



# Doing More with Less

Replicable, Innovative and Cost-Saving Measures  
in Adult Protective Services

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**National Adult Protective Services Association**

# About NAPSA

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- Formed in 1989, the goal of NAPSA is to provide Adult Protective Services (APS) programs a forum for sharing information, solving problems, and improving the quality of services for victims of elder and vulnerable adult mistreatment.
- Its mission is to strengthen the capacity of APS at the national, state, and local levels, to effectively and efficiently recognize, report, and respond to the needs of elders and adults with disabilities who are the victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, and to prevent such abuse whenever possible.

# About NAPSA

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## Current Committees

- **Public Policy**

- advocacy for national legislation, policies and increased funding
- education of policy makers
- promoting public knowledge

- **Education**

- developing educational content for APS programs
- disseminating professional training materials
- promoting training opportunities for APS programs
- developing, maintaining and disseminating Standards of Practice, and
- developing and providing guidance in an advisory capacity for a national certificate program.

# About NAPSA

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## Current Committees

- **Research**

- supporting research to better understand and respond to abuse, neglect, self-neglect, and exploitation as they may affect older persons or adults with disabilities
- expanding APS's participation in practice-related research.

- **Communications**

- advancing NAPSA's mission and strategic goals related to marketing and communications
- promoting the quality and consistency of NAPSA's internal and external branding and messaging

# About NAPSA

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## Current Committees

- **Membership**

- working to expand NAPSA membership
- expanding member and non-member involvement with the organization
- identifying unaddressed needs of current members

- **Conference**

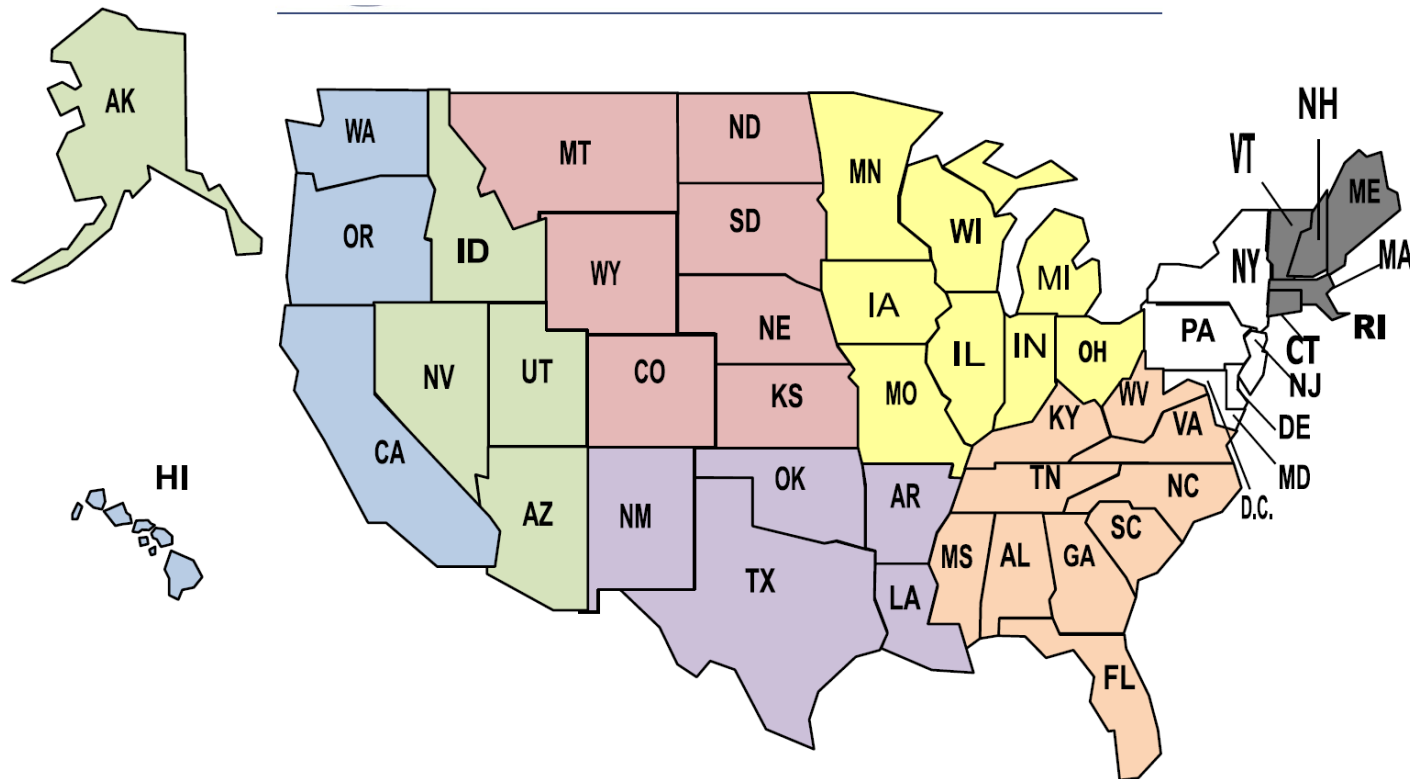
- Via subcommittees, works to plan the annual NAPSA conference attended by 600 professionals each year
  - Presentations
  - Awards
  - Scholarships
  - Entertainment
  - Sponsors

