2009 Consumer Satisfaction Survey

November 9, 2009

Prepared by: National Service Research
Introduction and Methodology

Background
The Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) serves as the State Unit on Aging (SUA) in the State of Texas. The SUA supports the Older Americans Act’s mission to assist older individuals to maintain independence and dignity in their homes and communities. DADS is a visible and effective advocate and leader in providing for a comprehensive and coordinated continuum of services and opportunities to enable the older population to live dignified lives. DADS’ consumers are the older population of Texas, 60 years of age or older, their families, and caregivers who receive a wide variety of services provided through federal, state, and local funding.

DADS is committed to providing the highest level of quality in the services it provides to consumers through the 28 Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) and their service providers. In order to achieve this goal, the Department understands the critical importance of measuring consumer satisfaction and obtaining suggestions by consumers for improvements.

Goals of the Research
This report outlines the steps taken to gain an accurate measure of satisfaction among the AAAs’ many consumers. Results of the consumer satisfaction survey are being used to improve service delivery and will be included in DADS’ strategic plan. Another goal of the research project is to develop a research methodology which can be used to assess the satisfaction of the AAA consumers on an on-going basis.

The types of services provided by AAAs and their contractors vary from region to region. For this reason, DADS has selected the services utilized by the largest number of consumers and considered to have the greatest impact on an older individual’s quality of life and ability to remain independent.

DADS selected seven AAA services for this research. These services and a brief description of each are below:

Benefits Counseling/Legal Assistance – Benefits Counseling/Legal Assistance services include advice from or representation, by an attorney, including assistance by a paralegal or law student under the supervision of an attorney, or counseling or representation by a non-lawyer, where permitted by law, to older individuals with economic and social needs.

Care Coordination – Care Coordination services include assessing an individual’s needs, developing a care plan and accessing consumer services through providers for assistance such as homemaker, personal assistance, or residential repair services. These services are often provided to older adults who are recovering from surgery or other illnesses or who need additional help to remain in their homes.

Caregiver Support Coordination – Caregiver Support Coordination services include assessing the needs of a caregiver and care recipient, effectively planning, arranging, coordinating and following-up on services which most appropriately meet the identified needs as mutually defined.
by the caregiver, the care recipient, and the access and assistance staff. A caregiver is an adult
family member or another individual who provides in-home and community care to an older
individual or to an individual with Alzheimer’s disease and a related disorder with neurological
and organic brain dysfunction.

**Nutrition Services** – The purposes of nutrition services are to reduce hunger and food
insecurity, promote socialization of older individuals, promote health and well-being of older
individuals, and help older individuals sustain independent living in a safe and healthful
environment.

  **Congregate Meals** – Hot or other appropriate meals served to eligible older consumers
in a group setting.

  **Home Delivered Meals** – Meals are delivered to consumers’ homes and are generally
provided through a service provider. The meal can be a standard meal, therapeutic meal or
liquid supplement.

  **Respite Care** – An array of services which provide temporary relief for caregivers to dependent
older individuals who need supervision. Services are provided in the older individual’s home
environment on a short-term, temporary basis while the primary caregiver is unavailable or
needs relief. In addition to supervision, services may include meal preparation, housekeeping,
assistance with personal care or social and recreational activities.

  **Transportation** – Transportation services include rides to places such as the doctor, grocery
store or a congregate meal site which are typically provided by a service provider using a car,
van or bus and usually require 24 hours advance notice.

**Research Methodology**

In 2009, the AAAs were given an option to use one vendor to conduct their surveys using the
telephone method or conduct the survey in-house using the mail-out survey. Of the 28 AAAs, 93
percent (26) of the AAAs chose the one vendor approach. Two AAAs conducted mail-in surveys
to collect data and entered their results into the National Service Research (NSR) website. The
website was created by NSR especially for this survey.

From August 17, 2009, through September 29, 2009, National Service Research used telephone
interviews to collect data for 26 AAAs and for DADS. During this period, NSR called consumers
up to four times, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week, excluding Sunday from 8 a.m. to
noon.

