

Developing a Supportive Services Program

Models of Service Provision

There are three distinct models of service provision used in service-enriched housing, although there are many variations on each. The model best suited to a particular site will depend on factors specific to the management agent, the community, and the resident population. The three basic models are:

1. An in-house service program

Management may hire staff to provide and/or coordinate services for residents. A service coordinator may be the foundation for a supportive services program. Many sites also employ a resident aide, activity director, or van driver to provide direct services for their residents.

It is essential under this model that a clear delineation of responsibilities be made. Service staff and management must understand their respective roles while supporting each other in their varying but complementary functions.

Hiring in-house may be most appropriate when the management company has the capacity to provide adequate supervision and resources for staff development. Many larger management companies have distinct social services divisions within their organizational structure to provide that training and supervision.

2. Contract with a community-based organization

If an appropriate service agency is available, management may choose to contract with that agency to provide and/or coordinate services for residents. Many different types of agencies may fill that role if their mission is compatible with the type of services needed by a particular site. Contractual arrangements have been established with Senior Centers, Area Agencies on Aging, hospitals, Community Action Agencies, Public Housing Authorities, Community Development Corporations, Family Service Centers, and a variety of human service agencies.

Some questions to ask before you commit to a service provider are:

- Is this service provider's mission consistent with the goals of the plan of services?
- Does this service provider have significant experience and success serving the population that will be housed in this development?
- Is this service provider currently involved in service-enriched housing?
- Is this service provider respected and do they have a good reputation for collaborating with other organizations in the community?
- Does this service provider have the capacity to take on this additional role? Do they have the organizational, staffing, and resource capacity to implement the plan of services?

Only if the answers to the above questions are "yes" should the organization be considered as a potential service provider for the housing development. If there are several "no" answers, it would be best to look for a more appropriate service provider in the community.

For contractual arrangements to function smoothly management and the service provider must delineate expectations and program outcomes, communicate effectively during regularly scheduled meetings, and collaborate on joint projects. Refer to sample Checklist for Agreements for Contracted Services and Agreement for Contracted Services.

3. Co-location of service providers on-site

There are a variety of ways in which services can be located on-site without hiring or contracting for services. Commercial space may be rented to agencies or groups that serve residents, such as physician offices or kitchens that prepare home-delivered meals. Space within a site's management offices or community space may be used by non-profit organizations for the express purpose of meeting the service needs of residents. Common examples include locating a senior center or day care center in the community room or providing office space to community development organizations or aging service agencies.

If co-location is to be a viable option, the mission of the organization must be compatible with meeting the service needs of residents. If the organization usually only targets a specific subset of the population, it must be prepared to expand to serve all residents equally.

In some situations, a service organization that locates itself within the walls of a housing development may choose to continue to serve the larger community, not just the development's residents. Prior to establishing such an arrangement, management and the service provider must come to an understanding regarding several issues:

- Non-resident access to site facilities and property, including parking.
- Balancing services to residents and non-residents.
- Allocation of staff time and budgetary requirements.
- Tax credit implications of serving non-residents.

Basic Models of Service Delivery

Model	Service Delivery	Advantages (+) and Issues (-)
In-house Service Provider	<p>Management company or owner hires staff to coordinate and/or provide services.</p> <p>Staff at a senior site may include a service coordinator, activities director, and van driver or housekeeping aide.</p> <p>Staff at a family site may include a service coordinator, youth activities director, counselor, or other category of service provider.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Management has nearly complete control over services and staff. + Services are made available without the eligibility requirements that are often imposed by external service providers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There must be a clear delineation and separation of roles and responsibilities between the service provider and management. ▪ Capacity is limited by funding and expertise of staff. ▪ Management must have the capacity for adequate supervision and staff development.
Contract with a Community-Based Organization (CBO)	<p>Management company pays a CBO to provide and/or coordinate services for residents. Many different types of agencies may fill that role, e.g., senior centers, AAA service providers, hospitals, community action agencies, public housing authorities, community development corporations, family service centers, and a variety of human service agencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Management maintains some degree of control through the contract. + The site benefits from an expansive network of staff, programming, and expertise. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The mission of the CBO must be compatible with management and resident needs. ▪ The CBO may already be serving that population. ▪ Effective communication and coordination of efforts is crucial between the CBO and management. ▪ Expectations should be clearly set forth in the contract and in every interaction with the CBO.
Co-location of Service Provider On-Site	<p>Management provides space to service provider to carry out their mission. Space may be provided through a commercial lease or by making space available at no cost to the service provider.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Residents and management gain from the presence of the service provider without having to necessarily pay for that service. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Management has limited control other than breaking the lease agreement. ▪ The mission of the service provider should be compatible to the needs of the residents. ▪ If the service provider usually only targets a specific subset of the population, they must be willing to expand their vision and serve all residents equally. ▪ Service to the larger community must take into consideration such issues as: non-resident access to facilities and parking; balancing services to residents and non-residents; tax credit implications.

