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ABSTRACT

The creation of Title XX of the Social Security Administration in 1975 has led to a tremendous increase in homemaker, task, and home management services to the frail elderly. Several needs assessments of the rural elderly have pointed to discrepancies between services rendered and services actually wanted or needed by clients. The Senior Services Council program was developed to assist the frail elderly with light household tasks so that they could continue to live at home. Clients (N=27) of the program, aides (N=19), and staff members (N=9) completed a semi-structured interview about services provided by the program. Results revealed that clients, aides, and staff differed widely in the frequency and types of responses mentioned, and that these differences depended on whether the program or the aides were being evaluated, and on whether fulfilled needs or unmet needs were considered. Clients, aides, and staff agreed to some extent on important fulfilled and unmet needs. The major inconsistency between the groups was the extent to which the staff placed heavy emphasis on human service and personal maintenance needs. The findings suggest that the seminar services program is highly successful from the standpoint of meeting the role and scope of formal organizational objectives, but that some issues remain unresolved with regard to unmet needs. (NRB)

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A "grassroots" Assessment of Homemaker
Needs for the Frail Elderly

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CG 015492

The creation of Title XX of the Social Security Administration in 1975 has resulted in a tremendous increase in homemaker, chore, and home management services to the frail elderly. In 1978, an estimated \$481 million was spent on home-based services to 1.5 million people and the elderly were among the primary beneficiaries (Wolff, 1978).

In a study done in 1980 assessing the needs of the rural elderly, Hayslip et al. have pointed to differences between an agency oriented vs. an elderly consumer perspective and have emphasized the importance for matching of self perceived needs of the elderly clients with service providers at all levels (i.e. local and state). Other investigators (Friedman, 1977; Lind, 1977; Rief, 1977; Ward, 1975) have also pointed to a possible mismatch between services rendered and what the clients actually want or need.

The main goals in the present research project were to provide: (1) An assessment of the specific homemaker needs of the rural frail elderly in a home based program that provided homemaker services from three "grass-roots" perspectives: the supervising staff, the homemaker aides, and the elderly clients themselves. (2) To compare the views of these three groups to determine possible areas of misunderstanding, clarify these areas, and use this clarification to increase understanding within the program. (3) Examine the relationship between homemaker needs of the elderly as viewed from the above three local perspectives and these needs as presented in the State of Missouri, Division of Aging Guidelines for homemaker services. (4) Clarify the differences in viewpoints found between the program supervisors, homemaker aides and/or clients and the state guidelines, in order that understanding would be improved between the state and local levels of this program.

Method

Subjects were the entire staff (nine) of the Senior Services Council program located in Rolla, Missouri, a random sample of 19 aides employed by the program and a selected sample of 27 clients serviced by the program. In the three years since being organized, the Senior Services Council had grown from one aide in Phelps County, to over 130 aides providing homemaker services in 17 counties in South Central Missouri where over 700 clients received homemaker services. The purpose of the program was to assist the frail elderly in light household chores so that they could remain independent and continue to live at home. Funding of the program came primarily from Title XX. For the 27 clients interviewed, ages ranged from 58 to 90 with the mean age being 78.7.

During the Spring and Summer months of 1980, approximately one hour to an hour-and-a-half long semi-structured interviews were conducted by a trained research assistant. Clients, aides and staff members were asked to provide answers to the four following questions: (1) What are some things the Senior Services Council program does for its clients that you really like? (2) What are some things the homemaker aides do for the clients that you really like? (3) What are some things that the Senior Services Council does not currently do for clients that you would like them to do? (4) What are some things the homemaker aides do not currently do for clients that you would like them to do? These questions were clear and straightforward enough that clients were able to respond to each with a well formed opinion, yet unstructured enough that answers to the questions were not in any way forced. In addition, the aides, themselves, were separated from the program, and needs not met were separated from needs met.

Answers to the four questions were categorized into the following five home service need areas (which have been described by Butler & Lewis, 1977): (1) LH-Light household tasks (e.g. dusting, vacuuming), (2) HH-Heavy household tasks (e.g. moving furniture, home repairs, lawn work), (3) S/C-Social/Community services (e.g. transportation), (4) PM-Personal maintenance (e.g. bathing, taking medicine, the need for live-in-aide), and (5) HS-Human services (e.g. counseling, friendly visitor, protective services). In addition, a sixth category of general comments (GC) was also used to place general overall statements made concerning services which were provided by either aides or by the program.

