

**Training Needs Assessment of
Adult Day Care Directors Participating in the
Child and Adult Care Food Program**



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National Food Service Management Institute The University of Mississippi

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The mission of the NFSMI is to provide information and services that promote the continuous improvement of Child Nutrition Programs.

VISION

The vision of the NFSMI is to be the leader in providing education, research, and resources to promote excellence in Child Nutrition Programs.

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**TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF ADULT DAY CARE DIRECTORS
PARTICIPATING IN THE CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Adult Care Food Program (ACFP), which operates within the prevailing guidelines of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), plays a major role in adult care services by ensuring the recipients are provided affordable nutritious meals and snacks. With the growing number of adult day care programs receiving ACFP benefits, the importance of having well-trained professionals is more apparent than ever before.

The purpose of this study was to determine the training needs and issues associated with adult day care professionals (institution directors) participating in the CACFP, and to identify demographic characteristics of the institution directors and programs that contribute to the delivery of training. Using telephone survey methodology, researchers were able to gather information from adult day care directors representing 17 states within the seven USDA regions.

The majority of survey respondents operate a single adult day care site, have been a director for ten years or greater, and possess the minimum of a baccalaureate degree. The findings indicate survey respondents not only take part in training, but also believe training their staff strengthens their knowledge and skills in following and operating an ACFP within compliance of program rules and regulations. Respondents expressed a preference for small group training sessions, and believed they would benefit from training resources provided in a diverse format, such as written materials/manuals, Web-based resources, and DVDs/videos.

State agencies and training developers are advised to consider strengthening their training efforts to directors who administer adult day care programs by providing diverse training formats

tailored to the adult day care director and staff. These diverse training formats could include written materials/manuals, Web-based resources, and DVDs/videos. Promoting and maintaining comprehensive training opportunities in diverse formats will positively influence the partnership between the state agency and institution directors who oversee adult day care programs that operate in compliance with the ACFP guidelines.

INTRODUCTION

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federally-funded program designed to provide aid to qualified programs that serve children and adults with nutrition assistance. The overall purpose of the CACFP is to provide funds to programs operating under the guidelines of the CACFP in serving nutritious meals and snacks. The CACFP program operates under the Child Nutrition Programs, which is administered at the federal level by the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS). State agencies or FNS regional officials oversee the program operated at the local level (USDA, 2009a). For this study, the focus will be on the Adult Care Food Program (ACFP) that operates within the prevailing guidelines of the CACFP. Since the inception of the adult component to the program in 1988, there has been a steady growth of participation by adult day care programs offering nutritious meals and snacks through the ACFP. According to data provided by the USDA, two million ACFP approved meals were served to elderly adults during the first year of existence (USDA, 2009b). By 2008, 64 million meals were served to adults through approved programs serving an elderly population. This federal investment in nutrition assistance aids in reducing hunger, and positively impacts the quality of nutrition services offered by adult day care programs that operate within a contractual agreement with the approving agency.

The ACFP plays a major role in adult care services by ensuring the recipients are provided affordable nutritious meals and snacks. With the growing number of participants and awareness for accountability in today's environment, the importance of having well-trained professionals operating adult day care programs receiving benefits from the ACFP is more apparent than ever before. These career professionals play a critical role in the services offered and in ensuring compliance with the federally-funded nutrition assistance program. Gaining an

understanding of the training needs of these career professionals will assist in the advancement of training resources that is provided or developed by training professionals.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this study was to determine the training needs and issues associated with adult day care professionals (institution directors) participating in the CACFP, and to identify demographic characteristics of the institution directors and programs that contribute to the delivery of training.

METHOD

A descriptive study was conducted to identify the training needs and issues associated with adult day care directors participating in the Adult Care Food Program (ACFP). State agency child nutrition program directors responsible for the ACFP were contacted via e-mail and were asked to provide contact information for institution directors in their state who operate adult day care programs that participate in the ACFP. A total of seventeen state agency contacts responded to the request. A follow-up e-mail was sent to those agency contacts who did not respond, and there was no response. A stratified randomized selection procedure occurred to assure appropriate representation of adult day care directors by the responding states within the seven United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regions for participation in the telephone sponsor survey. A total of 300 adult day care directors were identified from the information provided and compiled into a Microsoft Excel file to serve as the study sample.