Roles and Responsibilities

At the core of service-enriched housing are people: residents, managers, service staff, owners, and developers. Each of these groups of individuals plays an important role in the provision of services for residents. The success of any program relies on the ability of these groups to fulfill their individual responsibilities and work collaboratively.

Whether services are provided by employees of the management company, via contract with a community-based organization, or through co-location of services, a cooperative attitude and recognition of clearly defined roles and responsibilities are crucial. The success of service-enriched housing, therefore, hinges upon relationships, particularly the relationship between the property manager and service provider. The job-specific and shared responsibilities of the property manager and service provider are outlined below:

Property Manager and Service Provider - Division of Labor¹

Property Manager	Shared Responsibilities	Service Provider
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rent collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support resident council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crisis intervention
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• General maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Needs assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coordinate activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resource and referral
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compliance monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• General troubleshooting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On-site programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain resident files	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health and safety issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community liaison
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Referrals to service provider		

The existence of a supportive services program enables the site manager to focus on his or her primary responsibility – effectively managing the development. On-site services provide management with an option to delegate resident concerns to the service provider. The service provider must be concerned with programming and services for residents, and with how that service impacts management. A coordinated effort between the site manager and the service provider will result in an improved program of services for residents and a more efficient and well-run property.

Team Work: Manager and Service Coordinator

The work of the service coordinator and manager should complement each other. It is important that both parties have open communication and regularly update each other. Refer to the sample Referral to Service Coordinator form that provides an effective means of communication between the service coordinator, management, and maintenance staff.

¹ Page 48. Tull, Tanya. 1998. Service-Enriched Housing: Models and Methodologies. Beyond Shelter. Los Angeles, CA.

Successful management teams:

- Have a mutual respect for each other.
- Actively listen and learn from each other.
- See the benefits of all roles.
- Provide the essential tools for each team member to do their job well.
- Support confidentiality.

Soliciting Resident Input

One of the three basic tenets upon which the Agency's SSP is built, is that decisions surrounding services are based, in part, on resident input. Management is expected to re-evaluate their service programs and solicit resident input at least once every three years.

Resident needs and interests should be the basis for developing a service plan. This resident input allows program administrators to adjust services to the changing needs and interests of residents and make improvements to the site's supportive services program over time.

Management may solicit resident input through a variety of formats. The format selected should take advantage of the unique circumstances of each property. Sites may choose to facilitate focus or discussion groups, distribute a written survey, or conduct individual needs assessments. Regardless of the method selected, all residents should have the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. Decisions that impact what services are available, how they are accessed, and any associated costs to residents should not be made without resident input.

To help determine what method should be used to solicit resident input at any particular site, answer the following questions:

- What surveys and data collection methods have been used in the past?
- Which methods worked best?
- What is the best way to gain information from your residents?

Resident Input Methods

Self-Administered Written Questionnaire	Although these may be the easiest to distribute, care must be taken to make sure the questionnaire is easy to read and understand, and that the resident sees the value in completing the survey. Refer to sample Resident Survey forms and cover letter. Alternative methods should be used for residents with sight-impairments or for those who are unable to read or write.
Personal Interviews	Interviews work best at sites with few residents. A personal interview may result both in a higher response rate and in the collection of more information. The interviewer may probe for clarification or more in-depth responses while following a standard set of questions.

Discussion or Focus Group	Residents may be separated into groups, such as by floor of residence, and led in a group discussion utilizing questions similar to those in the personal interview. The facilitator must assure that all residents have the opportunity to participate in the discussion.
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Though a 100% completion rate may not be achievable, it is reasonable to expect that more than half of the residents will participate in the resident survey if they recognize the benefits of doing so. Incentives may be offered to encourage participation, but at the very least, a comprehensive marketing effort with follow-up will increase participation.

The following conditions should be met to assure that residents have input into site services:

- Resident input should be considered in the design and format of the resident survey to assure that pertinent issues are covered.
- All residents must have an opportunity to participate in the survey process.
- A response rate below 50% should be evaluated to determine whether another means of surveying the population should be used.
- An attempt to ascertain the service needs of residents must be completed every three years.
- The findings from the resident survey should be made available to residents to demonstrate the results of their support for the project and encourage future participation.

A summary of findings from the resident survey becomes the foundation on which the site’s plan of services is based.

Community Resources

It is unlikely that management or the service provider will have the capacity to meet all the needs of residents without utilizing the services and resources of community-based organizations. Therefore, management must know what resources are available in the community before committing to a plan of services.