RESULTS

In order to provide an overall test to see if clients, aides, and staff differed in their perception of important needs being met and not met with regard to both the program and the aides, themselves, the frequency of comments falling into each of the five categories of LH, HH, S/C, PM, and HS for each of the four questions was tallied for each client, aide, and staff member. General Comments were excluded and analyzed separately. Results were analyzed with a $3 \times 2 \times 2 \times 5$ (Clients/Aides/Staff x Needs met/Needs not met x Senior Services Council/Aides x Service Category) analysis of variance using a least squares procedure because of the unequal, but proportional numbers of subjects in each cell (See Wiener, p. 600 to 603, 1971). A highly significant four way interaction ($p < .001$) in Table 1, indicated that clients, aides, and staff differed widely in the frequency and types of responses mentioned, and that these differences depended upon whether the Senior Services program or the aides themselves were being evaluated, and upon whether needs met vs. needs not met were being considered. The highly

significant Needs met x Service category ($F = 156.66, p < .001$) interaction in Table 1 reflects the fact that while heavy housework and social/community needs received no mention to questions 1 and 2 (needs met questions), they were the most frequently mentioned responses for questions 3 and 4 (needs not met), and of these two, heavy housework was the most frequently mentioned. The highly significant ($F = 135.71, p < .001$) needs met/needs not met x program/aides interaction indicated that, in general, for needs met, the aides received more comments than did the program. For needs not met, the program received more comments than did the aides. Table 2 shows the mean frequency of comments made in each of the five categories by clients, aides, and staff for each of the four questions.

Table 3 shows a breakdown of simple effect analyses of the four way interaction in Table 1. For the first question, needs met by the Senior Services Program, clients and aides did not significantly differ ($F = .89$). Members of the staff, on the other hand, differed significantly from both aides ($F = 11.66, p < .001$) and clients ($F = 3.34, p < .01$). In general, clients and aides emphasized light household tasks while the staff emphasized personal maintenance and human services tasks.

With regard to Question 2, important needs met by the aides, clients differed from aides ($F = 38.70, p < .001$) and staff ($F = 39.60, p < .001$) and aides differed from staff ($F = 2.57, p < .05$). Clients again most frequently mentioned light housework. Personal maintenance and human services were infrequently mentioned. Staff and aides, on the other hand, mentioned personal maintenance and human services very often. In fact, staff members responded with human services items more frequently in response to this question than with any other type of response (including light housework). For clients and aides, light household work was most important,



human services next most and personal maintenance was third.

On question 3 (i.e. needs not met by the program but which you would like the program to provide), clients again differed from aides ($F = 6.35$, $p < .001$) and staff differed from aides ($F = 2.57$, $p < .05$). For clients, heavy household work received the most frequent mention. Light housework was next most frequently mentioned, and social/community was third. Personal maintenance and human services hardly received mention at all. Similarly, aides mentioned heavy house work most often, but also frequently mentioned social/community and personal maintenance needs. Human services were infrequently mentioned, and, in contrast to clients, light household work received no mention. The staff, on the other hand, mentioned heavy housework and human services most often and to about the same extent. Personal maintenance was mentioned to a lesser extent. Social/community needs were mentioned infrequently, and light household needs were not mentioned at all.

On question 4 (important needs not provided for by the aide but which you wish the aide could provide), clients, aides, and staff again all differed significantly from one another. Clients most often mentioned light housework for this question and had few responses which fell into the other categories. Aides most frequently mentioned heavy housework and social/community needs. Human services and personal maintenance were mentioned next most frequently. Similar to results for question 3, however, light house work, the category most frequently mentioned by clients, was not mentioned at all. For staff, human services and social/community received greatest and approximately equal emphasis, and heavy household work and personal maintenance also received mention. Similar to the aides, but very different from the clients, however, light household work was not mentioned at all.