The researcher followed informed consent procedures established by the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee of The University of Southern Mississippi. The researcher solicited the services of the Center for Research, Evaluation, Assessment, and Training Services (CREATeS) Survey Research Laboratory (SRL), a telephone research laboratory at The University of Southern Mississippi. The researcher worked with CREATeS to develop the survey. The survey instrument was designed for the study sample and included questions to collect the needed information. The draft survey was pilot tested by twelve state agency staff from four states who work with this population. Using the evaluation form provided to the pilot participants, the evaluation instrument directed the reviewers to confirm the terminology in and the clarity of the survey questions, and to identify possible gaps.

Individual survey time was limited to approximately five to ten minutes. All calls were made during the normal business hours. Special consideration, based on time zones, was made by the interviewers to avoid calling during meal times. A notification letter explaining the nature of the research study and range of dates for telephone calls was mailed to the study sample approximately two weeks prior to conducting the telephone survey.

The interviewers were trained specifically for the survey and were supervised during data collection by the research coordinator. The researcher worked closely with the research coordinator to ensure quality interviews and data collection techniques were followed. A 10-station Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system using Sawtooth Ci3 WinCATI software was used for the calls and data collection. The data files were prepared in SPSS 13, and descriptive statistics were determined.

RESULTS

The national sample of adult day care directors generated a total of 82 (N = 300) completed telephone surveys, generating a 27% rate of return. The CATI system used by CREATEs tracks the disposition of all calls. Features were in place to permit return calls where the initial call generated no response, a busy signal, or a request by the respondent. The actual disposition of calls is presented in Table 1. Information in Table 1 includes disposition codes of those that effected the total data set available from which to place calls. Although a notification letter explaining the nature of the research study was sent to potential study participants (N = 300) prior to initiating the telephone survey, there was a high level of doubt and suspicion for participating in the survey.

Table 1

Disposition of Phone Calls

Disposition	Number
Callbacks	367
Answering machine	249
Refusal	101
Completed	82
No answer	62
Changed number	22
Disconnected	21
Not qualified	12
Fax line	10
Hang up	10
Cell phone	2
Total calls	738

Study respondents represented 17 states from the seven USDA regions. In order to validate the sampled respondents as the desired study group, respondents were asked to verify their work title. Eighty-two (100%) responded that they considered their work title to be adult day care director, institution director, or executive director, and all indicated participation in the Adult Care Food Program (ACFP).

Respondents were asked specific demographic questions to confirm their professional roles as an institution director for an adult day care program. Personal and program characteristics are presented in Table 2. Of the respondents, the majority (52.4%) reported that they had been an institution director of adult day care for ten years or greater. Eighty-three percent (68) indicated an age range of 36 to 65 years of age, and none reported in the age range of 25 or less. Sixty-four percent (53) reported having a Baccalaureate degree or higher. The greatest challenges faced by respondents in order of frequency were the following: funding and financial issues (24.6%); applications, paperwork, and reporting (23.1%); and menu planning and food quality (20%).

Table 2

Personal and Program Characteristics (n = 82)

Telephone Survey Question	Frequency	%
Would the term Adult Day Care Adult Day Care Director/Institution Director/Executive Director best describe your work title?		
Yes	82	100.0

(Table 2 continues)

(Table 2 continued)

Personal and Program Characteristics (n = 82)

Telephone Survey Question	Frequency	%
How long have you worked as institution director for Adult Day Care sites, facilities, or centers?		
Less than 1 year	3	3.7
1-3 years	9	11.0
4-6 years	12	14.6
7-9 years	15	18.3
10-15 years	19	23.2
16-20 years	12	14.6
More than 20 years	12	14.6
What is your highest education level?		
High School Diploma or GED	9	11.0
Some College	11	13.4
Associate Degree	9	11.0
Baccalaureate Degree	39	47.6
Masters Degree	13	15.8
PhD	1	1.2
What is your age range?		
25 year or less	0	0.0
26-35 years	11	13.4
36-45 years	25	30.5
46-55 years	28	34.1
56-65 years	15	18.3
Over 65 years	0	0.0
Refused	3	3.7

(Table 2 continues)

(Table 2 continued)

Personal and Program Characteristics (n = 82)

Telephone Survey Question	Frequency	%
What state do you operate in?		
AK	1	1.2
CO	1	1.2
CT	3	3.7
DE	1	1.2
FL	4	4.9
KS	1	1.2
KY	6	7.3
MD	12	14.6
MN	7	8.5
MO	13	15.9
NY	13	15.9
NC	3	3.7
OH	1	1.2
OK	1	1.2
OR	1	1.2
TX	8	9.8
WI	6	7.3
How many Adult Day Care sites/facilities/centers does your institution administer?		
1 site	50	61.0
2 sites	17	20.7
3 sites	6	7.3
4 sites	4	4.9
5 or more sites	5	6.0

(Table 2 continues)

