Developing and Delivering Effective Resident Services Coordination Programs

Ruben Rivera-Jackman
ruben.riverajackman@humangood.org

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History of Service Coordination Programs

- Recognition of the need to integrate supportive services into older adult housing is not a recent development. (HUD Multi Family Service Coordination grants)
- What is relatively new is support for AH providers to bring supportive services into older adult housing.

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American Association of Service Coordinators (AASC)

Incorporated after the fourth annual National Service Coordinator Training and Networking Conference in 1999, the American Association of Service Coordinators (AASC) has since evolved into an organization leading the service coordinator profession nationwide.
(Founder: Janice Monks)

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Three Distinct Models of Service Provision

1. In-house service program
2. Contract with a community-based organization
3. Co-location of service providers on-site

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In-House Service Program

- Housing owner/management hires staff to provide and/or coordinate services for residents.
- Some sites employ a resident aide, activity/social director and/or van driver to provide direct services for their residents.
- It is essential to develop a clear delineation and understanding of roles and responsibilities.

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Contract with a CBO

- Housing management chooses to contract with an available agency to provide service coordination activities.
- Examples of established contractual arrangements with CBO includes Senior Centers, Area Agencies on Aging, hospitals, Community Action Agencies, Public Housing Authorities, Community Development Corporations, Family Service Centers, and a variety of human service agencies.

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Contract with CBO

Questions to ask before you commit

- Is this service provider's mission consistent with the goals of the plan of services?
- Does this service provider have significant experience and success serving your population?
- Is this service provider currently involved in service-enriched housing?

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Contract with a CBO

Questions to ask before you commit

- Is this service provider respected, and do they have a good reputation for collaborating with other organizations in the community?
- Does this service provider have the capacity to take on this additional role?
- Do they have the organizational, staffing, and resource capacity to implement the plan of services?

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Contract with a CBO

For contractual arrangements to function smoothly, housing management and the service provider must:

- Delineate expectations and program outcomes
- Communicate effectively
- Meet regularly
- Collaborate on joint projects

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Co-Location of Service Providers On-Site

- Variety of ways services can be located on-site without hiring or contracting for services. (MOUs, Facilities Use Agreements, etc.)
- Rent commercial space to agencies or groups that serve residents, such as physician offices or kitchens that prepare home delivered meals.

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Co-Location of Service Providers On-Site

- Space within a site s management offices or community space may be used for the express purpose of meeting the service needs of residents.
- Common examples include locating a older adult center or day care center in the community room or providing office space to community development organizations or aging service agencies.

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Co-Location of Service Providers On-Site

- Mission of the organization must be compatible with meeting the service needs of residents.
- Service organization that locates itself within the walls of a housing development may choose to continue to serve the larger community.

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Co-Location of Service Providers On-Site

Must reach an understanding regarding the following issues:

- Non-resident access to site facilities and property, including parking.
- Balancing services to residents and non-residents.

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Co-Location of Service Providers On-Site

- Allocation of staff time and budgetary requirements.
- Tax credit implications of serving non-residents.
- Proof of Insurance.

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Key Traits of a Successful Service Coordinator

- Strong communication skills
- Cultural competence
- Empathy + professionalism
- Organizational skills

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What SCs Do

- Assess individual and community needs
- Connect residents to health care, transportation, food, mental health, and more
- Advocate for residents with service agencies
- Monitor resident well-being and help prevent crises

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What SCs Do

1. Information & referrals.
2. Identification of community resources.
3. Crisis intervention and support.
4. Resident participation in the Decision-Making Process.

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Understanding Resident Needs

Why it Matters:

Tailoring programs to the actual needs of your resident population increases engagement and effectiveness.

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Example

Ms. Lopez, 82, is newly widowed and isolated. The SC connects her with a bereavement group and Meals on Wheels. Two months later, she's more social and physically healthier.

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How to Assess Needs

- Resident surveys (print and verbal)
- Informal conversations & observations
- Focus groups
- Needs assessments

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Best Practice Tip

Repeat needs assessments annually and adapt programming as your population changes.

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Creating Engaging and Inclusive Activities

- Designing activities that promote engagement and address various needs (e.g., physical health, mental well-being, social connections).
- Offering a mix of group activities and individual support services.

