

Recommendations to the Elder Justice Coordinating Council for a National Elder Abuse Research Agenda

Presented by the NAPSA/NCPEA Research Committee

September 24, 2013

Recognizing that research and direct practice inform each other and need to be mutually supported in order to advance the field of elder /adult protection, the Research Committee makes the following recommendations to strengthen the nation's response to abuse of vulnerable adults, with a particular emphasis on research related to Adult Protective Services (APS).

The recommendations are not in order of priority, each being critical to the goal of building the nation's capacity to define and support research that will enable APS to more effectively protect victims. Each recommendation will require the close and ongoing involvement of APS professionals in order to be accomplished. We ask the Elder Justice Coordinating Council to:

- Advocate and facilitate at the federal level relevant data sharing protocols across systems to share victim data and expand the research capacity to track outcomes (including health status and death), as well as to enhance a coordinated response to elder abuse victims. These systems include but are not limited to APS, Long-term Care Ombudsmen, Medicaid, Medicare, the Veterans Administration, and the Social Security Administration Representative Payee program. Barriers, including HIPAA, must be addressed.
- Support the development and use of common data standards, definitions and reports on key elements of APS practice.
- Promote research to identify measurable outcomes in APS in order to build evidence-based practice with a focus on both client-centered and process compliance outcomes.
- Increase support for research focused on distinct forms of abuse, including physical, sexual, emotional and financial exploitation by trusted others; self-neglect; and poly-victimization, in order to provide more guidance for APS practitioners and enhance their ability to protect victims.
- Support the development of research designs to study, under controlled conditions, APS investigations and service delivery in order to determine benchmarks for manageable caseloads, building on the methods used for Child Protective Services by the Child Welfare League of America. Case complexity, allegation types, and variations among state APS systems must be considered in the study designs.
- Promote the testing of the caseload benchmarks developed above in various states, using different practice models to develop best practice standards, recognizing the variation in APS laws and programs across the country.
- Encourage research that emphasizes community participation in the purpose and design of the project, recognizing the importance of cultural diversity.



The Research Committee is a joint initiative of the National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) and the National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (NCPEA) to provide guidance, expertise, and feedback regarding data collection, data analysis, and other research activities concerned with elder and vulnerable adult abuse and Adult Protective Services.

