

Survey of Case Management Services for Older Adults in Dane County

January 1, 2015 – August 31, 2015

Synopsis

Background

Through contracts with purchase of service (POS) agencies, Dane County Department of Human Services provides publicly-funded case management services for older adults. Case management services in Dane County are provided through a network of 15 geographically-based senior focal points.

Primary Goal

The primary goal of case management services is to provide older adults with the support, resources, and community services that they need to safely remain in their own homes and communities. Case managers assist with the assessment of individual needs and the coordination of a variety of services – from home chore and personal care to assistance with health insurance and prescription drug plans.

Funding

Case management services are funded primarily with General Purpose Revenue (GPR). A small amount of 2015 funding (\$10,000) came from State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) funds which are federal dollars from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), passed through the State Department of Health Services (WDHS) to counties to provide outreach to low-income older adults for assistance with issues involving Medicare/Medicaid, enrollment in assistance programs to help off-set the cost of Medicare premiums (like LIS – Low Income Subsidy or Extra Help) and any other issue related to Medicare. In Dane County, these dollars are used to provide this outreach through ten (10) of the senior focal point case management programs.

Dane County Department of Human Services has a long history of investing in and supporting the Senior Focal Point network, which offers a unique opportunity to provide community-based programs and services for senior adults living in Dane County. Case management is a vital component of the available service mix. A limited number of community agencies provide this service—which would not be the same without the joint partnerships. Local municipalities and towns of the 15 Senior Focal Points also make significant investments in this program; during 2015, Dane County provided 41% of the total program budgets.

Eligibility

In order to receive County-funded services, clients must be Dane County residents age 60 and older, live in their own home or apartment or home of a family member, and have an income below 240% of the Federal Poverty level.

Study

The purpose of the survey as stated in the 2014 Plan was to measure client satisfaction of case management services with the goal of using this input “in order to improve program efficiency and ensure the program is effectively helping senior adults” (p.4).

Measures

The mail version of the Case Management Survey of the Administration on Aging, Performance Outcome Measures Project (POMP), served as the base instrument. That instrument, developed beginning in 2002, has been used in looking at performance nationally. Using it for this study allowed for comparison with national and regional data available at <http://www.agid.acl.gov/>.

The Case Management Survey examines the services that were provided, recipients' satisfaction with those services, and the ways they have been helpful. Revisions to the Dane County version of the survey were made in 2015 to address some of the issues cited in the prior year's report, such as reducing the number of free-form questions to make the survey easier to complete for persons with arthritis or other conditions limiting their capability to write.

Translation

The survey was made available in Spanish and designed so that the form had both the English and Spanish versions side-by-side.

Survey Population

The survey population was all persons who received case management services between January 1, 2015 and August 31, 2015, who were reported to Dane County Department of Human Services, who had a valid mailing address, and were still living at the time of the survey. A random sample of this population was pulled.

Survey Method

A total of 1,140 survey forms were mailed October 5-7, 2015. Surveys were sent out in DCDHS Department envelopes. A postage-paid, self-addressed return envelope was included.

Response Rate

The overall response rate for the 420 valid returned surveys was 39.5%; a response rate of 20% is considered acceptable for a one-time mail survey.

Findings

The full report may be found on the County web site at: <https://danecountyhumanservices.org/reports.aspx>. Briefly, some of the findings include:

- a. Survey respondents rated their case managers highly in "Always" treating them with respect (98.7%), returning their telephone calls in a timely manner (93.5%), explaining services in a way they could understand (93.5%), and in involving them in discussing and planning their services (93.2%).
- b. The length of time that services had been received affected how respondents rated some items on the survey. Survey respondents who received services for three years or longer were significantly less likely to indicate their case manager involved them in discussing and planning their services. Respondents who received case management services between 13 and 18 months were significantly less likely to indicate their case manager "Always" did a good job of setting up services for them.
- c. Survey respondents indicated that their case managers helped them get services they did not have before (88%), that their situations were better because of their case managers' help (95%), and the case management services helped them continue to live where they chose (93%).
- d. The results for 2015 are very similar to results from the 2014 survey. For both years, survey respondents rated case management services they received quite highly, with 96% rating them as excellent, very good, or good.