
Neighborhood Mediation Center, Reno, Nevada
OC Human Relations, Santa Ana, California
SEEDS Community Resolution Center, Berkeley, California
Utah Dispute Resolution, Salt Lake City, Utah
Yolo Conflict Resolution Center, Woodland, California

Great Lakes Region
(Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Ontario, Wisconsin)
4Ward With Purpose Inc., Brunswick, Ohio
Center for Conflict Resolution, Chicago, Illinois
Citizens Mediation Service, St. Joseph, Michigan
Cleveland Mediation Center, Cleveland, Ohio
Community Justice and Mediation Center, Bloomington, Indiana
Community Mediation & Restorative Services, Inc., New Hope, Minnesota
Conflict Resolution Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Conflict Resolution Services, Inc., Traverse City, Michigan
Dayton Mediation Center, Dayton, Ohio
Dispute Resolution Institute, Inc., Murphysboro, Illinois
E.U.P. Community Dispute Resolution Center, Sault Ste Marie, Michigan
Education for Conflict Resolution, North Manchester, Indiana
Great Lakes Legal Mediation Division, Redford, Michigan
Mediation & Conflict Solutions, Rochester, Minnesota
Mediation Services for Anoka County, Blaine, Minnesota
Northern Community Mediation, Petoskey, Michigan
Oakland Mediation Center, Bloomfield Hills , Michigan
The Dispute Resolution Center, Ann Arbor, Michigan

The Resolution Center, Mount Clemens, Michigan
UPCAP Conflict Resolution Program, Escanaba, Michigan
Wayne County Dispute Resolution Center, Dearborn, Michigan

MidAtlantic Region

(Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington D.C. West Virginia)
ACCORD A Center for Dispute Resolution Inc, Binghamton, New York
Better Agreements, Inc., Blacksburg, Virginia
Community Mediation Center, Carroll Community College, Westminster, Maryland
Catholic Charities Dispute Resolution Center, Oneonta, New York
Center for Dispute Settlement, Rochester, New York
Central Susquehanna Valley Mediation Center, Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania
Children's Trust, Roanoke Valley, Roanoke, Virginia
CMG Foundation, Richmond, Virginia
Common Ground Dispute Resolution Inc., Catskill, New York
Community Dispute Resolution Center, Inc., Ithaca, New York
Community Mediation DC, Washington, DC
Community Mediation Services, Jamaica, New York
Fairfield Center, Harrisonburg, Virginia
Good Shepherd Mediation Program, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Institute for Mediation and Conflict Resolution, Inc., Bronx, New York
Long Island Dispute Resolution Center, Hempstead, New York
Mediation and Conflict Resolution Center of Howard County, Columbia, Maryland
Mediation Center of Charlottesville, Charlottesville, Virginia
Mediation Center of Dutchess County, Poughkeepsie, New York
Mediation Matters, Albany, New York
Mediation Services of Adams County, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania
Mid Shore Community Mediation Center, Easton, Maryland
NVMS Conflict Resolution Center, Fairfax, Virginia
Peaceful Alternatives Community Mediation Services, Inc., Madison Heights, Virginia
Piedmont Dispute Resolution Center, Warrenton, Virginia
Resolution Center of Jefferson and Lewis Counties, Inc., Watertown, New York
reSOLUTIONS, Inc., Woodstock, Virginia
The Rural Law Center of New York Inc., Plattsburgh, New York
Westchester & Rockland Mediation Centers, CLUSTER, Inc., Yonkers, New York

Columbia River Valley and Pacific Ocean Region

(Alaska, British Columbia, Hawai'i, Idaho, Oregon, Washington State)
Beaverton Center for Mediation and Dialogue, Beaverton, Oregon
Bellevue Conflict Resolution Center, Bellevue, Washington
Center for Dialog & Resolution, Tacoma, Washington
Center for Dialogue and Resolution, Eugene, Oregon
Clackamas County Resolution Services, Oregon City, Oregon
Columbia Basin Dispute Resolution Center,Moses Lake, Washington
Common Ground Mediation, North Bend, Oregon

Community Mediation Services for Polk County, Dallas, Oregon
Community Mediation Services, Vancouver, Washington
Dispute Resolution Center of Grays Harbor & Pacific Counties, Aberdeen, Washington
Dispute Resolution Center of King County, Seattle, Washington
Dispute Resolution Center of Kitsap County, Silverdale, Washington
Dispute Resolution Center of Thurston County, Olympia, Washington
Dispute Resolution Center of Yakima and Kittitas Counties, Yakima, Washington
East Metro Mediation, Gresham, Oregon
Eastern Oregon Mediation Center, La Grande, Oregon
Fulcrum Institute Dispute Resolution Center, Spokane, Washington
Ku'ikahi Mediation Center, Hilo, Hawai'i
Lewis County Center for Constructive Resolution and Conversation, Centralia, Washington
Neutral Ground Dispute Resolution Center, College Place, Washington
Northwest Mediation Center, Spokane, Washington
Okanogan County Dispute Resolution Center, Omak, Washington
Peninsula Dispute Resolution Center, Port Angeles, Washington
Resolve center for Dispute Resolution and Restorative Justice, Medford, Oregon
Six Rivers Dispute Resolution Center, Hood River, Oregon
Snohomish, Island and Skagit County Dispute Resolution Center, Everett, Washington
The Mediation Center of the Pacific, Inc., Honolulu, Hawaii
Volunteers of America Dispute Resolution Center, Skagit County, Mount Vernon, Washington
Wenatchee Valley Dispute Resolution Center, Wenatchee, Washington
Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center, Bellingham, Washington
Your Community Mediators of Yamhill County, McMinnville, Oregon

Canada

Community Mediation Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario
Community Justice Initiatives of Waterloo Region, Kitchener, Ontario
St. Stephen's Community House, Conflict Resolution & Training, Toronto, Ontario

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