

Assessing Needs, Achieving Visions

Assessing the Unmet Needs of Older Individuals (60+):
A Community Collaboration

Tuesday, September 9, 2013
3:30 – 4:30 pm

Presented by:

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Elizabeth Haskins, Director, Cortland County Area Agency on Aging

SUNY Cortland – Foundations & Social Advocacy

- **Institute for Disability Studies**
- ***Social Advocacy and Systems Change* peer-reviewed journal**
- **Core values: educational and social equity; inclusivity; advocacy for system change**

Access to Independence – ILC

- **Resources & advocacy for people with disabilities, their friends and family**
- **Empower people with disabilities to lead independent lives in the community**
- **Strive to open doors to full participation and access for all**
- **All people have the right to control their own lives, make their own decisions and to participate fully in society**

Cortland County Area Agency on Aging

- **Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program – HIICAP**
- **Long Term Care Ombudsman Program – LTCOP**
- **Home Delivered Meals (Meals on Wheels)**
- **Expanded In-Home Services to the Elderly Program (EISEP)**
- **Nutrition Program**
- **Senior Centers**

Driving Forces Demonstrating Need

- **Strategic Planning**
- **Limited Community Resources**
- **Poor Economy**
- **Lack of Transportation / Accessible Housing**
- **Poverty / Isolation**
- **Civil Rights**

Driving Forces Demonstrating Need

“The team wanted to gain more rich and intimate knowledge of the local population in the 60+ age range...and to better understand those individuals who service providers advised us were reluctant or difficult to reach: individuals in rural areas who were cut off from services and information due to a lack of transportation, and individuals who were reluctant to communicate because they felt stigma about accepting what they perceived as the “welfare” nature of services.”

(Bentley, Underwood, Haskins, Bundy & Mullins, 2013)

Agency Strategic Planning

- **Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, Threats (SWOT)**
- **Board of Directors**
- **Staff**
- **Consumers**
- **Economy**
- **Funding (Opportunities)**
- **Health Care & LTC reform (Aging & Disability Resource Centers)**
- **Statewide Needs Assessment - NYAIL**

Evolution of Collaboration

- **ATI Staff outreach to SUNY Cortland**
- **ATI staff joins IDS Advisory Committee / serves on Editorial Board for journal**
- **Associate Professor joins ATI Board**
- **Needs Assessment collaboration identified**
- **Outreach to Aging Providers**
- **Director of Area Agency on Aging joins Board**

Defining the Goal

“What are the unmet needs of older individuals (60+) in Cortland County?”

Method

- **Mixed method longitudinal**
- **Literature review**
- **Review of existing data**
- **Qualitative focus groups**
- **Qualitative Interviews**
- **Analysis**
- **Next Steps / Action**

Literature Review

- **Identify important themes**
- **Secure supporting facts / beliefs**
 - **Health**
 - **Impairment & Disability**
 - **Disability & Premature Aging**
 - **Aging, Health & Poverty**
 - **Aging, Health Housing & Homelessness**
 - **Aging & Depression**
 - **Aging & 'Invisible Issues'**

Focus Groups

- **SUNY Cortland Institutional Review Board (IRB)**
- **Participant consent**
- **Targeted audiences**
- **Data coding (Qualitative)**
- **Service Providers**
- **Older Individuals**

Preliminary Findings / Actions

- **Disability & Aging providers need to turn their poor relationships into collaborative partnerships.**
- **Providers need to better reach out to older individuals to secure their input and to provide them with needed information on available services.**
- **Older individuals need help advocating for improvements to their unmet needs**

Additional Focus Groups

- **SUNY Cortland Institutional Review Board (IRB)**
- **Participant consent**
- **Targeted audiences**
- **Data coding (Qualitative)**
- **Service Providers**
- **Older Individuals**

Data Analysis: Findings

- **Unmet Transportation Needs**
 - **Availability**
 - **Efforts for Improvement**
- **Unmet Information Needs**
 - **Availability**
 - **Efforts for Improvement**

Data Analysis: Findings

- **Unmet Housing Needs**
 - Availability
 - Efforts for Improvement
- **Other 'Invisible' Issues**
 - Homelessness
 - Elder Abuse
 - Scams

Managing Project Risks / Issues

- **Relationships with other providers**
- **Data validity**
- **Time / financial commitment**
- **Sensitivity of information**
- **Confidentiality**
- **Scope creep**

Action Plan – Next Steps - ILC

- **Publicity**
- **Programming**
- **Advocacy**

Action Plan – Next Steps - AAA

- **Four Year Plan**
- **Information Dissemination**
- **Intra-Agency Communications**

Questions / Comments?

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