**Survey Instrument**

The survey instruments were provided by DADS. The survey instruments are designed to be
user-friendly, easy to understand, have non-leading and unbiased questions, and use scaled
responses to questions with actual words that utilized no more than three response categories.

Due to randomization of the population, it was possible for a AAA not be included in the DADS’
sample group. Statistical validity was determined to begin with six completed responses.
A total of 6,092 surveys were completed, including 300 surveys conducted by telephone at the state level. The AAAs are listed below with the number of surveys completed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area Agency on Aging</th>
<th>No. of Completed Surveys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area Agency on Aging of the Alamo Area</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area Agency on Aging of Ark-Tex</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area Agency on Aging of Bexar County</td>
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<td>Area Agency on Aging of Brazos Valley</td>
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<td>Area Agency on Aging of the Capital Area</td>
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<td>Area Agency on Aging of Central Texas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area Agency on Aging of the Coastal Bend</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area Agency on Aging of Concho Valley</td>
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<td>Area Agency on Aging of Dallas County</td>
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<td>Area Agency on Aging of Deep East Texas</td>
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<td>Area Agency on Aging of East Texas</td>
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<td>Area Agency on Aging of the Golden Crescent Region</td>
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<td>Area Agency on Aging of Harris County</td>
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<td>Area Agency on Aging of Heart of Texas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area Agency on Aging of Houston-Galveston</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area Agency on Aging of the Lower Rio Grande Valley</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area Agency on Aging of the Middle Rio Grande Area</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area Agency on Aging of North Central Texas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area Agency on Aging of North Texas</td>
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<td>Area Agency on Aging of the Panhandle Area</td>
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<td>Area Agency on Aging of the Permian Basin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area Agency on Aging of the Rio Grande Area</td>
<td>182</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area Agency on Aging of Southeast Texas</td>
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<td>Area Agency on Aging of South Plains</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area Agency on Aging of South Texas</td>
<td>214</td>
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<td>Area Agency on Aging of Tarrant County</td>
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<td>Area Agency on Aging of Texoma</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area Agency on Aging of West Central Texas</td>
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Part I

State Data
Significant Findings

Overall Satisfaction
There is an extremely high level of satisfaction among AAA consumers. Consumers were found to be highly pleased with the services received. The highest level of satisfaction was found with regard to caregiver support: 96% responded “yes” to the question, “Overall, are you satisfied with the person who arranged for the services you received?” Satisfaction was also high with home delivered meals (96%), transportation (95%), congregate meals (91%), respite care (91%), and care coordination (90%). Benefits/legal counseling received the lowest satisfaction rating (77%).

Satisfaction with Specific Aspects of Service
Consumers were also asked about specific aspects of each service. Their responses reveal high levels of satisfaction.

Benefits Counseling/Legal Assistance: Consumers felt staff listened to them and understood their needs (94%); they got useful information (88%), and received information in a reasonable amount of time (84%). Of the consumers surveyed, 87% reported the person was knowledgeable with 91% reporting staff was courteous and professional. Consumers reported they were satisfied with the help they received (77%) and the service helped them resolve their issue (75%). A majority (84%) would call again if they needed assistance.

Care Coordination: Care Coordinators received good ratings of satisfaction, especially with regard to being friendly (91%) and understanding consumers’ needs (86%). A total of 87% said the AAA provided services in a reasonable amount of time. Explaining services clearly (84%) also rated high. Some consumers (25%) did not feel involved in planning and choosing which services to receive, however, a majority (75%) stated they were involved. More than half (67%) reported someone followed-up with them to see how they were doing, 97% said it was important that they received these services and 96% would call again if they needed assistance.

Caregiver Support Coordination: Caregiver support received 98% ratings for friendly staff. Consumers stated they would use the service again (95%) and it is important they received the services (97%).

