# Options Counseling Interactive Workshop for Program Planners and Managers

# Technical Assistance Exchange

## Introductions

**Technical Assistance Resources**

- Weekly Electronic Newsletters
- Websites
- Resource Materials
- Examples from the Field
- Grantee Surveys

**Building a Grantee Community**

- Teleconferences/Webinars
- Trainings
- National Meetings
- Online Forum

# Learning Objectives

- Explore design and implementation issues related to developing an options counseling program.
- Reflect on your own organizational capacity to implement options counseling.
- Learn about some strategies and approaches other states have used in developing options counseling
- Hear about tools you can use for training staff to deliver options counseling.

# AoA Vision for ADRCs

Aging and Disability Resource Centers…

**every** community in the nation

**highly visible** and **trusted**

people of **all incomes and ages**

information on the **full range** of long term support options

point of entry for **streamlined access** to services

# AoA's National Standard Development

## 2010/2011

- Group of states, experts, and stakeholders contributing through regular meetings
- Defining the parameters of options counseling (i.e. where it begins and ends and how it intersects with other ADRC functions)
- Establishing core competencies for options counselors
- Developing a comprehensive set of minimum national standards for options counseling.

Source: AoA 2010 Program Announcement

# AoA's National Standard Development

## Proposed Basic Components of OC Service Standards

- Service and Unit of Service Definition
- Outcome and Evaluation
- Service Design
  - How do people find out about the service
  - What triggers OC
  - How is it delivered
  - Components/Required activities
  - Staff/Skills-Attributes/Training/Administration
  - Record Keeping/Documentation/IT
- Partnerships
- Maintaining Policies and Procedures
- Other State Specific (for example, mandatory reporting; emergency planning; added training; degree requirements; etc.)

# Foundations of Options Counseling

## Value of Options Counseling

- Institutional placements often occur without consideration of available community-based options
- Lots of information is available on-line and from different I&R providers, but it can be complex, contradictory, and confusing
- Families need individualized support making decisions about long-term care
- Few people plan ahead for long term support needs

## Poll

**I attended Part I: Art of Options Counseling**

- Yes
- No

# Foundations of Options Counseling

## What is Options Counseling?

**In your own words, please define options counseling**

# Foundations of Options Counseling

## Defining Options Counseling

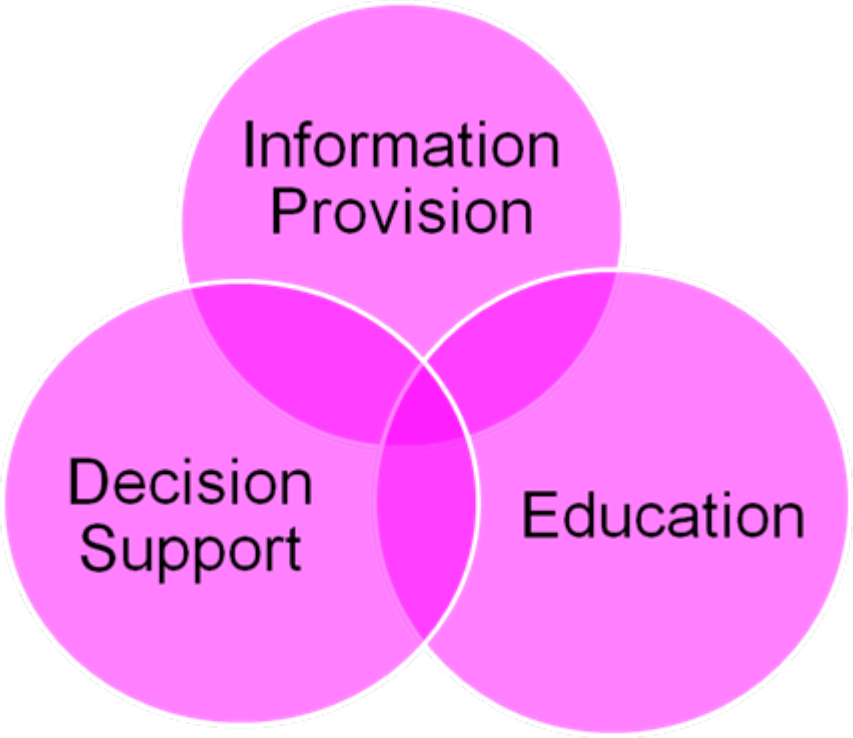
Long-Term Support Options Counseling is an interactive decision-support process whereby consumers, family members and/or significant others are supported in their deliberations to determine appropriate long-term support choices in the context of the consumer's needs, preferences, values, and individual circumstances.