Just as the resident survey makes known the demand for services, a community assessment is necessary to inventory the resources and services present, their availability, and barriers to accessing them. The sample Working with Partners in the Community document contains a partial listing of community-based organizations and services. A sample of information that should be collected from each is included in the Partners in the Local Community form. This form may be a useful tool to generate a local inventory of available resources, including information on costs, eligibility requirements, service limitations, waiting lists, and conditions that must be met in order to access the service.

An understanding of these two factors, the demand for services and the availability of services, are prerequisites for developing a service plan.

Developing a Service Plan

The service plan delineates program goals and expected outcomes, services to be provided or paid for by management, services to be accessed from community-based organizations, and the staffing and budgetary requirements to implement such a plan. Strategies for developing a service plan differ slightly if the housing development is just in the planning stages or if it is currently occupied with residents. For an occupied development, service plans should be revised and updated at least every three years. However, they may be revised and submitted to the Agency for approval as often as warranted by changing site conditions.

The site service plan consists of the following components:

1. Description of Population and Resident Needs and Interests

- a. Describe the existing population in terms of age, frailty, gender, income status, household make-up, use of existing services, and other pertinent factors. Include significant resident resources that may be drawn upon in the plan of services.
- b. Summarize and prioritize the findings of the resident survey. Include a copy of the assessment or survey form and include the date administered, rate of participation by residents, and responses to the survey questions.

2. Inventory of Services and Resources in the Community

This inventory should go beyond a simple resource directory of community-based organizations. Information on waiting lists, costs, eligibility requirements, and service limitations should be included along with the name and telephone number of a contact person. This additional information will determine whether or not services available in the community can meet the needs of residents.

3. Goals/Expected Outcomes

- a. Identify existing property management issues that may be positively impacted by the provision of services.
- b. Describe the specific goals of the supportive services program and how they relate to the needs/desires of residents.
 - i. General occupancy developments should include goals to:
 - o Stabilize occupancy by improving residents' ability to uphold their lease obligations.
 - o Enhance quality of life through programs for employment, education, and income/asset building, child and youth development, community building, and improving access to services.
 - o Improve building and unit maintenance.
 - ii. Senior developments should include goals to:
 - o Stabilize occupancy by improving residents' ability to uphold the lease throughout the aging process through improved access to health and other services.

- Enhance quality of life through community building, socialization, and other programs.
- iii. Developments for populations with special needs should identify relevant goals based on the strengths and needs of the targeted population.
- c. Link expected outcomes to each goal and identify how impact/success will be measured or determined.
- d. Describe how the program will identify and respond to the changing needs of residents over time (e.g. through regularly scheduled resident meetings, needs assessments, surveys, focus groups, etc.).

4. Implementation of services, programs, and activities

Describe the proposed actions that will address existing needs for services.

- a. Identify the activity (ies), program(s), or service(s) that will be implemented over the next three years to address resident issues. Identify:
 - The party responsible for providing each service and a timeline for implementation.
 - How and where the service will be provided.
 - The frequency of the program or activity (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.).
 - Eligibility requirements for resident participation. Ideally all residents will be eligible for all services.
- b. Describe the service provider's methods to encourage resident participation.

5. Staffing

Define staffing needs to implement the service plan. Include a job title and description, supervision, qualifications, and support (e.g. office space, computer with Internet/e-mail access).

6. Budget

Identify annual expenses and income related to the service. Indicate sources of funding for the program, including co-payments, external funds, reserves, operational dollars, or residual receipts.

Refer to the sample Service Plan Template for developing a service plan for an existing housing development.

Supportive Services Program Quality Standards

When developing a supportive services program, it is essential to establish an infrastructure that will adequately support those services, regardless of the type of services to be offered, the structure of service delivery or the level of need for services by residents. This infrastructure will provide the framework to successfully develop and implement an effective supportive services program.

Program elements that enhance the quality and efficiency of services are delineated in the sample Supportive Services Program Quality Standards. These can be grouped as follows:

1. Administrative Support, Coordination, and Procedures

Service staff and management work together to agree on respective roles and responsibilities and to establish methods of coordination and referral. Adequate program funding and administrative support exists. Procedures for documentation, reporting, and information exchange are established and followed.

2. Staff Development

Appropriate and sufficient training and support systems exist.

3. Service Plan Development, Implementation and Evaluation

The service plan is revised at least every three years based on input from residents and internal monitoring and evaluation of services.

4. Resident Participation

In every situation possible, management and service providers use approaches that empower residents to act in their own best interest, increase residents' capacity to help themselves, and utilize the knowledge and expertise present within the resident population.

5. Community Partnerships and Community Building Initiatives

It is unlikely that management or service providers will have the capacity to develop programs that meet all of a residents needs. It is imperative that community-based organizations are involved in providing services at the property, and that residents are encouraged to maintain and increase their connections with their neighbors and the surrounding community.