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Creating Engaging and Inclusive Activities

- Managing chronic illnesses
- Transportation to appointments
- Help with benefits applications (SNAP, Medicaid)
- Companionship and socialization

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Develop a Resource Directory

- Creating and maintaining a directory of local services, healthcare providers, transportation options, and emergency resources.
- Regularly updating the directory and ensuring residents can easily access it.

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SC and PM Collaboration

"Service coordination isn't a silo; it's a team effort between property and people services."

- SC works closely with property mgmt., maintenance, and healthcare providers to ensure integrated service delivery.
- It's crucial that team members understand each others' roles & responsibilities and leverage their expertise.

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SC and PM Collaboration

- Resident Services work best with intentional planning and collaboration
- PMs and SCs are partners in resident stability
- Meet weekly or biweekly to discuss resident concerns

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SC and PM Collaboration

- Share insights while maintaining confidentiality
- Coordinate events (room scheduling, marketing, maintenance support)
- Problem-solve lease compliance issues with a human-centered approach

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Example

If a resident is hoarding, the SC can connect them to therapy and cleaning services, while the PM ensures lease compliance and schedules pest control.

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Impact of SC

- Assist one million+ low-income older adults, individuals with special needs and families residing in affordable housing.
- Helps in identifying, locating and acquiring services necessary to age in place in their own homes.

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Impact of SC

Provides access to community-based supports, skills training and community resources needed to achieve self-sufficiency and economic independence.

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Measuring Impact

Why Measure?

- Shows value to funders and leadership
- Identifies what's working, or not

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Measuring Impacts

Outcome-Based Planning

Focus on measurable outcomes, such as improved quality of life, access to resources, or community engagement.

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Measuring Impact

- Track Data:
  Use software tools or manual systems to track program participation and outcomes.
- Resident Satisfaction:
  Regularly survey residents to gauge satisfaction and identify areas for improvement.

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Program Development and Delivery

Adjust Programs:

Use evaluation results to refine programs and ensure they meet residents' evolving needs.

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What to Track

- # of residents served
- # of referrals made
- Attendance at events
- Outcomes (e.g., % of residents connected to a PCP)

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Tracking Tools

- Excel sheets
- Online platforms (e.g., AASC Online, FamilyMetrics)
- Resident satisfaction surveys

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Case Study

Sunshine Gardens Senior Apartments

- 120 residents
- Identified transportation as a barrier
- Partnered with a local shuttle service and scheduled weekly shopping trips
- Result: 85% of residents reported easier access to healthy food and doctors

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Impacts of SC

One focused solution based on real need can significantly improve quality of life.

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Factors Responsible for Growth of SCPs

- Demographic trends, Baby Boomers.
- Changing needs of older adult housing residents.
- Increased numbers of persons with disabilities, average of 2 after age 65.

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Program Development and Delivery

Develop a Clear Mission and Goals

- Mission Statement: Define a mission that aligns with the housing organization's values and objectives.
- SMART Goals: Set Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound goals for the program.

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Best Practices

Developing and delivering effective Resident Services Coordination (RSC) programs for affordable housing communities requires a thoughtful, holistic approach that considers the unique needs of the residents and the goals of the housing organization.

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Best Practices

By following best practices, RSCs can develop and deliver high-quality services that significantly improve the lives of seniors in affordable housing communities.

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Best Practices

Continuous learning, cultural competence, and a focus on health and wellness are key to fostering a supportive, thriving environment where older adults can age with dignity and independence.

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Best Practices

Person-Centered Approach

- RSCs should always employ a person-centered approach that focuses on the unique needs, preferences, and values of each resident.
- This involves listening to residents' concerns and tailoring services to promote their independence, dignity, and autonomy. (self-determination)

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Understand Resident Needs

- Conduct Needs Assessments:
  Use surveys, focus groups, or individual interviews to understand residents' challenges and priorities.
- Demographic Analysis:
  Consider the age, cultural background, and abilities of residents to tailor services appropriately.

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Best Practices

Implementation:

- Conduct individual assessments to understand each resident's health, mental health, social, and physical needs.
- Create personalized service plans that empower residents to make informed decisions about their care and services.

