

Final Report
2015

Consumer Satisfaction with Aging & Disability Resource Connection of Oregon: Round 4

Part 6. Consumer Concerns, Recommendations, and Satisfaction

Submitted to
Oregon State Unit on Aging, Department of Human Services



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Part 6. Consumer Concerns, Recommendations, and Satisfaction

Consumer Concerns

All participants were asked if they had concerns that had not been met by the ADRC and 25% did, a similar response over time (Table 57). When asked about those concerns, about one-third of those with concerns indicated a general need for services and resources. Some were still waiting, others were uncertain about what could be done to help them, and a large segment of participants expressed frustration with the lack of follow up: These comments were typical and are consistent with the negative comments reported earlier.

I didn't get the help they promised me, even weeks after getting approval.

I was in a very bad situation and I did not know what to do emotionally or financially and I have not received any help.

I have very big concerns that they are going to get anybody out there for them to do the home help that they say they will do for my mother because it isn't happening. In that area they have definitely flunked.

They have not been addressed because I have not been contacted as a follow up yet.

Similar to the 2013 ADRC report, others described more specific needs related to the original reasons for their contact with the ADRC. These involved transportation, housing, health concerns, and help with Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs).

Help with food, transportation, having an attendant go to appointments with me.

I do not have a place to stay after tonight.

I have not received affordable housing assistance yet.

I am waiting to hear about dental work.

I need physical therapy, I am not really mobile enough to get out and do the things I should be able to do... I don't know what is going to happen in the future.

They were going to find help with help at home but have not done so.

Consumer Recommendations

Participants were asked if they had recommendations for the ADRC. Approximately half gave suggestions or made comments for improving the services of the ADRC. These were categorized as customer service, services and resources, outreach and awareness, and staff attributes.

Customer service. The most common area for improvement reported was customer service. Follow-up as phone calls were highly desired as indicated by these comments:

Perhaps they might not be so curt in their answers. If they can't help, they could take a few minutes to refer you to other services. They could be a little more concerned. They could actually return your call. I called four times and the wrong person called me back. They referred me to another wrong person. When the first person I called actually called me back it was more than a week later, and I ended up just hanging up because I was already livid.

They need to do something about their phone system. You wait and wait, and finally get through, then you have to leave a message. It takes time for them to get back to you; sometimes you have to repeatedly call. Sometimes their mailboxes are full and you can't leave a message.

Help with navigating available resources was also an area of importance in customer service. Two respondents stated,

That they would actually provide an advocate who was able to walk through the steps with the person that needs the help.

Take the time to listen to what the individual's needs are and stay on the line to help them maneuver the system so they can find help.

Services and Resources. A large segment of recommendations focused on the services offered by the ADRC. Many participants favored an expansion of the services, workforce, and funding. Two respondents connected the availability of funding and services with the quality of following up.

We made a decision that it is a very good organization. The biggest problem is just getting them to come out. They seem short staffed. Once we get them out here, they do their job well, As far as the people being nice, they can't be any nicer. They just need more people to be able to come out and help the clients.

If they had a bigger budget they could provide more people with benefits.

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ly valued among many respondents. For example, two senior consumer said,

They came to me. Somebody made a call and I was grateful.

...The phone conversation and the in home evaluations were excellent... We think that once we get someone in the home on a regular basis I think we could say it is exceptional too...

Many respondents also recommended coordinated services to streamline the process of accessing resources. Two expressed confusion about understanding the service system.

Not all the people there know what's going on. Some will say something and change around and another person will say they shouldn't have said that to you. It happens to me everywhere.

There are various layers and groups, it is overwhelming when you first start looking at them all.

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e participants offered recommendations about communication efforts to convey and receive

information. Many expressed the need to inform consumers of the available services, offering comparative differences between different programs or resources. A few thought a newsletter or brochure would be helpful for consumers to understand available services and to make the agency more visible. Some requested that the ADRC provide a list or chart of all available services and where to find them. Suggestions included,

Maybe a brochure they could send that could explain what they do, what can they help with and what can't they help with, so you know what to ask for and what not to ask for.

Make the process less confusing. There are so many agencies and services. It would be great to have a graphic to show how they are all related.

Staff attributes. Some participants felt that workers needed to be more knowledgeable about services, resources, and qualifications. This ties in to the desire for more streamlined, coordinated services. The location of the resource centers was also an area of recommendation. Some respondents expressed the need for convenient, accessible, and centralized locations with adequate parking for people with physical limitations.

I felt I was more knowledgeable than my case supervisor. If I had known I would have a different situation. I knew more than the ADRC Representative.

... I wouldn't let people come in hopeful and have people not knowing where to send them or not getting them help because they make ten cents above the required amount...

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ations highlighted the value of the ADRC for consumers and family members as indicated by these comments:

Keep on doing what you're doing. They are so competent and wonderful.

Just continue to be there for the people that need you.

They were there to help and I could at least relax a bit.

I needed all the help they provided.

I would not have found the resources without the help of the ADRC.

They...brought peace to the family.

They have been an excellent help.

They helped to orient me to the system and without it I would not be as good.

Overall Satisfaction

In spite of the concerns described above, the majority of participants reported that the ADRC was helpful overall (see Table 58). Responses in Round 4 were similar to Round 3, with over well over half reporting the ADRC was very helpful and another 20% rating it as somewhat helpful; 6%, reported that the ADRC had not been at all helpful. Similarly, an important indicator of consumer satisfaction involves participant willingness to recommend the ADRC to others. No specific benchmarks were identified for recommending the ADRC to a friend or family, but consistent with previous years, 92% of participants would recommend the ADRC (Table 59).

To give an overall picture of how the different elements of the ADRC and participants' experiences relate to one another, a variable of overall satisfaction was computed by combining responses to general helpfulness of the ADRC and whether they would recommend the ADRC to others. Other composite variables included staff attributes (i.e., respectfulness, knowledgeable, ability to explain how to get services), options counselor attributes (i.e., helping consumers explore choices, supporting decisions, considering consumer opinions, helping to understand the service system), number of needs identified, and number of services received. Also examined was the relationship between these variables and participants' understanding of the service system, whether they had received the information they needed, amount of contact with the ADRC, and their assessment of how easy it would be to contact the ADRC if they needed to. The correlations among these variables are presented in table 60.

Overall satisfaction with the ADRC was significantly correlated with better understanding of the service system. Staff characteristics such as being respectful, knowledgeable, supporting consumer decisions were strongly correlated with overall satisfaction. Reports of positive outcomes, ease of contacting the ADRC if needed in the future, and receiving the information needed when participants initially contacted the ADRC were also positively associated with overall satisfaction. Interestingly, overall satisfaction was not associated with the amount of need or services received. Unlike earlier rounds, the amount of contact with the ADRC was not associated with general satisfaction in 2014 (Table 60).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The ADRCs are clearly providing services that are valuable to consumers and their family members. ADRCs need to continue building capacity to meet the growing demand for services and to address concerns of consumers who are not able to find services that meet their needs. This includes increasing community partnerships, increasing follow up, and continuing staff development. Specific recommendations include:

- Continue to improve customer service where needed through staff training and mentoring.
- Continue to build skills and resources to communicate with consumers who may have limited capacity to understand the service system.
- Continue to build partnerships and expand service availability.
- Continue the good work of respecting consumers and providing a vital service.