

# Caring Communities Resource Centers: Starting Where the Client Is

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March 29, 2012



# Program Outline:

- Goal: Assist individuals to remain independent by providing additional services to already existing senior sites within six different community settings.

## Key Services:

- Health screenings/education by RN
- Care Manager-on site referrals/ case management
- Mental health services (group and individual counseling)
- Socialization

# Six Neighborhood Settings

- Christ the King: urban, large NORC neighborhood
- St. Louis Senior Center: urban core, poverty stricken, no community resources
- Seton Center: urban core, high crime area, very few resources
- The Palmer Center: located in an area with a high population of older adults in Independence
- Ray County Senior Center: rural community, an hour East of Kansas City
- Northeast Senior Center: urban, changing population, largely Latino

# Problems:

- The demographic reality of the senior centers, did not coincide with the information that was researched.
- Initial planning conversations did not include front line staff members responsible for implementation
- Communication with administrators at sites was challenging due to their lack of understanding of the CCRC program.
- Older adults are unwilling to accept change at their centers.

# Solution:

- **Knowing the Neighborhood**

- While census data and neighborhood/city needs assessments are helpful for community overview, they do not provide the insight into the challenges.
- Most valuable source of information gathering is being in the neighborhood and having conversations with those that know the history and current status of area

# Solution:

- **Knowing Whom to Include in Planning**
- CEO's and Directors are critical to implementing programs, but inviting key personnel to initial planning meetings assists with knowledge of current program and can offer insight into future needs.
- When planning a program with multiple sites, it is important to be aware of individual needs.

# Solution:

- **Relationship Building with Key Staff**
- Administrator and staff of the senior center, need to accept program and services.
- Key personnel need to see value of program, be open to the change, and begin to incorporate it in to their programming.
- Center staff should feel they are a collaborator and not being “dictated” to.

# Solution:

- **Senior Participant Acceptance**
- Older adults need to be open to change and accept new ideas.
- Engaging and gathering feedback from the seniors is critical in their acceptance of the program.
- Utilize active participants as champions for the program.



# Conclusion

- When initiating community based program, it is important to take the time to be part of the neighborhood, have conversations with key figures and learn about the culture and history of the area and those that will be served.
- Patience and time are essential in building a successful program.