(Table 2 continued)

Personal and Program Characteristics (n = 82)

Telephone Survey Question	Frequency	%
What best describes the Adult Day Care sites/facilities/centers administered by your institution?		
Private nonprofit adult day care sites/facilities/centers	65	79.3
For-profit adult day care sites/facilities/centers	15	18.3
Government or municipality site/facilities/centers	2	2.4
What is your greatest challenge in administering an adult day care institution?		
Funding and financial issues	16	24.6
Applications, paperwork, and reporting	15	23.1
Menu planning and food quality	13	20.0
Staffing	8	12.3
Customer satisfaction and service	7	10.8
Enjoyable and healthy, balanced meals	1	1.5
Maintaining the census	5	7.7

Study respondents were asked numerous questions related to issues influencing their participation in training related to the ACFP. Training issues related to ACFP are reported in Table 3. Approximately 76% (63) of those surveyed indicated that they had conducted training in their institution on the food program. Of those who responded to the survey, 95% (78) indicated that they had received training on the regulations of the food program, while 96% (79) reported that they provided training on the regulations to the staff.

The top two categories/topics offered to the adult day care staff focused on:

- Nutrition, menu planning, meal patterns and special diets; and

- Sanitation, food safety, and handling.

Fifty-percent of respondents indicated that they provided training annually. Thirty-three percent reported that they provided training quarterly, every six months, or three times per year. The primary location for conducting training was at the facility (76.8%), and 71 (86.6%) of the respondents reported their preference for training was at the adult day care facility. The preferred method for delivering training was described as small group training (54.9%). Respondents (100%) reported that they believed the training conducted is helpful to the staff in following and operating the ACFP. The number one training topic identified as most important for managing a quality ACFP was identified as “food components, nutrition, and meal patterns”, with “program requirements and reporting” reported as second in importance.

Table 3

Training Issues Related to the Adult Care Food Program (n=82)

Question	Frequency	%
Have you received training on the regulations of the Adult Care Food Program?		
Yes	78	95.1
No	4	4.9
Have you conducted training to your Adult Day Care/facility/center/staff/contact on the regulations of the Adult Care Food Program?		
Yes	79	96.3
No	3	3.7
Do you provide training to your staff involved with the Adult Care Food Program?		
Yes	79	96.3
No	3	3.7

^aTotal n varies based on responses to the question.

(Table 3 continues)

(Table 3 continued)

Training Issues Related to the Adult Care Food Program (n=82)

Question	Frequency	%
Do you provide training to your staff involved with the Adult Care Food Program?		
Yes	79	96.3
No	3	3.7
What topics of training do you offer? ^a		
Nutrition, menu planning, meal patterns and special diets	49	59.8
Sanitation, food safety and handling	43	52.4
Food program rules and regulations	36	43.9
Food production and preparation	19	22.0
Civil rights	4	4.9
How often do you offer training?		
Annually	41	50.0
Quarterly	11	13.3
Every six months	9	11.3
Three times per year	7	8.5
Monthly	4	4.8
As needed	6	7.3
Orientation of new employees	4	4.8
Where is the training offered?		
At the adult day care facility	63	76.8
At a location away from your site, facility, or center	13	15.9
Other varied locations	6	7.3

^aTotal n varies based on responses to the question.

(Table 3 continues)

(Table 3 continued)

Training Issues Related to the Adult Care Food Program (n=82)

Question	Frequency	%
Do you believe that you are offering enough training opportunities to the sites, facilities, or centers associated with your adult day care program?		
Yes	73	89.0
No	9	11.0
Where do you prefer to conduct training for the sites/facilities/centers' staff that your institution offers?		
At the site/facility/center	71	86.6
At a location away from the site/facility/center	11	13.4
Identify from the following list the training equipment that you use for training: ^a		
Computer	33	40.2
Internet access	26	31.7
Other	23	28.0
VCR and TV monitor	20	24.4
DVD and TV monitor	17	20.7
None - no equipment available	8	9.8
Satellite dish	3	3.7
How have you conducted training in the past? ^a		
Small Group Training	56	68.3
Lecture	54	65.9
One-on-one Instruction	44	53.7
Hands-on Activities	41	50.0
Other	4	4.9

^aTotal n varies based on responses to the question.