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Best Practices

Interdisciplinary Collaboration

RSCs should collaborate with healthcare providers, social workers, and other community organizations to deliver comprehensive support services.

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Best Practices

Implementation:

- Develop partnerships with local healthcare systems, community centers, and faith-based organizations to offer holistic services, such as home health care, social activities, and transportation.
- Facilitate regular communication among interdisciplinary teams to ensure coordinated care and service delivery.

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Example

A service coordinator partnered with a local college's nursing program to host free weekly blood pressure clinics no budget required, and students got credit.

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Best Practices

Community Engagement and Empowerment

Engage residents in creating a vibrant, inclusive community where they have a say in the services and activities available to them.

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Best Practices

Community Building:

Host events that celebrate milestones, such as anniversaries or the completion of a program.

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Best Practices

Community Engagement and Empowerment:

Focus on empowering residents to achieve independence and self-sufficiency.

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Program Development and Delivery

Engage Residents in Planning:

Involve residents in shaping programs to ensure they align with their preferences.

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Examples of Resident Events

- Game nights, movie clubs, storytelling events
- Celebrate cultural holidays to promote inclusion
- Monthly “Benefits Days” to help with LIHEAP, SNAP, Medicare enrollment
- Tech tutoring
- Fraud prevention sessions (partner with local police or AARP)

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Best Practices

Implementation:

- Establish resident councils or advisory boards to gather feedback and involve residents in decision-making.
- Encourage residents to participate in social, cultural, and educational programs that foster community connection and reduce isolation.

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Benefits of Involving Residents in Housing Management

- Problems and issues can be identified and addressed before they become crises.
- Housing management can facilitate changes that respond directly to resident concerns and needs.
- Residents can develop new skills.

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Benefits of Involving Residents in Housing Management

- Residents develop a sense of connectedness to their residence and its surroundings, taking responsibility for the well-being of the property.
- Residents develop a sense of community and empowerment.
- It's the right thing to do! (Mission)

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Best Practices

Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusion

- Addressing the diverse cultural, racial, and socioeconomic backgrounds of residents.
- Designing programs that are inclusive and respect residents' values, beliefs, and practices.

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Best Practices

Culturally Competent Services

Services should be delivered in a way that respects the diverse cultural, racial, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds of the residents.

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Best Practices

Implementation:

- Ensure that programs are accessible to residents with diverse needs by offering multilingual services and incorporating cultural traditions into programming.
- Provide cultural competency training for all staff members, including RSCs, to improve their ability to serve diverse populations effectively.

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Best Practices

Comprehensive Health and Wellness Programs

Developing health and wellness programs that address the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of residents is essential.

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Best Practices

Implementation:

- Offer wellness checks, fitness programs, chronic disease management workshops, and mental health support.
- Create opportunities for residents to access preventive health services, such as flu shots, health screenings, and nutrition counseling.

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Health & Wellness Programs

- Blood pressure screenings (partner with local clinics)
- Walking groups, chair yoga
- Nutrition classes or grocery delivery services

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Building Community Partnerships

Why Partnerships Matter:

- You can't do it alone.
- Partnering expands resources and services.

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Partnership Examples

- Aging services (Area Agencies on Aging)
- Community health clinics
- Transportation providers
- Faith-based groups
- Nonprofit senior service orgs

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Tip

- Start with an outreach email, followed by a call.
- Be clear about your population and what you're looking for (e.g., monthly foot clinic).

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Best Practices

Effective Use of Technology

Integrating technology into resident services can enhance communication, access to resources, and overall service delivery.

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Best Practices

Focus on Communication

- Resident Outreach: Use flyers, newsletters, digital platforms, and one-on-one conversations to inform residents about available services.
- Feedback Mechanisms: Create channels for residents to provide input and express concerns, such as suggestion boxes or regular meetings.

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Best Practices

Implementation:

- Implement telehealth services for health consultations, especially for residents who have mobility or transportation challenges.
- Use digital platforms to facilitate virtual community events, educational sessions, and resident communications.

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Best Practices

Ongoing Training and Development for RSCs

Continuous professional development ensures RSCs remain well-equipped to address evolving needs and provide high-quality services.

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Best Practices

Develop Comprehensive Training for Coordinators

- Cultural Competency: Ensure coordinators are trained to work with diverse populations.
- Specialized Training: Include training on elder care, mental health first aid, crisis intervention, and trauma-informed practices.

