



Part 2: Looking for a Service Gap and Considering Ways to Fill it

Date: 2/23/2023

Organization: Example Organization A

Submitting Personnel:

Name: Person One

Role/Title: Program Supervisor

Name: Person Two

Role/Title: Program Coordinator

For many older people trying to remain in the community, the support they receive from family and friends is the critical factor in maintaining independence. This organizational assessment tool is designed to help you reflect on areas of strength, and opportunities in your efforts to support family and friend caregivers. The assessment will require you to review organizational materials and to talk with leadership, administration, and service personnel within your organization.

What gaps have you identified between what caregivers in your community need and what your organization offers?

A gap in services which our organization would like to address is reaching underserved populations in our 2-county area. Working with underserved populations is based on building trust within these communities to really assist with their current needs. We are working on building trust, but it takes time and resources which may not be in place. This is an ongoing gap in services to individuals who could really benefit from our programs.

Our respite program primarily focuses on providing financial assistance for consumers to provide respite care. We do not provide ongoing case management for these consumers, and only contact them if there is an issue that has come up. Due to funding and low staff levels, we are not able to provide more intensive services.

What challenges or barriers have you experienced in providing services or support to caregivers in your community?

The rural/urban divide is a big barrier in providing services to caregivers within our program. Many times, there are not enough caregivers in these rural areas to provide respite care, or they have a 3-hour minimum service requirement. The COVID 19 pandemic provided many challenges with providing services, as well. We were unable to meet with Family Caregivers face-to-face to provide Powerful Tools for Caregivers, and we could not go into their home to provide support.

What knowledge and/or training does your organization need to provide better services or support to caregivers in your community?

Our organization believes training our Service Coordinator role to be an integral part of providing great services to our consumers. We would like to train all of our Service Coordinators to be able to offer Powerful Tools for Caregivers. We would also like Service Coordinators to become more informed on illnesses/diseases that affect the aging population, such as dementia, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, ALS, etc.

What resources (not just monetary) does your organization need to provide better services or support to caregivers in your community?

With the COVID-19 pandemic, our organization was able to increase our respite dollar amount to \$2,400. However, with the pandemic coming to an end, that funding has been dropped to \$1,000. With this loss of funding and increased rates for Home Care Workers, the funding available does not adequately cover enough hours.

Increased staffing would also assist in providing better services and support to our family caregivers. It has been a struggle over the last several years to hire staff to fully meet the need for our family caregiver consumers. Currently, caseloads can reach up to 90 consumers. With caseloads this high, it can hinder our ability to check in regularly with consumers and provide proactive service coordination.

What areas of caregiver support would your organization most like to improve?

Our organization would like to improve outreach to our population of grandparents raising grandchildren. We only have one participant in our two-county area that receives respite services.

We would also like to increase our ability to facilitate our Powerful Tools for Caregivers workshop. In the past, this workshop has been successful in helping caregivers learn how to care for themselves while caring for their loved one.