

S T E P S



SUCCESS

STORIES

WHAT IS STEPS?

STEPS is a state-wide training program that teaches employer skills to people who receive in-home services through the Client-Employed Provider, Oregon Project Independence, State Plan Personal Care for seniors or people with physical disabilities, and the Spousal Pay program. Centers for Independent Living (CILs) provide STEPS training for FREE through workshops, or one-on-one and guide-on-the-side trainings.

STEPS is a collaborative partnership between:

- ✓ Home Care Commission
- ✓ State Independent Living Council (SILC)
- ✓ Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 503
- ✓ Oregon's eight Centers for Independent Living (CILs).

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WHY WAS STEPS CREATED?

The project was initiated through a collaboration between the State Independent Living Council, the Home Care Commission, and SEIU (the Homecare Workers' union). The tools and knowledge provided at STEPS trainings enable individuals to live independently. Consumer-employers are better able to:

- ✓ Recruit, interview and hire a homecare worker
- ✓ Communicate and manage their homecare worker
- ✓ Express appreciation for work that is well done
- ✓ Provide a safer working environment
- ✓ Be aware and respectful of employer/employee boundaries



WHAT'S IN IT FOR CASE MANAGERS?

Case managers report that the STEPS training makes their jobs easier:

- ✓ STEPS reduces the time it takes for case managers to problem solve or be involved in "employer duties" including recruiting, hiring, and managing homecare workers.
- ✓ STEPS includes training on use of the Home Care Commission Registry and Referral system, enabling consumers to have the skills to find appropriate homecare worker candidates on their own.
- ✓ More time enables case managers to address other aspects of their workload.



WHAT'S IN IT FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO RECEIVE IN-HOME SERVICES?

STEPS provides training on effective communication, safety, management, rights and responsibilities of a consumer-employer, understanding task lists, homecare workers' rights, and more. The training enables consumer-employers to develop and maintain effective skills for finding, selecting, and coordinating their in-home services so that they are able to live as independently as possible. The resulting empowerment and improved communications may have a positive impact on other aspects of their lives.



THE STORIES

This booklet contains a compilation of success stories gathered from consumer-employers, case managers, and homecare workers. The stories show various ways that STEPS training has made a positive difference to a broad range of individuals.

Here are their stories, in their own words.....



STORIES FROM CONSUMER-EMPLOYERS

I've used homecare workers for years and didn't think I needed to attend this training, but I'm really glad I did. I now can set rules in my house, when before I felt I was at the mercy of others just letting things happen I didn't approve of, in order not to go without the help I need.



Two nights before I attended this training, I had to spend the whole night in my wheelchair because my homecare worker didn't show up to help me get into bed and I didn't have a back-up plan. Now, after the training, I know I have choices. I don't have to just take the person sent to me, and I have hired a new homecare worker. I feel safer too, because I have a back-up plan and won't have to spend another night in my wheelchair.



I've always had my providers selected by my case managers because I didn't know how to interview on my own. Now that I've learned how to do interviews, I found a new provider and am a lot happier. I like to interview so much, that even after I found the person I hired, I interviewed several more providers, just to practice! They're on my backup list.



This training is exactly what employers of homecare workers NEED. I think EVERYONE who gets approved for home care should attend. It would definitely reduce a lot of hassle for them down the line. The presentation was excellent and I give this program the highest of raves.



After one workshop and one guide-on-the-side, I had enough tools to help me feel more in control of my life. I have been able to make better choices and I know more about being an employer and can express it. The STEPS program is a total win-win situation for both employer and homecare worker. This program has been a lifesaver, literally, for me.



With the help of the STEPS Program I believe I can do my activities of daily living myself and if I need help I will ask in the future. With the help of my case manager and the STEPS Program I am able to be independent again.



I thought the information was valuable, but I never thought I'd use my new skills so soon. My case manager gave me several people to call for a replacement, but only one of them showed up for an interview. I screened six potential caregivers on the phone, interviewed two, and hired an almost perfect person. Yesterday I sat down with my caregiver, and we had our 30 day review. Now I'm more convinced than ever that I made a good choice, thanks to my STEPS training.



I appreciate the information I have received from my one-on-one with Jennifer. Having the book available to me when my case worker came was beneficial to complete my task list. It also gave me an opportunity to share information with my care provider with positive results. I'm looking forward to the follow up classes.