Table 4 shows types of comments and their frequency of occurrence as a percentage of total comments made to both question 1 and 2 (needs met) for clients, aides, and staff. Appendix A shows a finer breakdown of Table 4. Table 5 and appendix B shows a similar breakdown for question 3 and 4 (needs unmet by aides and program).

With regard to general comments in Tables 4 and 5, clients, aides, and staff most frequently mentioned "anything and everything the aide does is important" in response to questions 1 and 2. Stated another way, 59% of the clients, 33% of the aides, and 22% of the staff made this comment. From the client's point of view this program obviously served a very important need. General comments for questions 3 and 4 (needs not met) from the client were that the aide was "slow but good". Overall, however, general comments were only a small percentage of all comments made and suggests that the Butler et al. (1977) scheme was adequate for categorizing answers.

With regard to needs met by the program, it can be seen in Table 4 that clients and aides were in overwhelming agreement in emphasizing light housework needs. Although members of the staff mentioned this with some frequency, their greatest emphasis was put on human services and personal maintenance. While aides agreed with clients in the frequency of response to light housework being the first priority, they also more closely resembled the staff in terms of their second and third priorities. All three groups, however, viewed the aide as a needed source of dependable companionship. Yet, staff members clearly mentioned this more frequently than aides. And aides mentioned this more frequently than clients. Moreover, only staff, and to a somewhat lesser extent, aides, commented on the aide as a source of psychological support.

From appendix A it can be seen that human services most frequently mentioned were regular and dependable visits by the aides, the aide as someone to talk to, and the aide as someone who shows concern and or is a friend. From appendix A, it can also be seen that personal maintenance comments for aides and staff most often had to do with keeping the client independent and out of an institution. This was rarely mentioned by clients, however.

With regard to needs not met by the program, all three groups emphasized heavy housework needs, and agreed fairly closely on the specific heavy housework services needed most (i.e. someone to do repair work and lawn work). Social/community needs (transportation) and personal maintenance needs (e.g. convalescent service) were also mentioned fairly frequently as an important need not currently met by the program by both aides and staff. Clients, on the other hand, responded in these latter categories infrequently. Again, members of the staff mentioned human services items more frequently than in any other category. In fact, "time to simply visit with the client," and "provide emotional and psychological support" accounted for approximately 32% of all comments made by the staff to questions 3 and 4. Clients and aides, however, rarely responded to questions 3 and 4 in this manner.

DISCUSSION

At the local level, clients, aides, and staff agreed to some extent on important met (i.e. light household) and unmet (heavy household) needs of the elderly. Consistency was especially high for unmet needs of repair work and yard work services. The major inconsistency between clients, aides, and staff was the extent to which the staff, and to a lesser extent, aides, placed heavy emphasis on human service and personal maintenance needs. Although all three groups noted the aide was a source of dependable support, only the staff mentioned this as the dominant need of the elderly.



Similarly, only the staff mentioned "keeping the client from having to be institutionalized" with a high degree of regularity in the personal maintenance category.

These differences could be due to a number of factors. First, a greater emphasis on human services (i.e. psychological support) and "deinstitutionalization" could be due to a greater sophistication on the part of the staff. They might be in a better position to see a broader perspective of needs being served. On the other hand, this difference could also be due to the staff's "greater distance" from the real lives of their clients. This might cause the staff to underestimate the importance of light housekeeping needs. Viewing the situation from Maslow's hierarchy of needs framework, human service needs are not likely to be highest in priority when you are worried about where your next meal is coming from, how to get your laundry done, and you are concerned primarily with day to day survival. All members of the staff presumably have these needs met, but few of the clients do. The aides, on the other hand, see the plight of their clients on a daily basis which would cause them to score in between the clients and the staff.