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Best Practices

Professional Development:

Encourage ongoing learning opportunities through workshops, certifications, or networking events.

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Best Practices

Implementation:

- Provide regular training in areas such as aging-in-place, mental health first aid, crisis intervention, and service coordination.
- Encourage participation in professional organizations like AASC/NERSC to stay updated on trends, resources, and certifications.

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Best Practices

Collaboration with Housing and Property Management Teams

Close coordination with property management is crucial for creating an environment that supports resident services and overall community well-being.

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Best Practices

Implementation:

- RSCs should attend property management meetings and communicate regularly with property staff to ensure the needs of residents are met and that services align with housing policies.
- Work with property managers to identify potential issues (e.g., safety hazards, accessibility needs) and address them proactively.

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Best Practices

Action Plan Development

- Encouraging participants to develop actionable plans for implementing best practices in their own communities.
- Setting measurable goals and timelines for program improvements.

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Best Practices

Prioritize Ethical and Inclusive Practices

- Confidentiality: Ensure resident data and interactions remain confidential.
- Equity: Design programs that are inclusive and accessible to all residents, including those with disabilities or limited English proficiency.

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Best Practices

Prepare for Crisis Situations

- Emergency Planning: Develop protocols for handling crises such as natural disasters, medical emergencies, or interpersonal conflicts.
- Mental Health Support: Offer resources for residents experiencing grief, trauma, or mental health challenges.

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Best Practices

Safety Procedures:

Work with property management to ensure residents feel safe in their homes and communities.

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Best Practices

Celebrate Success

- Highlight Achievements: Share success stories in newsletters or community meetings to build morale and demonstrate impact.
- Recognition: Acknowledge residents and staff who contribute to program success.

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The Impact of Well-Developed RSC Programs

- Significantly improve the quality of life for seniors in affordable housing communities by addressing their physical, emotional, and social needs.
- These programs help ensure better health outcomes, enhance safety, increase satisfaction, and foster a strong sense of community.

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The Impact of Well-Developed RSC Programs

- The role of RSCs is essential in creating a supportive, thriving environment where older adults can age with dignity and independence.

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The Impact of Well-Developed RSC Programs

Have a far-reaching impact on the overall health, safety, and satisfaction of residents.

The benefits of effective coordination and programming are seen in several areas:

1. Health Improvements Outcomes
   - Reduced Hospital Readmissions
   - Improved Mental Health
   - Access to Preventative Care

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The Impact of Well-Developed RSC Programs

2. Enhanced Safety and Security

- Fall Prevention and Home Modifications: RSCs often identify safety hazards in residents' homes and help with necessary modifications (e.g., grab bars, improved lighting) or connect residents with fall prevention programs.
- This enhances residents' physical safety and prevents accidents.

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The Impact of Well-Developed RSC Programs

Emergency Preparedness:

They ensure that residents are prepared for emergencies (e.g., natural disasters, medical emergencies) by providing education and resources, as well as maintaining emergency contact lists and assistance plans.

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The Impact of Well-Developed RSC Programs

Increased Community Engagement:

When residents are engaged in their community, they are more likely to communicate about potential safety concerns (e.g., security issues, neighborhood hazards), allowing RSCs to address problems before they escalate.

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The Impact of Well-Developed RSC Programs

3. Improved Resident Satisfaction and Community Well-Being

Higher Retention Rates:

- When RSC programs meet the needs of residents, satisfaction increases, leading to higher retention rates in housing communities.
- Residents feel more connected to their homes and are more likely to renew leases or remain in their living spaces.

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The Impact of Well-Developed RSC Programs

Stronger Sense of Community:

- Engaging residents in social, educational, and volunteer opportunities fosters a sense of belonging and community.
- RSCs facilitate this by organizing group activities, creating spaces for interaction, and promoting intergenerational relationships.

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The Impact of Well-Developed RSC Programs

Tailored Services:

- RSCs take a person-centered approach, ensuring that each resident's unique needs and preferences are met.
- When residents feel heard and supported, their satisfaction with both the services and their living environment increases.