(Table 3 continues)

(Table 3 continued)

Training Issues Related to the Adult Care Food Program (n=82)

Question	Frequency	%
What is your preferred method of delivering training? ^a		
Small group training	45	54.9
Hands-on activities	32	39.0
Lecture	28	34.1
One-on-one instruction	23	28.0
Other	4	4.9
What is your preferred day of the week to conduct training for your sites/facilities/centers that your institution sponsors?		
Sunday	1	1.2
Monday	11	13.4
Tuesday	14	17.1
Wednesday	40	48.8
Thursday	8	9.8
Friday	6	7.3
Saturday	2	2.4
Do you believe the training you conduct is helpful to the staff in following the Adult Care Food Program?		
Yes	82	100.0
Do you feel the training you conduct is helpful to the staff in operating the Adult Care Food Program?		
Yes	82	100.0

^aTotal n varies based on responses to the question.

(Table 3 continues)

(Table 3 continued)

Training Issues Related to the Adult Care Food Program (n=82)

Question	Frequency	%
What is your preferred time of day to conduct training for your sites/facilities/centers that your institution administers?		
Early morning, before normal work hours	15	18.3
Morning, before lunch	19	23.2
During lunch	3	3.7
Afternoon	32	39.0
Early evening, after work hours	10	12.2
Saturday	1	1.2
Sunday	0	0.0
Other	2	2.4
What are the three topics of training you believe are needed most by your staff as related to the Adult Care Food Program? ^a		
Food components, nutrition, and meal patterns	52	63.4
Program requirements and reporting	32	39.0
Sanitation and food safety	27	32.9
Food production and preparation	17	20.7
Caring for the elderly	4	4.9
First aid, CPR, safety	3	3.7
Budgeting and food purchasing	2	2.4

^aTotal n varies based on responses to the question.

(Table 3 continues)

(Table 3 continued)

Training Issues Related to the Adult Care Food Program (n=82)

Question	Frequency	%
What are three topics of training that you believe are most important to managing a quality Adult Care Food Program? ^a		
Program requirements and reporting	26	31.7
Food components, nutrition and meal patterns	17	20.7
Staff training	15	18.3
Sanitation, food safety, and handling	12	14.6
Management and operations	11	13.4
Customer service	8	9.8
Caring for the elderly	7	8.5
First aid, CPR, safety	6	7.3
Food production and preparation	3	3.7
Violent behavior	3	3.7
Recreational activities	2	2.4
Budgeting and purchasing quality food	1	1.2
Do you have suggestions for needed training materials/resources to assist you in training adult day care site/facility/center staff?		
Resources are sufficient	49	59.8
Diverse format: manual; Web-based; DVDs; videos	10	12.2
State guidance and information (simplified)	5	6.1
Menu; dietary requirements	4	4.9
Special needs for the elderly	3	3.7
Culturally diverse menu/recipe ideas	2	2.4
Conducting hands-on training	1	1.2

^aTotal n varies based on responses to the question.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Limitations

The primary limitation of this research is the inherent response bias associated with conducting telephone survey research. Furthermore, although appropriate efforts were taken in attempts to increase response rates, including a pre-notification letter explaining the nature of the research, the 27% response rate is somewhat low. There also was a high level of doubt and suspicion expressed by those potential participants for participating in the survey.

Research Study Conclusions

As a federally funded nutrition assistance program, the Adult Care Food Program (ACFP) plays a pivotal role in meeting the needs of those served by the program. Therefore, it is critical for those operating within the guidelines of the ACFP to have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the program. Such knowledge enables those overseeing services provided through the nutrition assistance program to support adequate and informative training. This training would ultimately enhance the competency level of those faced with the day-to-day operations of planning, preparing, and serving meals and snacks that are in compliance with the ACFP guidelines.

The findings indicate that institution directors of adult day care programs participating in this study take part in training. The findings also indicate that institution directors believe training their staff strengthens their knowledge and skills in following and operating an ACFP within compliance of program rules and regulations. The majority of survey respondents operate a single adult day care site, have been a director for ten years or greater, and possess the minimum of a baccalaureate degree. They responded that they prefer small group training sessions, and that they would benefit from training resources provided in a diverse format, such

as written materials/manuals, Web-based resources, and DVDs/videos. Respondents indicated that their greatest challenge focused on funding and financial issues. They also indicated that paperwork, menu planning, staffing, customer service, meals enjoyed by their clients, and maintaining census were additional challenges they face. Knowing this information is beneficial to those directly responsible for training development and delivery for adult day care sponsors participating in the CACFP.

Research Study Recommendations

State agencies and training developers are advised to consider strengthening their training efforts to directors who administer adult day care programs by providing diverse training formats tailored to the adult day care director and staff. Promoting and maintaining comprehensive training opportunities in diverse formats will positively influence the partnership between the state agency and institution directors who oversee adult day care programs that operate in compliance with the ACFP guidelines.

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