# About NAPSA

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## Regional Representatives

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# About the NAPSRC

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- Two year grant funded by the Administration for Community Living/Administration on Aging
  - Expires January 31, 2016
- NAPSRC has the first federal funding *specifically designated* for APS
- [www.napsa-now.org/napsrc](http://www.napsa-now.org/napsrc)
- Goal “enhance the quality, consistency, and effectiveness of elder abuse APS prevention by identifying APS secondary prevention best practices, and compiling and disseminating the “lessons learned,” and providing targeted technical assistance to APS administrators.

# About Me

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- Have worked in social services in vulnerable adult abuse for 15 years
- Former adult protective services caseworker and program administrator in Ohio
- Worked at the national level five years, formerly with the National Center on Elder Abuse



# About the Project/Report

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- Project aim was to investigate cost-effective and promising practices in APS
- Since there is no federal “home” for APS, peer support is very important
- Over 40 programs/practices were submitted from across the US
- Team of peers selected the programs to focus on

# Programs Selected

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## Site Visits

- New York City Human Resources Administration
- Philadelphia Corporation for Aging
- Maryland Department of Human Resources
- Fairfax County (VA) Dept. of Family Services
- Sacramento (CA) County Senior and Adult Services

## Phone Interviews

- Alaska Division of Seniors & Disabilities Services
- Massachusetts Disabled Persons Protection Commission
- Florida Department of Children & Families
- New York City Elder Abuse Center at Weill Cornell

Let's Play...

True  
Or  
False?

# Highlights from the 2012 Survey of State Adult Protective Services Programs

[www.napsa-now.org/baselinesurvey](http://www.napsa-now.org/baselinesurvey)

True  
Or  
False?

Most APS  
programs  
investigate cases of  
abuse involving  
individuals age 18+

**TRUE**

Only 14% of programs DO NOT  
investigate cases of abuse involving  
those 18-59 (n=51)

True  
Or  
False?

Half of APS  
Programs DO NOT  
investigate abuse  
in nursing homes.

**TRUE**

45% investigate in nursing homes  
59% investigate in assisted livings  
69% investigate in board/care homes  
41% investigate in DD facilities  
39% investigate in MH facilities

True  
Or  
False?

Most APS  
programs have  
centralized (state-  
level)  
intake/reporting.

**FALSE**

Only half (50%) of APS  
programs have centralized  
intake (n=50)

True  
Or  
False?

Several states  
report average  
caseloads of over  
100 clients per  
investigator.

**TRUE**

10% of respondents reported  
average caseloads of over 100  
clients.

# NYC Human Resources Administration

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Human Resources  
Administration  
Department of  
Social Services



# NYC Human Resources Administration

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- Largest metropolitan APS office in the US
- Receives more than 1500 reports each month
- 220 Caseworkers in seven separate offices (North Manhattan, South Manhattan, North Brooklyn, South Brooklyn, Bronx, Queens, Staten Island)
- Averages 7,000 active APS cases at any given time
- Two practices focused on in the report
  - Prevention Services Program
  - Financial Management Services

# Prevention Services Program (PSP)

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- Begun appx. 10 years ago
- Enrolls clients whose cases have been investigated and stabilized with services
- Uses volunteer “Contact Person” for each client who reports to the caseworker on client status monthly
- Caseworker visits client on a quarterly basis
- Each PSP caseworker maintains a caseload of up to 55 clients
- PSP caseworkers work exclusively with PSP consumers (i.e. do not investigate new cases) for indefinite period

# PSP Contact Person

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- Most important part of the program
- Defined as “stable and involved family members, friends, or agency representatives who see the client (or receive reports from other agency staff) at least once a month.”
- Cannot be anyone alleged to have been involved in abuse, neglect or exploitation
- Typically staff at an agency working with consumer, a neighbor or a family member