*Options Counseling is the "value-added" for ADRCs!*

# What is Options Counseling?

## Decision Support

**Information + Education + Personal Experience = Knowledge**



# Design Considerations

## Today's Discussion Topics

- Who will be offered options counseling?
- What protocols will be followed?
- What will be involved in actual counseling?
- Who will conduct it? Staff qualifications, training needs, etc.
- How will it be tracked and evaluated?

# When Does Options Counseling Occur?

## Situations

- When an individual is considering a move
- When an individual has immediate or short range long-term care needs
- When a family caregiver needs help to continue providing care
- When a long distance caregiver has concerns about the increased frailty or care needs of a family member
- When an child with a disability is transitioning from a school-based system to the adult service system

## System flow

- During provision of I&R
- During SHIP counseling
- With hospital discharge
- During an assessment of need
- When applying for publicly funded benefits
- While waiting on application to be processed
- After applying unsuccessfully for public programs
- After admission to a long-term care facility
- As part of transition from institution

# Who Will Receive Options Counseling?

## Poll

Please indicate if your state has some formal legislation, pre-admission screening or other formal way to ensure people have options counseling available to them?

- Yes
- No
- Planning

# Who Will Receive Options Counseling?

## State Example: Massachusetts

- 2006 - Chapter 211, a bill mandating Long-term Care Options Counseling
- Three ADRCs piloting the program
- Specialized staff providing options counseling
- Triggers
  - Partnering with hospitals, short-term rehab centers and nursing facilities to identify individuals appropriate for options counseling
  - Individuals who call ADRC for information and present as needing assistance

# Who Will Receive Options Counseling?

## State Example

**Arkansas legislation (Act 516)**

Options counseling must be offered to:

- An individual or their representative who seeks counseling
- Newly admitted individuals to NH and AL Level II regardless of payment source
- All individuals seeking Medicaid reimbursement

# What is Involved in Options Counseling?

## Process/Protocols

**Common elements in state options counseling protocols**

- Assessing consumer/ family needs
- Connecting consumers with service providers and empowering consumers to make connections
- Helping consumers weigh pros and cons in deciding course of action (decision support)
- Counseling with consumer and support network throughout process

Source: From 2008 survey of Georgia, New Jersey, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Indiana

# What is Involved in Options Counseling?

## Six core competencies of options counseling

1. Determining the need for OC
2. Assessing needs, values and preferences
3. Understanding and educating about public and private sector resources
4. Facilitating self-direction / determination
5. Encouraging future orientation
6. Following-up

**ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS**

# What is Involved in Options Counseling?

## Process/Protocols

**Our ADRC conducts options counseling in person.**

- **Yes**
- **No**
- **Planning**

# What is Involved in Options Counseling?

## State Example: Wisconsin Reporting Definitions

**Provided Options Counseling** - Options counseling is an interactive decision support process whereby consumers are assisted to evaluate and weigh their long-term care service options (e.g., assistance evaluating housing options, assistance sorting through home care and personal care options, helping a person to decide to move or stay in their current residence

**Provided Information & Assistance** includes: listening to the inquirer, assessing his or her needs, helping the inquirer to connect with service providers or gain information to meet the identified needs (e.g., provided assistance locating transportation services, chore services, employment and training options, provided linkages to elder abuse and adults at risk system, referred for benefit counseling

Source: Wisconsin ADRC Activity Reporting Available at http://dhs.wi.gov/ltcare/pdf/ADRCActivityReportingDefinitions.pdf

# What is Involved in Options Counseling?

## State Example: Wisconsin Reporting Definitions cont.

**Provided Short-Term Service Coordination -** ADRC staff member served as the "coordinator" of services and the main contact person on behalf of an individual for agencies and others providing services that the individual has chosen. The complexity, diversity and/or quantity of needs and providers necessitate coordination that the individual can not perform and there is no one else who can do so.

**Provided Enrollment Consultation -** ADRC assisted an individual who is found eligible for publicly funded long-term care in selecting and enrolling in a publicly funded long-term care program (e.g., Family Care, Partnership, IRIS).

