Best Practices in Program Management

Program Management

- Management means getting the job done through planning, organizing, budgeting, staffing, directing, and evaluating.
- Policies and procedures guide your program and help to assure all staff and clients are treated equally.
- Confidential information must be protected at all times.
- Program staff must have a **“need to know”** to have access to records.
- Emergency/disaster planning is essential since elders have special needs and concerns during an emergency or disaster.

Planning and Organizing

- Identify what you want to accomplish – your program goals.
- Conduct a needs assessment.
- Identify actions for both meeting grant requirements and addressing the priority needs.
- Identify what results you expect to accomplish because of these actions.
- Establish a work plan with specific tasks.
- Prioritize duties.
- Plan for evaluating program outcome.

Budgeting

- Although a budget is not a required part of your Title VI application, many Tribal Councils require programs to submit a budget.
- Even if you are not required to, you are encouraged to develop a budget as soon as you know your funding amount.
- You need to find out what indirect cost your tribe is charging your program, as well as what is included in that cost.
- Coordinate your record keeping with your finance office so that everyone has the same information on which to make decisions.
- While carry over of unexpended funds are allowed within a project period, large carry over amounts indicate poor program planning or may be a red flag that your program is in trouble.

Programming Around Need

- Listen to your elders and caregivers – understand their needs and likes.
- Respect their personal dignity and uniqueness.
- Get to know them personally and understand their history.
- Design services which are varied enough to match individual preferences and skills.

Policy

- Policies guide the implementation of programs.
- For Title VI programs, any of the OAA requirements should have a written policy.
- Policies usually require high-level approval. (ex. The number of respite hours allowed per person, per month, and/or per year)

Procedures

- Procedures are the steps or activities necessary to achieve the policy.

Policy and Procedure Manual

- Every Title VI program is different and your policies and procedures should reflect these differences by individualizing policies to meet local situations.
- A standard format in your policy and procedure manual will make it easier to use.
- Policies should be dated so that older policies can be reviewed in the light of new legislation or tribal regulations.
- The policies and procedures must clearly spell out the confidentiality rules and anyone having access to confidential records must receive training on maintaining confidentially of records.
- The confidentiality rules also should be stated in job descriptions.
- Policies and procedures need to specify the disciplinary action that will be taken for breaking the confidentiality policies.

Implementation and Training

- Implementation and training is another important step in developing a policy and procedures manual.
- All staff must understand the need to follow the approved policies and procedures and need to be aware of new or revised policies and procedures.
- If there is a major change, program directors should conduct a formal training session so all staff will get the same information.

Records

- Records with information about program participants must be protected.
- A record is defined as any information, whether or not it is written down and recorded, that is collected by a program.
- This includes information obtained from a program participant or about a program participant.
- Records may be kept in a folder, binder, file cabinet, or computer system.
- Examples include: Participant Logs, Intake Forms, Sign in sheets, Assessment forms, Referral Reports, Follow up reports, Dates and purposes of contacts, etc.

Records Policies

- Many people working with elders and their families provide documentation about a specific problem or need.
- Thus, it is important to develop policies and procedures on who has access to which records and under what circumstances, who can make copies, who can provide information about elders to telephone callers and who has the responsibility to determine emergency situations.
- Your policy should specify who will make the final decision about who is able to view information in a client's record.

Intake

- Generally first point of contact and can help identify a potential eligible caregiver
- Services are specific to age, so will be important to determine eligibility for Title VI services
- Emergency contact information can help to identify a caregiver in a role that they may not identify as caregiving
- Identify needs, concerns, and referrals
- Follow up with the individual

Service Plan

- Review needs and available services with your caregiver.
- Authorize services based on your policy and procedure manual, budget, and need.
- Coordinate, as needed.
- Record what was offered, accepted/declined, date(s) of service(s).
- Consider tracking unmet need if you are unable to develop a plan of service to support the caregivers needs.
- Maintain records and ensure confidentiality.

Keeping Track of Services Provided

- Keeping track of the elders and caregivers who participate in your services is an essential part of the Title VI Director's job.
- The records you keep on a daily basis will become the annual report required by your grant.
- Having a good way to keep track of each caregiver who receives services, which services they received, and frequency will help you to apply for grants, contact service providers about needs, and keep track of the number of participants your grant is serving.

Quality Assurance

- Quality assurance can be used for many purposes, including program management, program improvement, and accountability.
- Quality assurance can help you decide if you are providing timely and relevant services, if your services are improving the quality of life for the family caregivers and the areas in which you can improve.
- By using regular quality assurance measures, you can help ensure you are providing quality family caregiver support services that meet the needs of your caregivers.
- Because of the diversity of programs, no single approach or set of criteria for quality assurance will apply to all programs.
    - Review Steps for Developing Quality Assurance

Preparing for Emergency and Disaster Situations

- An emergency/disaster requires immediate and effective intervention of multiple government and private sector organizations to help meet the needs of the community and area just after the disaster occurs and the area and people begin to recover.
- Just in Case: “Emergency Readiness for Older Adults and Caregivers” has step-by-step information to help older adults prepare for a disaster/emergency.
- It includes helpful checklists, contact lists, and a medication list that can be filled in.