# PSP2 Program

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- Variation on the original program
- Begun in 2012
- Do not use a Contact Person
- Caseworker must visit client every other month
- Best for consumers that have no one who can serve as a Contact Person

# Financial Services Management (FSM) Program

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- Also been in place for over 10 years
- APS serves as Social Security representative payee
- FSM unit consists of 20 staff
- HRA accepts client income and expends funds for rent, bills, insurance, etc.
- An annual budget is completed with each client

# Financial Services Management (FSM) Program

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- Agency uses a very sophisticated software package
- Maintains a savings account for each client for unforeseen expenses
- Client receives remaining funds via check, deposit or cash from caseworker

# Benefits of PSP and FSM

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- Can stabilize cases known for coming back to the system
- Less restrictive than guardianship
- Helps decrease incidence of eviction, which accounts for >50% of NYC cases

# Philadelphia Corporation for Aging

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PHILADELPHIA CORPORATION FOR AGING™



# Philadelphia Corporation for Aging

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- Area Agency on Aging based APS program
- Staff of 20 investigators with 2000 APS cases per year
- Only investigates cases of those age 60+

# Philadelphia Corporation for Aging

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Focused on enhancing response to financial exploitation

- Financial Exploitation Specialist
- Financial Exploitation Prevention Taskforce
- Utilize a Certified Public Accountant volunteer

# Financial Exploitation Specialist

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- Caseworker/Investigator position
- Only handles exploitation cases referred by caseworkers
- Current staff in position has a law enforcement background
- Has established relationships with prominent local institutions (central access point)

# Financial Exploitation Prevention Taskforce

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- Private & public members
  - Local prosecutors
  - APS
  - Financial Institutions
- Engages case review (not primary emphasis)
- Education, awareness and collaboration (primary emphasis)

# Financial Exploitation Prevention Taskforce

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- Recent meeting focused on “gypsy” scams
- Presentation by state police investigator
- Group discussed bank branch closure impacts on older adults
- Establishes relationships among agencies

# Volunteer Certified Public Accountant

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- Referred by caseworkers and specialist
- Review of more complicated financial arrangements
- Better able to track and locate exploitation patterns
- NOTE – PA has statute that allows APS access to records

# Maryland Department of Human Resources

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# Maryland Department of Human Resources

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- As of 2013, no increase in funding since 2008
- In 2009, DHR began the Adult Services Policy and Practice Initiative (ASPPI)
  - caseload priority analysis
  - realigning practice to family and community based practice
  - developing resilience to vicarious trauma
- Developed measurable outcomes for each focus area



# Caseload Priority Analysis

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- Focus primary intervention efforts toward cases with the most need
- Victims assessed with higher risk levels are given priority within a caseload with the goal of stabilization
- State-developed risk assessment
- Systematic review put in place at specific intervals
- Monitors chronic repeat cases as well as case plan goals

# Realigning practice to family and community-based

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- Prior to ASPPI, were often working with cases long term
- Services were transitioned to external informal and formal support systems, when appropriate
- Measureable outcomes include:
  - A documented increase in family and community involvement, an increase in service plans that reflect community involvement, and
  - a documented increase during intervention and assessment periods in the number of contacts made to family and the community on behalf of a client.

# Developing resilience to vicarious trauma

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- Vicarious trauma occurs when an individual who was not an immediate witness to the trauma absorbs and integrates disturbing aspects of the traumatic experience into his or her own functioning (Wendt Center for Loss and Healing, 2011)
- DHR developed resources, procedures and policies that target vicarious trauma and its effects

# Additional Info

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- System first piloted in seven offices across the state
- “Change Teams” helped the transition and included staff at all levels of organization
- Strategy allowed for better buy-in among all staff
- Decreased the time needed to intervene and refocused where the attention is given

# Fairfax County Department of Family Services

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# Fairfax County Department of Family Services

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- County administered system
- County APS staff of 22
- Fairfax County is suburban Washington, DC
- Despite a median income of \$100K+, experienced budget cuts
- Utilize a nurse practitioner and a psychologist to provide in-home assessment services (*assessment only*)

# Licensed Psychologist

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- Completes assessment in the client's home, which provides opportunity for better observation
- Report is issued to APS that could include intervention options such as guardianship
- Provides a high degree of credibility and certainty to the decision to pursue guardianship

# Nurse Practitioner

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- Completes assessment in the client's home, which provides opportunity for better observation
- Report includes assessment of complicated medical conditions that may be difficult for APS social workers
- Nurse provides consultation during staffing of cases and is available to testify in court