Source: Wisconsin ADRC Activity Reporting Available at http://dhs.wi.gov/ltcare/pdf/ADRCActivityReportingDefinitions.pdf

# Who Provides Options Counseling?

## Various Models Used By States

- Front-line staff – first contact with consumers
  - information and referral/assistance workers
- Specialized staff
  - conducts only OC and possibly assists with other functions
- Specialized staff with minimum qualifications

# Who Provides Options Counseling?

## State Examples

**Wisconsin "LTC Options Counseling"**

- I & A staff
- Bachelor of Arts or Science degree or license to practice as a registered nurse
- At least one year of experience working with older adults and/or people with disabilities
- AIRS certification with in one year of employment

**New Hampshire "Long-Term Support Counselor"**

- Masters preferred, Bachelor's degree accepted with minimum of three years social work experience, preferably in the areas of aging, disabilities, community health, nursing home or hospital discharge planning.
- Experience working with older adults and or adults with disabilities

# Staff Training

## Orientation

**Topics**

- Introduction to the ADRC
- Introduction to the community (public and private resources available)
- Considerations related to specific to populations served (e.g. working with individuals with physical disabilities)
- How to provide decision support (concept, shadowing, coaching)
- Importance of documentation and follow-up (IT systems)

**Tools**

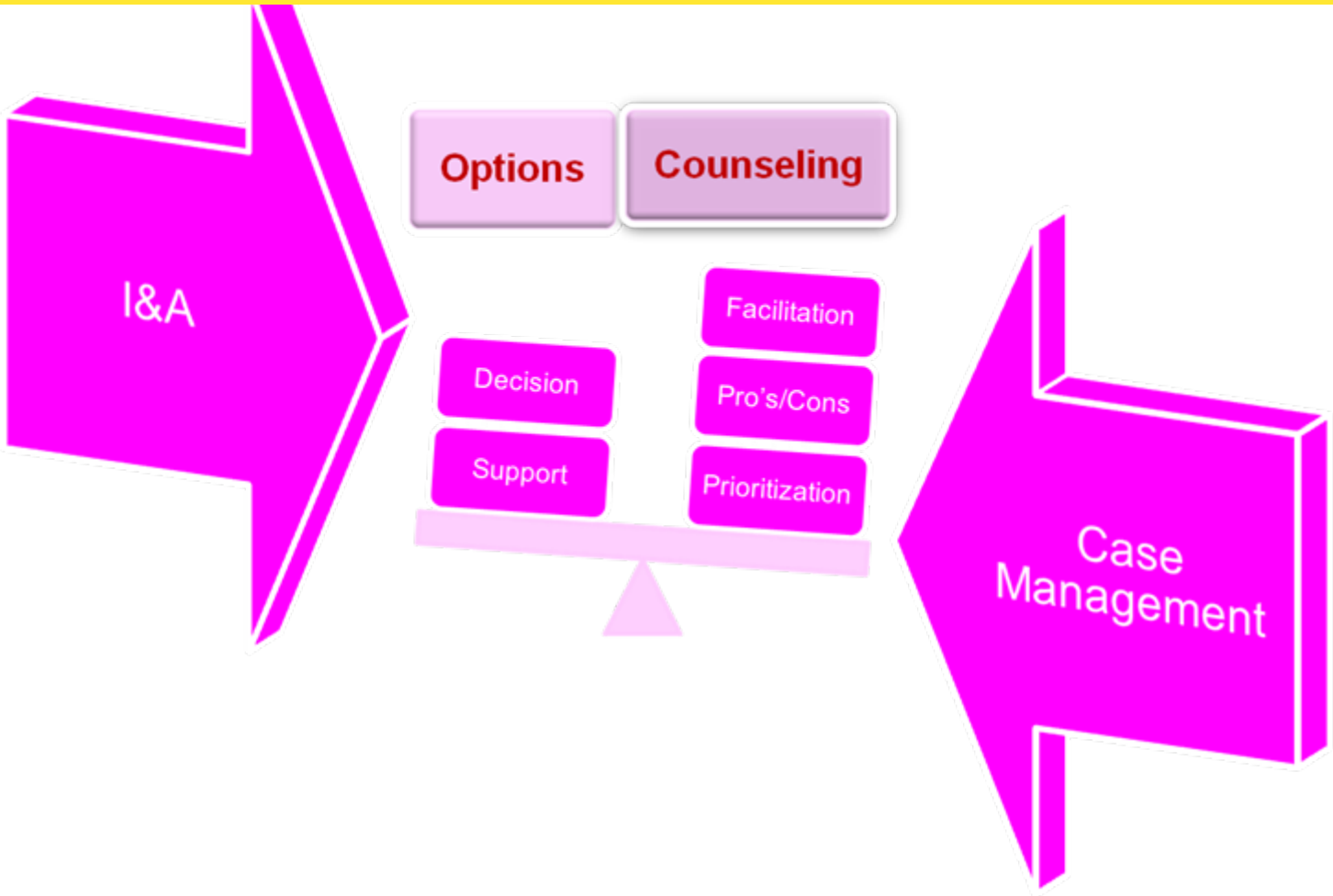
- Training Plan
- Orientation Checklist
- Supervisor Guide

