

OVERVIEW OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Aging Network Organizational Culture

The Allegheny County Department of Human Services Area Agency on Aging (ACDHS/AAA) and CONTRACTORS work together in an environment of mutual respect and accountability, dedicated to serving the aging community of Allegheny County. This collaborative network strives to meet today's needs, while planning for tomorrow's challenges.

Working with the Consumer

By building and maintaining a partnering relationship of trust and open communications, we make it possible for mutually identified goals to be achieved through services, supports and resources that:

- Enrich quality of life;
- Respect personal values and desires;
- Encourage active participation;
- Evaluate the availability and access to services and the experience, quality and satisfaction level of services provided.

We, the Allegheny County Aging Services Network:

- Respect our Consumers, caregivers and each other.
- Build relationships founded on trust, integrity and compassion.
- Strive for excellence and satisfaction in the delivery of services while demonstrating adaptability, competency, accountability and teamwork.
- Embrace diversity and cultural responsiveness, appreciate individuality, and consider the viewpoints of others.

Integrating Change Proactively

We continue to focus on those we serve. The Area Agency on Aging has established an agency-wide focus on three consumer outcomes: Independence, Quality of Life and Empowerment. In working with our Consumers, the Aging network focuses on assisting Consumers to enrich the quality of their life; connecting Consumers to services that will help them to be as independent as possible; respecting Consumers' personal values and choice; encouraging active participation in service planning and delivery; evaluating the quality of services and changing Consumer needs based on data; and making changes based on evaluation so that we better meet / serve the needs of our Consumers.

Quality

ACDHS/AAA leadership is committed to achieving service excellence by promoting the culture of quality as everyone's responsibility; contributing to Consumers' satisfaction with services and maximizing service outcomes. As a natural extension, this is an expectation from ACDHS/AAA CONTRACTORS to operationalize this culture using a continuous quality improvement framework and data informed practice to deliver service and make improvements.

No Wrong Door

Definition

The ACDHS/AAA and the CONTRACTOR agencies will adhere to a No Wrong Door Policy in which individuals seeking assistance are provided with enough information to get them to the correct person, program or agency to meet their needs. The No Wrong Door Policy assures good customer service practices and supports our organizational culture.

Application

The ACDHS/AAA and the CONTRACTOR agencies will conduct all business communications in a timely and professional manner; be that face-to-face, by telephone, virtually, written or electronic communications. Expectations include that anyone receiving a call or contact will make their best effort to satisfy the needs of the caller and that email communication will follow the framework and practices demonstrating good telephone customer service:

1. Appropriate greetings and tone will be used for all communication.
2. Live transfers of telephone calls will occur when the correct person to answer the question is within the same agency as the person receiving the inquiry.
3. Phone numbers will be given both on internal transfers in case of disconnects and when referring a caller to another agency.
4. Messages will receive a 24-hour response when an individual is working.
5. When an individual is out of the office for longer than a normal workday, instructions on how to reach someone else who can provide information will be included on voice mail and out of office email replies.
6. The same principles of timeliness and professionalism will apply in cases when the correct person, program or agency may not be a part of our own network.

Person-Centered Approach

Definition

ACDHS/AAA and CONTRACTORS will demonstrate commitment to a Person-Centered Approach in the planning and delivery of aging services. This approach moves us from system-centered thinking to a focus on the person and how they define quality of life for themselves. It enables us to support the individual in ways that will increase their success at living independently and being part of the community. Within the Person-Centered Approach we focus on strengths, recognizing the skills and support network that the individual is currently leveraging or is capable of leveraging to meet their needs. This Strengths Based approach is:

1. Consumer directed – an individualized approach to needs and strengths.
2. Based on strengths rather than deficits.
3. A nonjudgmental approach.
4. A temporary enhancement of the individual's support network to complement their strengths.

Application

The ACDHS/AAA and CONTRACTOR network will collaborate to expand application of the Person-Centered Approach across the network through training, engagement with the public, evaluation, and quality improvements. While the Person-Centered Approach can take a variety of forms, the application will integrate the following assumptions and principles:

1. Every individual has strengths regardless of whether or not they recognize them.
2. Not everyone recognizes their strengths.
3. Everyone needs and is worthy of support. The amount and type will vary over time.
4. Most people maintain a healthy interdependence with others. By nature, we are not dependent on public support.
5. Changing from a deficit model to a Person-Centered Approach requires a specific way of thinking about what we do.
6. A Person-Centered Approach results from coordinated efforts towards the individual's goals.

The Person-Centered Approach supports the rights of the individual. Consumers have the right to make an informed choice, to refuse service, to register complaints and to request changes in services or staff without retribution.

Mutual Accountability

Definition

ACDHS/AAA and CONTRACTOR agencies will engage in a collaborative process in which both parties focus on developing their accountability expectations and determine how their efforts can improve program services and administrative functions.

ACDHS/AAA supports a service-oriented focus that views mutual accountability as multi-dimensional including, at a minimum, the following three categories:

1. Responsibility: the expectation that performance, compliance and risk mitigation standards will apply to all parties.
2. Finances: the expectation that all funds will be administered in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.
3. Performance: the expectation that all parties understand how success will be measured and achieved.

Application

Goal of Mutual Accountability as a Collaborative Process

The ACDHS/AAA and the CONTRACTOR agencies will work toward collaborative mutual accountability by defining each stakeholder's role in the following framework:

1. Responsibility: To determine who is expected to carry out which actions for whom.
2. Responsiveness: To determine who is expected, or has the authority, to invoke or alter mutual expectations, especially if circumstances do not work out as planned.
3. Reporting: To determine who should provide the information to whom about how responsibilities are carried out.
4. Reviewing: To determine who is expected to use what information to make decisions about the future of the relationship.

ACDHS/AAA and CONTRACTORS use agreements, written reports, monitoring, financial audits and periodic one on one contact as mutual accountability tools.