Thanks to the STEPS program, I feel empowered to make my own decisions. I have learned how to do my own hiring of a homecare worker, and how to have a good working relationship through communications. As a senior, and being disabled, I am thankful for the resources that the program has shown me.



I wanted to take this opportunity to express my pleasure in a program that was well thought out, presented well and deserving of praise. That is the STEPS Program. I took the course from HASL. Rachel was wonderful in her presentation and the warm way she was able to encourage communication between her and the participants. I cannot believe how the information made me think about how I could make my home a more safe and helpful workplace, and keep it a home too. The task and priority lists I have are going to be different than that of any other client; the format of the STEPS program book allows for this to be possible. I, again, would like to take this opportunity to thank the people who made this class possible. Thanks to all.



Since attending the STEPS Program I have been better able to problem solve with my caregivers. I feel more empowered to communicate rather than to get angry and upset which has helped me feel less stressed.



I really enjoyed Myra, Dawn, and Jennifer for presenting me with new information about ways to manage my caregiver better. I was at my wits end with trying to communicate with my care provider. The workshop was pretty much an overview of what I already knew, however it was brought to my attention that creating a new job description along with a task list would allow me to communicate effectively with my caregiver so that she would know exactly what I expected from her. The task list was something new to me since I had never used it before and that is what I found most useful. The task list was not only helpful for my current homecare worker, but it also is very beneficial for anyone who would have to step in to take care of my needs. The task list describes word for word my short morning personal care routine, and progresses to the evening routines. I am very thankful for this training.



I thought the training was excellent, very informative, and made me feel more comfortable. I can now take charge in a positive way. The training provided communication ideas that will work for me and my homecare worker.



The STEPS training helped me become a better communicator with my homecare worker. I attended a workshop and the part where we discussed empowerment really hit home. The girls that gave the presentation opened my eyes to the fact that I have a say as to how I am taken care of. After the workshop I went home and created a task list, which I then shared with my homecare worker. On this task list I was sure to include how I want things done, and I discussed the task list with my homecare worker and since then things have improved.



I think this training helps me to be a better employer and I now know how to handle various roles. I wish I had thought to have a family member present for the training. I think this training is great! We need time for refresher classes from time to time. The training is fun and you learn a lot! It helps provide ideas and tools to improve interactions with homecare workers if used properly.



I was happy with my homecare worker, but felt I needed more hours than my homecare worker was available. After receiving in-depth STEPS training on interviewing and hiring a homecare worker, I can now say that as a result of gaining hiring skills from the STEPS training I now have two homecare workers meeting my needs, enabling me to live independently.



STORIES FROM CASE MANAGERS

After signing up for STEPS training, Gary, one of the consumers on my case load, shared that he really liked the quality of his care, but had a question about his caregiver's time sheet. His STEPS Trainer suggested a strategy for addressing the issue. Turns out, all Gary needed was confidence and a little support to convey to his caregiver about the need to keep records that both of them could understand. Two days later, Gary called the trainer back, convinced that she had spoken with his caregiver about the issue, when in reality it was Gary's clarity and confidence that was responsible for the change that resulted in solidifying a respectful working relationship. Gary is now more confident, and understands a key responsibility of being an employer. And he has yet to attend the full training. Empowerment is indeed powerful!



I attended a STEPS workshop and was so impressed that I asked my supervisor to coordinate a workshop for other case managers so that they'd all understand the value and benefits of offering the training to every eligible consumer!



One of my clients had some conflict resolution issues and had a volatile experience with his previous homecare worker as well as numerous instances of conflict with his current caregiver, neighbors and friends. This was not going to be an easy case, but when I described the STEPS program to him he was willing to give it a try. Once he realized that I was motivated to resolve these issues and was rooting for him to find a homecare worker that would work for him he was reassured. After three sessions with his STEPS Trainer he had set up a few interviews. I am happy to report that, after he interviewed some very capable applicants, he offered the job to one of them and they accepted! Now every time I talk to him he sings the praises of the STEPS program instead of telling me about his latest conflict!

The best part is the whole process was extremely easy! I gave the client a STEPS brochure, discussed it briefly, and then offered to make a referral for him. The STEPS Trainer took it from there! The client is still very happy with his new caregiver. Thanks to Rachel and HASL for their good work!! My client highly recommends the program! I look forward to the continued success of our partnership.