**Examples**

- WI Resource Centered Document
  - http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/ltcare/pdf/rcd08-2.pdf
- Orientation Chart ADRC of Brown County

# Staff Training

## In the Middle



# Staff Training

## Wisconsin Training Plan

**Sample: Information and Assistance Specialist Training Needs Plan**

**This sample training plan is designed to provide a format for documenting training needs of individual I&A Specialists.**
**ADRC of _____**
**Name of I&A Specialist _____**

| Date | Knowledge or skill area and level (beginner, etc.) | How learning will take place (OC toolkit, mentoring, etc.) | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |

# Staff Training

## On-going Training

- Continuous identification of training needs
- Local/state resources
- National resources
  - Alliance for Information and Referral Systems
  - Technical Assistance Exchange
  - Universities
  - Decision support tools (person-centered planning, motivational interviewing)
- Weekly staff meetings
  - Communication
  - Scenarios
  - Discuss community resources
  - Review policies and procedures
  - Fosters a team approach and atmosphere

# Tracking and Evaluation

## Poll

**How do you plan on evaluating options counseling?**

- Consumer satisfaction surveys
- Tracking outcome of consumer decisions made
- Measuring cost savings
- All of the above
- None of the above

# Tracking and Evaluation

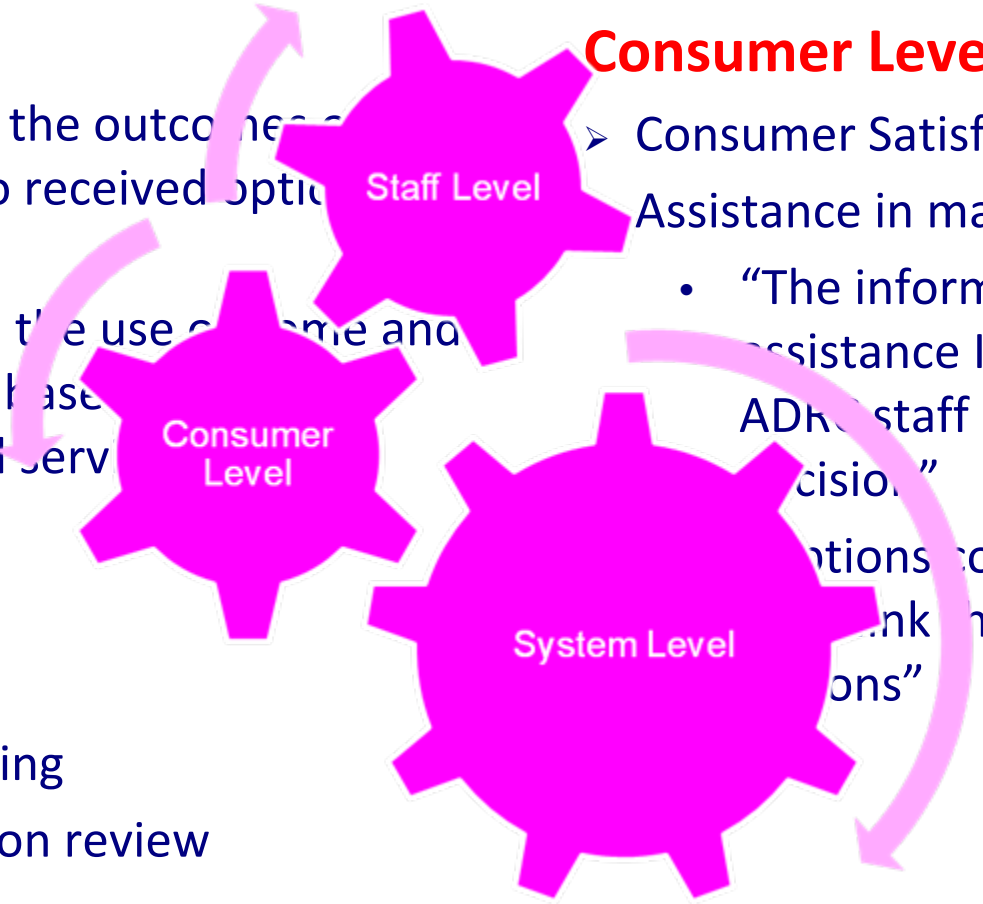
## Suggested Measures

### System Level

- Follow-up on the outcomes of individuals who received options counseling
  - Impact on the use of home and community based vs. institutional services