The sample Supportive Services Program Self Assessment Checklist provides a simple tool designed to help analyze the program's effectiveness.

Hiring a Service Coordinator²

1. General Duties of a Service Coordinator

A service coordinator links residents within the housing development to services and information provided by public agencies or other community based organizations. The service coordinator may assess service needs, determine eligibility for public services, and provide assistance in accessing services for all residents.

The service coordinator's main focus should not be recreational programming and activities. However, such activities are important tools to help establish relationships between the service coordinator and the residents.

A key responsibility of the service coordinator at a family site is to assure that there is sufficient on site programming for children and youth. These activities prevent potential behavioral problems by youth on site and help to establish relationships between the service coordinator and the residents.

² Adapted from HUD...Management Handbook 4381.5 REVISION-2, CHANGE-2, Chapter 8.

The service coordinator also is essential in property management's efforts to prevent or address problems such as rental delinquency, destruction of property, criminal activity, and general health and safety concerns. The service coordinator should not be expected to perform administrative work normally associated with management functions of the property, such as rent collection. Refer to the sample Job Descriptions for a Service Coordinator at a Senior or Family Development.

2. Qualifications of a Service Coordinator at a Senior Development

- A Bachelor degree in Social Work or a degree in Gerontology, Psychology, or Counseling is preferable; a college degree is fully acceptable. However, individuals without a degree, but with appropriate work experience may be hired.
- Training in the aging process, elder services, disability services, eligibility for and procedures of Federal and applicable State entitlement programs, legal liability issues relating to providing service coordination, normal and pathological aging processes, intervention techniques, and housing policies.
- Two to three years experience in social service delivery with senior citizens and younger persons with disabilities. Some supervisory and management experience may be desirable.
- Demonstrated working knowledge of supportive services and other resources for senior citizens and persons with disabilities in the geographic area.
- Demonstrated ability to advocate, organize, problem-solve, and provide results for the population served.

Qualifications of a Service Coordinator at a Family Development

- A Bachelor degree in Social Work or a degree in Psychology, Counseling, Family Development, or related degree is preferable; a college degree is fully acceptable. A combination of education and experience that results in knowledge of the human services system is essential.
- Training in services and development across the life span, disability services, eligibility for and procedures of Federal and applicable State entitlement programs, legal liability issues relating to providing service coordination, intervention techniques, and housing policies.
- Two to three years experience in social service delivery with children and families, senior citizens and younger persons with disabilities. Some supervisory and management experience may be desirable.
- Demonstrated working knowledge of supportive services and other resources for children and families, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities in the geographic area.
- Demonstrated ability to advocate, organize, problem-solve, and provide results for the population served.

Confidentiality

In order for residents to trust the Service Coordinator, confidentiality must be protected. To assure residents that the Service Coordinator will not breach confidentiality, the Service Coordinator will abide by and sign and date the Confidentiality Agreement with each resident during their initial meeting. A copy will be given to each resident for their own records. Refer to sample Confidentiality Agreement at the end of the chapter.

The Service Coordinator will not share the following types of information with the manager without the consent of the resident:

- Health conditions
- Family history and problems
- Personal problems and concerns

A written Consent for Release of Information is required as permission for the Service Coordinator to share information about the resident with any individuals or organizations. Such Consent must be updated annually. Refer to sample Consent for Release of Information form at the end of the chapter.

Exceptions to Confidentiality Protection: The Service Coordinator has a legal responsibility to report the following:

- Abuse or neglect of any kind, including physical, mental, financial.
- Endangerment – residents who are a danger to themselves or others.
- Fraudulent activity and other violations of the law.
- Lease violations.
- Information pursuant to a proper court order.

Refer to the Samples section at the end of the chapter for additional documents that can be used by a service coordinator in developing a Supportive Services Program.

Samples

Checklist for Agreements for Contracted Services
Agreement for Contracted Services
Referral to Service Coordinator
Cover Letter to Resident Survey
Resident Survey Form for a Senior Development
Resident Survey Form for a Family Development
Working with Partners in the Community – Basic Community Resources
Partners in the Local Community
Service Plan Template
Supportive Services Program Quality Standards
Self Assessment Checklist
Job Description for Service Coordinator for a Senior Development
Job Description for Service Coordinator for a Family Development
Resident Files Checklist
Resident Intake Form for a Senior Development
Resident Intake Form for a Family Development
Confidentiality Agreement between Resident and Service Coordinator
Consent for Release of Information
Progress Notes
Refusal of Services
Report on Violations
Resident Strengths Questionnaire for a Senior Development
Resident Strengths Questionnaire for a Family Development