KZ is a 22-year-old woman with cerebral palsy who was on my case load and was new to having a homecare worker. The STEPS class helped her gain knowledge, self-confidence, and self-assurance about how to interact with her homecare worker and how to direct her own care. Through STEPS she has gained knowledge of her rights and responsibilities as an employer of a homecare worker. The assertiveness part of STEPS taught her how to communicate her needs in a forthright and non-apologetic way. The task list part helped her to be more specific about how she wants things done. Prior to the training, she was meek and apologetic with her “requests”. The chapter about safety in the home got her started on her own safety plan and gave her tools to implement it.

As a case manager I was on the verge of disqualifying a client with a traumatic brain injury due to the time it was taking him to hire a homecare worker. Upon hearing from the Trainer that the gentleman had attended a STEPS workshop and was scheduling follow-up guide-on-the-side training, I delayed the action to allow the client an opportunity to fill the role of employer.



One woman on my case load, BC, who is in her 60s has diabetes, is legally blind, and is in chronic pain. Prior to the STEPS training, she had been going through homecare workers in rapid succession. In desperation, she'd hire the first one who came in the door, only to regret it soon thereafter when they'd either quit or she'd terminate them. BC became more and more impatient, which showed in her communication with her homecare workers. The STEPS training impressed on her that she was the employer, not the other way around, and that she had every right to have things done her way rather than the homecare worker's. It also got her thinking about her abrupt and impatient manner with her workers.

STEPS Trainers helped her in the process of developing a task list and writing an advertisement for a homecare worker. With encouragement and coaching, BC came up with a list of interview questions and selected a homecare worker to hire. She found the STEPS training helpful. It helped her feel empowered to hire whom she wanted, comfortable in asking for what she wants, and more knowledgeable about how to break down tasks in a clear and straightforward manner. She found the checklists helpful in breaking down the whole process of hiring and employing a homecare worker.



I am a Program Manager and our office has been working with an older lady, who said she was going to have to leave her own home since she didn't think she could find and manage a homecare worker. She went to a STEPS training and received some additional one-to-one help. As a result, she decided she can employ a homecare worker, has canceled plans to go into foster care, and will remain in her own home.



I was working with a senior who was a relatively new client and was accessing a homecare provider through an in-home agency. Her provider agency had recently announced that they were terminating services in her area. Her alternatives were to find another in-home agency or hire a homecare worker herself. She had previously seen a flier for the STEPS program and now felt that it was definitely needed. After taking the class she felt educated and empowered. It went a long way in providing stability in her case. As a case manager, it was definitely a positive experience for me. I am willing to help out, but the homecare worker doesn't work for me. My client now has a whole new set of tools to work with.



A STORY FROM A HOMECARE WORKER

I “walked away” from a consumer-employer about a year ago because my employer didn’t recognize the difference between being an employer and a friend and frequently asked me to do extra tasks and became upset when I did not agree to do those tasks.

This consumer-employer recently saw me at a friend’s home and said she had attended the STEPS training. She asked if I would consider working for her again since she now understood the importance of asking a homecare worker to do only tasks that were on her ‘task list’, and better understood her role as the employer. I agreed and our employer-employee relationship is now going well.



CONTACT INFORMATION

**For more information contact the STEPS
Training Coordinator at:
1-877-277-0513
500 Summer St NE
Salem OR 97301
www.orsteps.org
OR
Contact your local
Center for Independent Living**

Center For Independent Living	Counties (Service Area)
CORIL (Central Oregon Resources for Independent Living) (541) 388-8103	Crook, Deschutes & Jefferson (Service Area 1)
EOCIL (Eastern Oregon Center For Independent Living) (541) 889-3119	Baker, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Hood River, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wasco & Wheeler (Service Area 2 & 10)

HASL (Handicap Awareness & Support League) (541) 479-4275	Jackson & Josephine (Service Area 3)
ILR (Independent Living Resources) (503) 232-7411	Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, Multnomah, Tillamook & Washington (Service Areas 4, 12 & 13)
LILA (Lane Independent Living Alliance) (541) 607-7020	Benton, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Polk & Yamhill (Service Areas 5, 6 & 11)
SCILS (South Coast Independent Living Services) (541) 469-8887	Coos & Curry (Service Area 7)
SPOKES Unlimited (541) 883-7547	Klamath & Lake (Service Area 8)
UVDN (Umpqua Valley disAbilities Network) (541) 672-6336	Douglas (Service Area 9)



STATE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL

Promoting choice, access, and inclusion for people with disabilities.



OREGON
Home Care
Commission