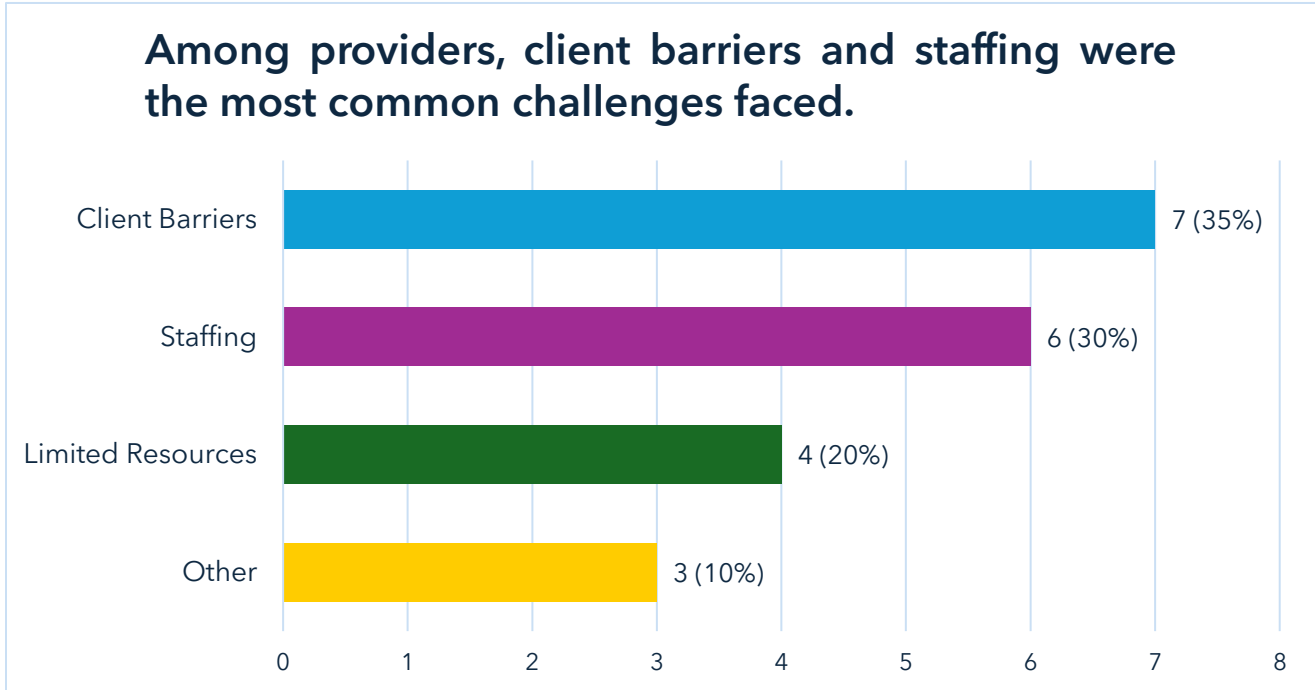


AB 109 PROVIDERS CHALLENGES FY23-24

During fiscal year 2023-24, the County's contracted AB 109 providers reported challenges they experienced in their semi-annual reports collected by ORJ. Four (4) common themes were identified as challenges experienced by providers: Client Barriers, Staffing, Limited Resources, and Other challenges.



CLIENT BARRIERS

Providers consistently reported client barriers as significant challenge throughout the fiscal year. These barriers, as detailed in the narrative reports, encompassed issues such as lack of stable housing, inadequate transportation, mental health concerns, substance use, permanent disabilities, and absence of proper identification documents.

“Challenges include addressing clients with undiagnosed mental health, substance use disorder, and permanent disabilities with limited fixed income. Clients need livable-wage jobs, training, and education. High rents and private major landlords do not budge on credit and income ratio requirements compared to the population that needs the housing.”

“Behavioral health and housing continue to be the biggest challenges faced by most of the population we serve.”

“Untreated mental health concerns and housing instability remain pressing issues in the communities around our (. . .) offices. Many individuals seeking our services prioritize housing as their main concern, which can affect their ability to fully participate in our programs.”

STAFFING

Similarly, providers also expressed staffing challenges including difficulties with hiring, retention, high turnover rates, and the need for additional staff training.

“I have been trying to fill our vacant [position] for the past year. Job Postings have and continue to be on our website, Indeed and I reached out to ORJ and it was posted on their webpage. Resumes come through, however most of them do not meet the basic qualifications of the position.”

“... we often see staff move on to higher-paying positions, particularly with county agencies. While this reflects the success of our training programs and sometime provides internal opportunities for advancement, the rate of turnover also necessitates continuous efforts to maintain operational stability and ensure that our programs continue to run smoothly.”

LIMITED RESOURCES

Providers also identified limited resources as another significant challenge experienced during the fiscal year, specifically noting constraints in funding capacity and housing availability.

“... County shelters remain at capacity leaving our main source of support local shelters, (Bay Area Rescue Mission). This challenge alone has a rippling effect as it contributes to instability resulting in members not looking for employment, having warm meals to eat, and maintaining healthy hygiene habits to name a few. It has also been difficult connecting our members to mental health services with the current referral process in place and one clinician countywide.”

“The AB 109 reentry housing providers in our network have shared that the funds provided for this program have been depleted. They have not been accepting referrals in the last few months. This has been a disadvantage for individuals who do not have family or friends to support them, and it exacerbates their challenges of recidivism, and loss of contact with services.”

OTHER

Other challenges experienced by providers during the fiscal year included lack of client engagement, client preferences, and issues with data collection processes.

“Tracking clients has proven challenging, despite our efforts to make multiple contact attempts and leave voicemails upon receiving referrals.”

“Another area of concern is participants who may need a lower level of care and who may be eligible for sober living are not utilizing this opportunity to have a safe and clean environment to reside. The money is available to support them as they make efforts to get back on their feet, but some would rather make other living arrangements that may not always be in their best interest.”