Differences in perspectives might also have been due to the client being unaware of, or reluctant to report, their human services needs. In general, it is easier to see and report such needs in other people than admit to having them ourselves. Because of this latter possibility, and because of the generally favorable comments received during the semi-structured interview, the authors believe that the latter interpretation is probably the more correct one and that little should be changed with regard to current program emphasis. Although the difference between the Senior Services Council staff, and program aides, the clients might lead

to misunderstandings, the program as it currently exists must be considered highly successful. Of 27 clients, 18 aides, and 9 staff interviewed, all had highly laudatory remarks with regard to the program - both of a general type and of a specific nature. While many of the clients mentioned "slow but good" in reference to their aides, possibly a result of the time trade-off of the aides ministering to the human service needs of the client rather than attending to light housework chores, many of these same clients indicated such things as their aide "being like a ray of sunshine in my life, like a mother to me, I love her, or I really look forward to her visit." Thus, in large measure much of the success of the program is quite likely due to clients having human service needs attended to at the same time light housework is being performed.

Needs mentioned by Clients, Aides,
and Staff and State Guidelines

Because federal guidelines for home care services do not exist (Butler, 1979), each state sets its own which then must be approved by the funding federal agency. In Missouri, the Missouri Division on Aging sets the standards for In Home Service. For Missouri, these guidelines are broken into three categories: personal care, home care, and optional activities.

In general, there was striking agreement between State guidelines of mandatory program activities and actual needs met by the Senior Services Council program with regard to home care activities. In fact, all areas of unmet needs by the Senior Services Council were either not a part of, or else were specifically excluded by the State guidelines (See Exhibit #1). Thus from the standpoint of meeting the role and scope of formal organizational objectives, the Senior Services program was highly successful.

Even so, several unresolved issues remain with regard to unmet needs.

First, although there was not a discrepancy between state guidelines and optional activities agreed to by the program and needs met by the program, there were a number of unmet needs of the elderly which all three groups considered important (e.g. lawn work and repairs). Thus it would seem highly desirable that the program could expand at some point to include more of these optional activities. Secondly, some noteworthy discrepancies existed between state and local levels concerning the human services, social/community (e.g. transportation), and the personal maintenance home service needs of the elderly. Although all three groups mentioned transportation as important (getting to the doctor), state guidelines expressly prohibit such service by the aide. Human services, moreover, were not a part of mandatory activities, and, in fact, the specific need most often mentioned by the elderly clients, i.e., having enough time for a pleasant conversation, was also forbidden. Finally, personal maintenance services such as spending the night with the client in the case of an emergency illness were also prohibited.

To the extent such needs somehow get met by programs like the Senior Services Council, in spite of official guidelines, it would seem that these programs and all of their participants deserve special praise. Our results, in fact, suggest providing some degree of human service activities expressly forbidden by official guidelines might well have been an important component in getting an already successful program to work even better. Thus it might seem desirable for state guidelines to recognize these unmet home service needs, both from the standpoint of the client and the aide, and make provision for a mechanism by which they can be met. On the other hand, from a political point of view such programs probably would continue to receive wider levels of support by continuing to officially exclude human service behaviors as a legitimate service. In terms of accountability, most tax-

payers are probably comfortable footing the bill for aides performing light housekeeping chores, but not for the aides providing psychological support. However, as long as both clients and aides seem happy with what the program provides, it is probably immaterial whether or not activities of a human service nature might not also be unofficially get exchanged in the relationship.

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Table 1

Analysis of Variance

Source	df	MS	F	P
(A) Clients/Aides/Staff	2	9.31	12.74	.001
Error Between	51	.73		
(B) Needs met/Not met	1	7.17	18.86	.001
(C) SSC Prog./Aides themselves	1	5.92	15.57	.001
A x B	2	4.29	11.27	.001
A x C	2	1.55	4.07	.025
B x C	1	51.57	135.71	.001
(D) Service Category	4	23.21	61.08	.001
A x D	8	10.22	26.89	.001
B x D	4	59.53	156.66	.001
C x D	4	20.99	55.24	.001
A x B x D	8	3.84	10.11	.001
A x C x D	8	2.72	7.16	.001
B x C x D	4	9.39	24.71	.001
A x B x C	2	.19	.50	N.S.
A x B x C x D	8	2.11	5.55	.001
Error Within	969	.38		

Table 2

Mean Frequency With Which Clients,
Aides, and Staff Mentioned Various Types
of Tasks on Each of the Four Questions