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The Impact of Well-Developed RSC Programs

4. Improved Overall Quality of Life

Physical Independence:

- Through programs that promote physical health, safety, and wellness, RSCs help residents maintain their independence for as long as possible.
- This not only enhances residents' physical quality of life but also fosters a sense of autonomy and dignity.

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The Impact of Well-Developed RSC Programs

Emotional and Social Support:

- RSC programs that reduce isolation, offer companionship, and promote emotional well-being have a profound effect on the residents' overall happiness.
- Connecting residents with each other helps build lasting friendships and combats loneliness.

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The Impact of Well-Developed RSC Programs

Access to Resources and Benefits:

By linking residents with important social services and financial support (e.g., public assistance, veterans' benefits), RSCs directly contribute to financial stability, housing security, and the peace of mind that comes with knowing residents' basic needs are met.

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Making Your Case

Approximately 2 million low-income older adults living in independent, federally subsidized rental properties

- Changing needs of older adult housing residents
- Residents are living longer, growing older.
- Increased desire to age in place.

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Making the Case

- Demographic trends: aging of population, especially Baby Boomers.
- Increased numbers of persons with physical, mental and cognitive disabilities.
- Escalating costs of LTC and the need to control escalating costs.

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Making Your Case

- Pressures to improve the LTC system.
- 20% of all new Section 202 residents are 80 years old or older.
- Large portion of residents are living with multiple chronic illnesses and disabilities

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Making Your Case

- Experience multiple functional impairments.
- Greater prevalence of risk factors include falls, Alzheimer's alcohol/drug abuse, bullying, and other behavioral issues.
- Increased risks for hospitalizations, calls to EMS, visits to emergency rooms. (Frequent fliers)

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Making the Case

- Impacts on Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and other government entitlement programs.
- Some residents would no longer be able to live independently without care management, services coordination, and monitoring of in-home care services. (Premature Institutionalization)

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Budget Constraints

The Challenge:

- Limited funding can restrict the number of programs, partnerships, and materials available.
- Many properties operate without a dedicated services budget.

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Solutions & Strategies

Leverage partnerships:
Partner with local nonprofits, health clinics, universities, and faith-based organizations that offer free programming.

Utilize volunteers:
Engage retired professionals, students, or residents themselves to lead programs (e.g., retired nurse gives wellness talks).

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Solutions & Strategies

In-kind donations:
Ask local grocery stores, pharmacies, or small businesses for snacks, supplies, or raffle prizes.

Apply for small grants:
Identify local community foundations, United Way, or senior-focused mini-grants.

Share costs across properties:
Rotate events like mobile clinics or speakers across multiple sites if you're part of a portfolio.

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Funding Options

- Rent revenue/operations budget.
- Fund a services reserve.
- Tap into agency's residual receipts.
- Implement resort or developer fee.

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Funding Options

- Apply for grants from foundations, corporations or federal, state local agencies, NOFA/MSFC, HOME CDBG, City Housing and Human Services Levy, etc.
- In-kind services from the neighborhood/community businesses.
- Rotary International, Elks, VFW, etc.

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Legal & Ethical Considerations

Confidentiality and Privacy

- Ensuring residents' personal information is protected in compliance with regulations (e.g., HIPAA, Fair Housing).
- Providing training on confidentiality and ethics for all staff and volunteers.

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Burnout and Staff Turnover

The Challenge:

- Service coordination is emotionally demanding work.
- PMs and SCs often juggle heavy caseloads and crises with limited support.

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Solutions & Strategies

Promote self-care:

- Regular check-ins and team debriefs to share burdens and problem-solve together.
- Encourage staff to block time for non-emergency work, breaks, and vacation.
- Peer support groups or buddy systems among SCs from nearby properties.

