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:
Dr. Judy K. C. Bentley, Associate Professor, SUNY Cortland
Chad W. Underwood, COO, Access to Independence of Cortland County, Inc.
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?
Contact Information:

Dr. Judy K. C. Bentley
State University of New York College at Cortland
P.O. Box 2000, Cornish Hall #1231
Cortland, NY 13045
607-753-5415
JudyK.C.Bentley@cortland.edu

Elizabeth Haskins
Cortland County Area Agency on Aging
60 Central Avenue
Cortland, NY 13045
607-753-4632
Ehaskins@cortland-co.org

Chad W. Underwood, MPA
Access to Independence of Cortland County, Inc.
26 North Main Street
Cortland, NY 13045
607-753-7363
cwunderwood@aticortland.org