Type of Task	Needs Met						Needs Not Met						x
	Program			Aides			Program			Aides			
	Clients	Aides	Staff	Clients	Aides	Staff	Clients	Aides	Staff	Clients	Aides	Staff	
Light Household	.96	.89	.56	3.74	2.16	1.44	.30	0	0	.48	.11	0	.89
Heavy Household	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.56	2.72	1.22	.11	1.17	.11	.57
Social/Community	0	0	0	0	0	0	.11	.56	.22	.04	.89	.44	.19
Personal Maintenance	.07	.28	1.56	.15	.89	.56	.04	.61	.44	0	.33	.11	.42
Human Service	.11	.11	.89	.37	1.88	2.22	.04	.27	1.00	.07	.44	.44	.65
x	.23	.26	.60	.85	.99	.84	.41	.83	.58	.14	.59	.22	

Table 3

F Values for Simple Effect Analyses
of Clients/Aides/Staff x Type of Task

Effect	Needs met		Needs not met		df
	SSC Program	Aides	SSC Program	Aides	
	Ques. 1	Ques. 2	Ques. 3	Ques. 4	
Clients vs. Aides	.21	1.71	17.15***	16.12***	1,51
Type of Task	19.23***	214.11***	67.72***	3.13*	4,969
C/A x Type of Task	.89	38.70***	6.85***	8.99***	4,969
Aides vs. Staff	4.24*	.86	3.43	4.56*	1,51
Type of Task	16.41***	69.77***	42.25***	8.39***	4,969
A/S x Type of Task	3.34**	2.57*	12.34***	2.76*	4,969
Clients vs. Staff	4.09*	.01	1.71	.82	1,51
Type of Task	12.68***	175.67***	28.18***	1.39	4,969
C/S x Type of Task	11.66***	39.60***	7.16***	2.64*	4,969

* p .05
** p .01
*** p .001

Table 4

Type of Needs Met by Program and Aides
as Mentioned by Clients, Aides, and Staff

Type of Task	Frequency in percentage of Total Comments made by:		
	Clients	Aides	Staff
General Comments	8.1	4.6	1.5
Light Household	78.9	50.0	26.1
Heavy Household	0	0	0
Social/Community	0	0	0
Personal Maintenance	4.4	12.7	29.0
Human Services	8.7	32.7	43.5

Table 5

Type of Needs Not Met by Program and Aides
as Mentioned by Clients, Aides, and Staff

Type of Task	Frequency in percentage of Total Comments made by:		
	Clients	Aides	Staff
General Comments	16.7	4.6	5.3
Light Household	15.7	1.5	0
Heavy Household	51.0	53.8	31.6
Social/Community	4.2	20.0	15.8
Personal Maintenance	1.0	13.0	13.2
Human Service	3.1	6.9	34.2

Appendix A
Needs Met by Program and Aides
Mentioned by Clients, Aides, and Staff

	Frequency in percentage of Total Comments made by:		
	Clients	Aides	Staff
General Comments	8.1	4.6	1.5
Anything and Everything they do	8.1	4.6	1.5
Light Household Tasks	78.9	50.0	26.1
Homemaker Aide help with housework	16.2	14.6	8.7
Cleaning	7.5	11.8	5.8
Sweeps	7.5	2.7	2.9
Cleans Bathroom	6.8	.9	0
Laundry	4.4	2.7	2.9
Miscellaneous	5.0	.9	0
Shopping	3.1	3.6	0
Grocery Shopping	1.9	4.6	0
Mops	4.4	0	0
Prepares meal	1.9	1.8	1.5
Dusts	3.1	.9	0
Cleans Cabinets, blinds, light fixtures, walls, or bed springs	3.1	0	0
Changes bed	2.5	0	0
Washes windows (inside)	1.2	.9	0
Makes bed	1.9	0	0
Washes dishes	1.2	.9	0
Cleans kitchen	1.2	.9	0
Lifting	0	.9	2.9
Cleans oven	1.2	0	0
Bill paying	.6	.9	0
Defrosts	1.2	0	0

Appendix A
(cont.)