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Solutions & Strategies

- Ongoing training and mentorship to keep staff engaged and supported.
- Clear job boundaries to avoid and burnout.
- EAP

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Example

A property management company created a quarterly retreat just for SCs to recharge, share best practices, and connect

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Resources

National Affordable Housing Association
www.naahma.org

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
www.hud.gov

LeadingAge
www.leadingage.org

Area Agency on Aging
www.n4a.org

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Best Practices

American Association of Service Coordinators www.servicecoordinator.org

Enterprise Community Partners, Inc. www.enterprisecommunitypartners.org

NeighborWorks America www.nw.org

Beyond Shelter www.beyondshelter.org

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Best Practices

King County Housing Authority www.kcha.org

Corporation for Supportive Housing www.chs.org

National housing Conference www.hhc.org

Maine state Housing Authority www.mainehousing.org

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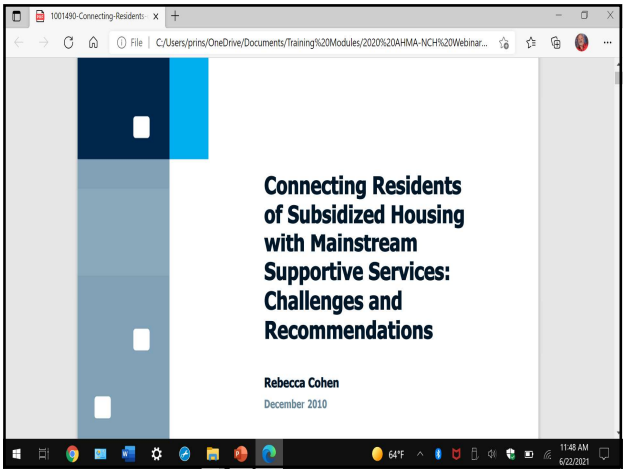

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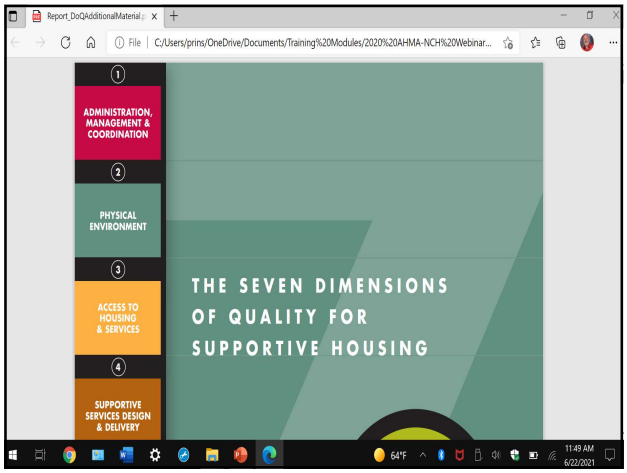

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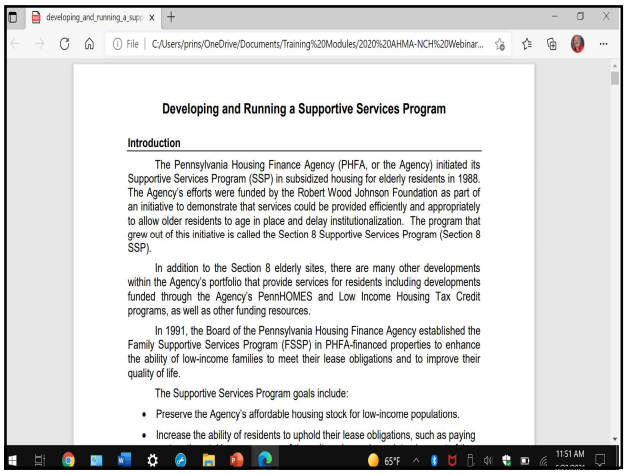

Developing and Running a Supportive Services Program

Introduction

The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA, or the Agency) initiated its Supportive Services Program (SSP) in subsidized housing for elderly residents in 1988. The Agency's efforts were funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation as part of an initiative to demonstrate that services could be provided efficiently and appropriately to allow older residents to age in place and delay institutionalization. The program that grew out of this initiative is called the Section 8 Supportive Services Program (Section 8 SSP).

In addition to the Section 8 elderly sites, there are many other developments within the Agency's portfolio that provide services for residents including developments funded through the Agency's PennHOMES and Low Income Housing Tax Credit programs, as well as other funding resources.

In 1991, the Board of the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency established the Family Supportive Services Program (FSSP) in PHFA-financed properties to enhance the ability of low-income families to meet their lease obligations and to improve their quality of life.

The Supportive Services Program goals include:

- Preserve the Agency's affordable housing stock for low-income populations.
- Increase the ability of residents to uphold their lease obligations, such as paying

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