Congregate Meals: According to congregate meal consumers, the temperature of the meals was satisfactory (91%) and there was enough food (90%). The consumers are satisfied with the variety of meals (82%) and the meals were served at the scheduled time (94%). Of the consumers surveyed, it was reported the location where meals were served was easy to reach (94%) and the food server was friendly (97%). As a result of receiving meals, 62% reported their diet had improved and 86% said they feel more socially engaged. Overall, 91% were satisfied with congregate meals.
Home Delivered Meals: According to home delivered meal consumers, the delivery person was friendly (98%), the temperature of the meals was satisfactory (91%), there was enough food (88%) and the deliveries were on time (87%). The taste of the meals was rated only slightly lower (80%). Comments on how to improve meals mainly included requests for more variety and flavor (more seasoning), more vegetables, and less starch and salt. Several consumers would like the overall quality of the food improved. A total of 64% indicated someone had mentioned they could make a donation toward the meal if they wanted. As a result of getting home delivered meals, 90% reported they have been able to maintain their independence.

Respite Care: Consumers felt AAA staff listened to them and understood their needs (95%), they were able to find a provider (78%), and the service helped them care for a family member longer (74%). Of the consumers surveyed, it was reported the AAA staff was knowledgeable (93%) and they were courteous and professional (96%). Consumers were satisfied with the help they received (91%). The consumers felt it was important for them to be able to choose their own provider (79%). A majority (96%) said it was important they got the services with 55% reporting they would have needed alternative living arrangements had they not received the services.

Transportation: Consumers of the transportation program appear satisfied with specific aspects of the service. They indicated the driver was friendly (96%), drove safely (97%), and the rides came on time (86%). A total of 82% reported rides were available when they needed them and 10% reported they were “sometimes” available when needed. A total of 52% indicated they were aware they could make a donation toward the ride if they wanted. A total of 89% were better able to maintain their independence as a result of getting rides.

Suggestions for Improvement
Consumers were asked for their suggestions for ways to improve services. Most of the consumers were extremely satisfied and liked the services. Below are suggestions offered by a few consumers.

Benefits Counseling/Legal Assistance: Need quicker response time and be more thorough before denying someone help.

Care Coordination: Raise the limits so more people can qualify, services are needed for longer periods as well as more frequency of service.

Caregiver Support Coordination: Better screening of staff, more hours and frequency of help are needed and quicker follow-up.

Congregate Meals: More diversity, less salt, more seasonings, more fresh fruit and vegetables, vegetables are over cooked, and more variety of fresh meats.
**Home Delivered Meals:** More variety, less salt, more fresh vegetables and fruit, more drink variety, more tender meats, more food in each meal and improve overall food quality.

**Respite Care:** More hours of help needed, include weekend options, more frequent help, extend service for more than six months and provide more staff training.

**Transportation:** Hire more drivers, provide more rides when needed, extend hours, offer weekend service and some vehicles have very rough rides.

**Impact of Services**

One of the most important findings of this study is the impact these services have on consumers. Consumers regard these services as very important to their lives (rated as important by 85% to 91% for all services) and as being instrumental in helping them maintain their independence. Transportation and home delivered meals are perceived as having the greatest impact on helping older individuals remain independent: 89% of transportation recipients reported as a result of getting services, they are better able to maintain their independence. The consumers were able to maintain their independence as a result of having home delivered meals (90%) and assistance with care coordination (87%). A total of 97% of those caregiver support services said it was important they receive this service.

In some cases, specific aspects of independence were also assessed. Respite care is critical to the consumers in being able to live where they choose. In fact, 56% of respite care consumers reported if they had not received these services, they would have to choose alternative housing like a nursing home or somewhere else to live. Caregiver support consumers (63%) and care coordination consumers (50%) would need to choose alternative living arrangements had they not received services. Most transportation consumers (91%) indicated it is easier to get where they need to go as a result of getting rides.

The consumers were asked to tell in their own words the importance of these services in their lives. Their verbatim comments dramatically illustrate the profound impact these services have on their lives and the adverse effects if they had to live without them. A sample of these comments follows:

**Benefits/Legal Assistance**
- “*Without the help my mother would have been lost. They saw to her needs.*”
- “*They gave me information on where to get help. They steered me to the right resources.*”
- “*They helped me resolve a medical bill that I couldn’t have done on my own.*”

**Care Coordination**
- “*Mother is going blind and can’t cook. She now has a housekeeper twice a week.*”
- “*I’m going to the dental school to get dentures and they helped me financially. It is hard to eat without them.*”
- “*The service helped me stay at home instead of going into a nursing home.*”
Caregiver Support Coordination

• “It was a support to her. They came and helped her walk and took her blood pressure.”
• “My husband is disabled. They provided a ramp which made it easier.”
• “It made all the difference in the world to my Dad’s life. They put in a ramp, bars in the bath, a scale and healthy drinks.”

