

An SSAI-Sponsored Study of the Relationship between Long-Term Care Providers and SCSEP

Summary

The Experiences of Long-term Care Organizations in Seven States with Older Workers, Volunteers and Participants in the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

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This study found that non-profit and public long-term care (LTC) agencies could benefit from more extensive partnerships with SCSEP, especially in areas with high demand and staff shortages for LTC services. Stratified random sampling in seven states yielded surveys from 66 adult day care, 66 assisted living, 54 home health, and 62 skilled nursing providers. The key findings follow:

Long-term care providers that serve as SCSEP host agencies are highly satisfied with SCSEP.

- Almost all (96%) organizations that were SCSEP host agencies (HAs) were either very satisfied or satisfied with the match of SCSEP participants to agency needs, and 88% were very satisfied/satisfied with participants' abilities to do assigned work after being trained.
- These results mirror SCSEP HAs' American Customer Satisfaction Index score of 81 (cf 80 for Starbucks or Google), and exemplified by one response: "They are the best workers we have!"

Awareness of SCSEP is very limited among LTC providers in general, but a majority of the organizations that did know of SCSEP had served as host agencies.

- More than one-fourth (28%) of surveyed non-profit/public but only 8% of for-profit LTC organizations had heard of SCSEP, in part because it is often known by other names. Of the non-profit/public organizations that were aware of SCSEP, 57% had served as a HA.
- Adult day care centers were by far the most aware of SCSEP and the most likely to be a HA. They represented 85% of the HAs, while 15% were nursing homes. None of the surveyed assisted living facilities or home health agencies had served as a HA.

SCSEP host agencies had little difficulty providing a wide range of job-skill and job-search support.

- More than 92% of HAs reported little or no difficulty helping participants understand how their job supported the organization's mission. The same percentage said that it was not difficult to help the participants develop specific job skills.
- In contrast, 35% reported that providing computer skills training was somewhat/very difficult, although soft skills were readily learned (84%).

The vast majority of providers use volunteers age 55+, who comprise nearly two-thirds of all volunteers.

- More than 77% regularly used volunteers and 64% of all their volunteers were age 55 or older.
- Home health agencies were least likely to report using volunteers of any age (26%), while adult day care agencies reported the lowest proportion of volunteers age 55 or older (44%).

LTC organizations readily make accommodations for all workers and more than one-third make them specifically for older workers and volunteers.

- More than 86% of surveyed LTC organizations reported accommodating workers in general, with 35% making workplace adjustments specifically for older workers and volunteers.
- The most common accommodations for older adults are flexible scheduling, reduced work hours, computer training, and job description changes to reduce physical demands such as heavy lifting.

Conclusion: The experiences of long-term care providers that are SCSEP host agencies have been very positive. But the proportion of providers that are host agencies is very low, largely due to lack of knowledge about SCSEP. Increased federal focus on SCSEP and expanded awareness of it among long-term care providers can be beneficial and cost-effective for them as well as for older workers.

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