### Staff level

- Call listening
- Secret Shopping
- Documentation review
- Peer Review




### Consumer Level

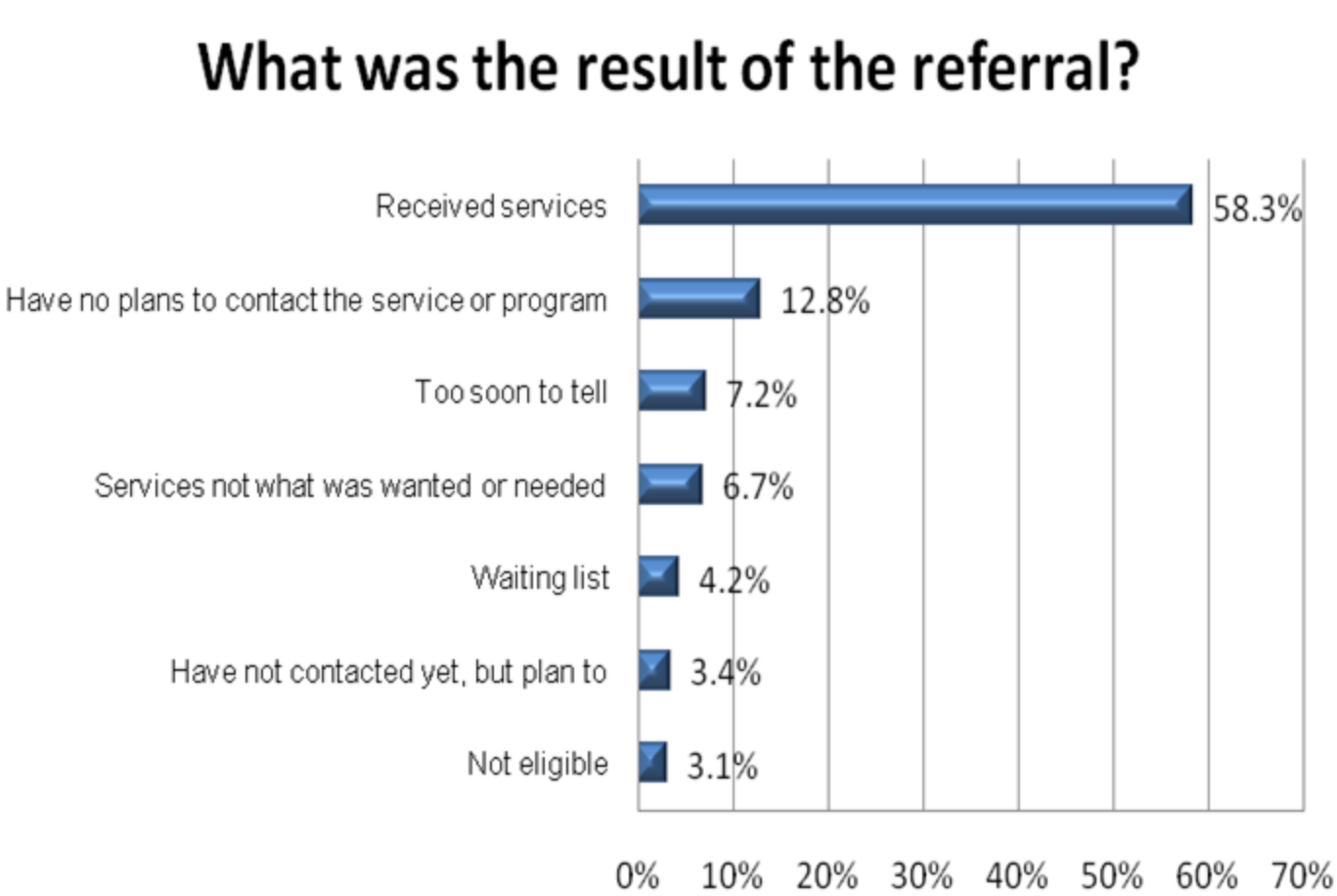
- Consumer Satisfaction

Assistance in making a decision

- "The information and assistance I received from ADRC staff helped me make a decision."
- "Options counseling helped me think through my options"

# Results from Wisconsin Evaluation

**"What happened? What didn't?" 42% resulted in other than "service"**



# Delivering a "Packge"

## of Customer Satisfaction in 2010

| | |
|---|---|
| **Personalization** | Consideration for the customer's and their family's individual needs and circumstances, following up to see how they were doing |
| **Accessibility** | Convenience of location and hours, ease of finding the phone number |
| **Culture of Hospitality** | Responsiveness, courtesy and privacy when talking to staff |
| **Knowledge** | Offering knowledge about a wide range of services and offering the customer easy access to information |
| **Guidance** | Explaining each step clearly, helping to navigate the system and fill out paperwork |
| **Empowerment** | Helping the customer to explore their choices, weigh the pros and cons, and connect to needed services |