Congregate Meals

• “It’s a way to get out and meet people. It provides a balanced meal.”
• “It gives us a chance to get out and socialize.”
• “I live out in the country and am home bound being handicapped. I can get out and involve myself with other people.”

Home Delivered Meals

• “My wife is in a wheelchair and I can’t stay away from her very long so this program has been very helpful.”
• “I can’t cook anymore, I’m blind.”
• “I can’t get out and I can’t drive anymore, it is wonderful to have them brought to me.”

Respite Care

• “I can’t walk by myself and they change the beds which is something I can’t do.”
• “I need to run errands sometimes and it helps to have someone stay with my husband who had dementia.”
• “I was able to keep working. It helped my husband and gave him peace of mind.”

Transportation

• “It’s the only way I have to get to medical appointments.”
• “I live by myself, am blind and I can no longer drive.”
• “If it wasn’t for the rides I wouldn’t be able to go anywhere, it mostly makes me feel independent.”
Graphs - State Level
Department of Aging and Disability Services
Consumer Satisfaction Survey

Benefits Counseling/Legal Assistance
(100 completed surveys)

Percent responding “Yes” to each issue listed in the chart below
Department of Aging and Disability Services
Consumer Satisfaction Survey

Care Coordination
(100 completed surveys)

Percent responding “Yes” to each issue listed in the chart below

- Clearly Explain Help: 84%
- Listen & Understand Needs: 86%
- Feel Involved in Planning: 75%
- Person Friendly: 91%
- Receive Services Timely: 87%
- Follow-Up Received: 67%
- Satisfied with Services: 90%
- Would You Call Again: 96%
- Keep Independence: 87%
- W/O Services, Live Elsewhere: 50%
- Important Services Were Received: 97%

Survey Conducted by: National Service Research, Fort Worth, Texas 817-731-3493
Department of Aging and Disability Services
Consumer Satisfaction Survey

Caregiver Support Coordination
(100 completed surveys)

Percent responding “Yes” to each issue listed in the chart below

- Explain Services Clearly: 95%
- Understand Your Needs: 97%
- Feel Involved: 85%
- Person Friendly: 98%
- Receive Services Timely: 90%
- Follow-up Received: 78%
- Satisfied: 96%
- Would You Call Again: 96%
- Kept Independence: 79%
- W/O Services, Live Elsewhere: 63%
- Important You Got Help: 97%

Caregiver Support Coordination - 2009
Department of Aging and Disability Services
Consumer Satisfaction Survey

Congregate Meals
(2211 completed surveys)

Percent responding “Yes” to each issue listed in the chart below
Department of Aging and Disability Services
Consumer Satisfaction Survey

Home Delivered Meals
(2087 completed surveys)

Percent responding “Yes” to each issue listed in the chart below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>% Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meals Taste Good</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enough Food</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meal Temperature OK</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Time Meal Delivery</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with Variety</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery Person Friendly</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donation Mentioned</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has Diet Improved</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain Independence</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important Meals are Delivered</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Home Delivered Meals 2009
Department of Aging and Disability Services
Consumer Satisfaction Survey

Transportation
(1098 completed surveys)

Percent responding “Yes” to each issue listed in the chart below
Department of Aging and Disability Services
Consumer Satisfaction Survey

Respite
(396 completed surveys)
Percent responding “Yes” to each issue listed in the chart below

74% of Respite Care survey responses were Agency Managed
24% were Voucherized Service
2% were Senior Companion Program

- Person Understand Needs: 95%
- Person Knowledgeable: 93%
- Courteous & Professional: 96%
- Find a Provider: 78%
- Important Choose Provider: 79%
- Satisfied: 90%
- Did it Help Care For Family Member: 74%
- Important to Receive Services: 96%
- Maintain Independence: 70%
- W/O Services Live Elsewhere: 6%

Respite 2009