# Sacramento County Department of Health and Human Services

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# Sacramento County Department of Health and Human Services

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- California is the only state with 100% county supervised and administered APS programs
- Only one state APS staff (new)
- Has very strong county programs

# Sacramento County Department of Health and Human Services

- ~~Private-Public partnerships with area hospitals~~
  - Sutter Medical Center
  - Kaiser Permanente Medical Center
- Each hospital contributes \$25,000 toward the APS budget
- Each hospital has a dedicated APS worker

# Sacramento County Department of Health and Human Services

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- All medical center personnel deal with their appointed APS staff person
- Cases that would have entered the system anyway (does not include change in intake criteria)
- Majority referred by the emergency departments
- Cases are followed for up to six months

# Sacramento County Department of Health and Human Services

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- 24 hour – 3 day response instead of statutory 10 day response
- 63% decrease in usage of hospital services in sample of 33 clients
- Stronger relationships
- Hospitals and APS both positive about the program
- Advisory group meets regularly

# Additional Noteworthy Programs



# Alaska Division of Senior & Disabilities Services

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- Alaska is HUGE – 663,300 square miles (more than twice the size of Texas)
- There are 11 APS investigators for the entire state
- Travel eats up many resources and includes air travel
- Weather is an obvious issue
- Have instituted “community designees” to ascertain health and welfare of clients (nurses, law enforcement, etc.)
- Also use video conferencing via internet and satellite
  - Meetings among staff
  - Assessment of clients

# Massachusetts Disabled Persons Protection Commission

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- Independent state agency responsible for protecting adults with disabilities who are age 18-59
- MA is one of two states with a bifurcated APS system – separate agencies for younger and older adults (LA is the other)
- Law enforcement is co-located/housed within the APS program
  - Five officers are mandated by statute
  - Employed by MA State Police
  - Regularly conducts joint investigations with APS staff
  - Advantageous to have law enforcement and social services in the same office



# Florida Department of Children and Families

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- State with the largest number of older adults
- Employees use mobile computer equipment
- Utilize “hoteling” - Hoteling is a method of supporting unassigned seating in an office environment
  - Most APS professionals spend majority of time in the field
  - Hoteling allows for work wherever the staff are located
  - Many employees only in the office once per week
  - Is perceived as a benefit within office culture and aids retention of staff
  - One region reduced their physical space by 79%, saving money

# New York City Elder Abuse Center at Weill Cornell Medical College

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- Coordinates and facilitates three multidisciplinary teams in NYC
- Comprised of APS staff, prosecuting attorney, local banks, other community partners
- Systemic issues and cases are discussed
- Team facilitator (from Weill Cornell) ensures:
  - Logistics are coordinated
  - Feedback is constructive
  - Confidentiality is maintained
  - Professional boundaries are maintained

# Project Findings

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- APS clients are remarkably similar in every location. Based on the home visits conducted, APS clients seem to be very much alike although in different parts of the country.
- APS services are also fundamentally similar, although they may be provided through very different administrative structures with varying levels of resources. All rely on highly skilled social work, are client-focused, resourceful in problem-solving, persistent, and trying to provide the most effective services in the most efficient manner possible.

# Project Findings

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- Multi-disciplinary cooperation is at the heart of APS work, whether it is accomplished formally through established multi-disciplinary teams, or done informally.
- Faced with ever increasing caseloads as well as increased case complexity APS staff have worked to insure that services to clients are affected as minimally as possible.
- APS must focus on helping their staff cope with the increased workloads and the difficult nature of APS work.

# Recommendations

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- 1. Peer Support** - To enable APS programs throughout the country to grow and improve, they must be able to learn from one another; therefore, ongoing support to facilitate communications and peer support among APS programs is necessary.
- 2. Multidisciplinary Approach** – Nearly all of the programs profiled in this report utilize a multidisciplinary approach, often in very unique ways.
- 3. Specialization** - APS programs provide services to a very diverse population with even more diverse needs.

# Recommendations

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4. **Flexibility** – The use of technology and non-traditional work environments has served many of these programs well. Rethinking the way they work has paid off both from a budget and service standpoint.
5. **Data Collection** - Efforts must continue to expand the ability to collect data by and about APS programs.

# Report Available At...

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## Doing More with Less: Replicable, Innovative and Cost-Saving Measures in Adult Protective Services

*available at*

[www.napsa-now.org/promisingpractices](http://www.napsa-now.org/promisingpractices)

# These Slides Available At

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# Thank You

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