	Frequency in percentage of Total Comments made by:		
Light Household Tasks	Clients	Aides	Staff
Hangs out clothes	.6	.9	0
Reaching	0	.9	1.5
Ruts up drapes	.6	0	0
Straighten magazines	.6	0	0
Heavy Household Tasks	0	0	0
Social/Community	0	0	0
Personal Maintenance	4.4	12.7	29.0
Keep in Homes/Not institu- tionalized/Independent	.6	9.1	17.4
Personal Care	0	0	4.4
Do things they cannot do	0	0	4.4
Pays bills	.6	1.8	0
Run errands	0	1.8	0
Bath	.6	0	0
Write letters and Christmas cards	.6	0	0
Goes to bank	.6	0	0
Rolls hair	.6	0	0
Looks after needs	.6	0	0
Getting in touch with other people	0	0	1.5
Take pride in home	0	0	1.5
Human Services	8.7	32.7	43.5
Regular and dependable visit	1.2	6.4	8.7
Someone to talk to	0	6.4	10.2

Appendix A
(cont.)

Frequency in percentage
of Total Comments made by:

Human Services	Clients	Aides	Staff
Shows concern, is a friend	1.2	4.6	7.3
Cheers up client	3.1	3.6	0
Sense of not being alone	1.2	2.7	4.4
Contact with outside world	0	0	8.7
Part of family	1.6	1.8	0
Someone to depend on more than real family	0	2.7	0
Looks after needs	.6	.9	0
Sounding board for feeling and frustrations	0	1.8	0
Client trust aide	0	1.8	0
Provides client with sense of self worth	0	0	1.5
Very considerate	.6	0	0
Provides psychological support	0	0	1.5

Appendix B

Needs Not Met by Program and Aides
as Mentioned by Clients, Aides, and Staff

	Frequency in percentage of Total Comments made by:		
	Clients	Aides	Staff
General Comments	16.7	4.6	5.3
Aide slow but good	10.4	0	0
More flexible list	2.1	2.3	5.3
Hours more flexible	2.1	.8	0
More hours needed	2.1	1.5	0
Light Household	15.7	1.5	0
Laundry	4.2	0	0
Cooking meals	3.1	.8	0
Wash windows, curtains	3.1	0	0
Scrub floors	2.1	0	0
Sewing	1.0	.8	0
Clean walls	2.1	0	0
Take out trash	1.0	0	0
Grocery shopping	1.0	0	0
Clean bathroom	1.0	0	0
Heavy Household	59.3	53.8	31.6
Handy man or repair work	26.0	23.8	13.2
Mow lawn	9.4	3.8	5.3
Wash outside windows	4.2	6.1	5.3
Rake leaves and clean up yard	3.1	6.9	0
Painting	6.3	2.3	0
General outside things	0	3.1	2.6
Help winterize house	3.1	.8	2.6
Snow removal	1.0	2.3	0
Take out trash	1.0	2.3	0
Help with garden or flowers	1.0	1.5	0

Appendix B
(cont.)

	Frequency in percentage of Total Comments made by:		
	Clients	Aides	Staff
Clean porch	1.0	0	2.6
Cutting wood	1.0	0	0
Trim trees	1.0	0	0
Put up curtains	1.0	0	0
Clean garage	0	.8	0
Social/Community	4.2	20.0	15.8
Transportation	3.1	15.4	13.2
Transportation to doctor	1.0	3.1	2.6
Get clients out more often	0	.8	0
Bus service	0	.8	0
Center to get people together	0	0	0
Personal Maintenance	1.0	13.0	0
Convalescent service	0	4.6	10.5
Help with business and legal matters	0	3.1	0
Live in help	0	1.5	2.6
Someone to bathe client	1.0	0	0
Visiting beautician	0	.8	0
Night care	0	.8	0
Deal with welfare office	0	.8	0
Read mail	0	.8	0
Christmas decorating	0	.8	0
Human Services	3.1	6.9	34.2
Visit with client	1.0	2.3	21.0
Emotional and psychological support	0	0	10.5
Take client someplace for fun	0	1.5	0

Appendix B
(cont.)

	Frequency in percentage of Total Comments made by:		
	Clients	Aides	Staff
Have lunch with client	1.0	.8	0
Coffee with client	1.0	0	0
Telephone conversation	0	.8	0
Counseling for relatives	0	.8	0
Be more like people and not robots	0	.8	0
Social service worker	0	0	2.6