

**2009 SMP National Conference**  
**Wednesday, August 19, 2009**  
**10:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. / Ensuring Quality SMP Services, Part 2**  
**Introduction: Barbara Dieker**

**Risk Management in the SMP Program**

- **The importance of a National SMP Volunteer Management Program**
  - As Linda mentioned, the management of our volunteer programs is one of the key dimensions of volunteerism planning. Now that you have seen the ‘big picture’ about contemporary volunteering and the different factors involved in volunteer program management, I’d like to share AoA’s vision of how a volunteer management program will benefit the SMP program as a whole, as well as each individual SMP.
  - Benefits of a **national** SMP Volunteer Management Program include:
    - Consistency, quality, professionalism, and reliability of information,
    - Beneficiary confidence, and
    - Credibility of the SMP program at the local, state, and national level.
  - We also hope that a national volunteer management program will make **your** work easier by doing some of the planning for you and providing you with a pre-packaged program that is customized for SMP work.
  - As Linda will explain later, having a national program and developing national expectations helps manage potential areas of risk for all of us.
- **Overview of Program Management & Risk Management in the SMP program**
  - In our discussions with Linda about Program Management and Risk Management in the SMP Program, we quickly realized that the SMP program as a whole and each individual SMP already have some expectations and risk management protocols in place.
  - For example...
    - We already have national expectations in place in the SMP program related to Performance Measures and SMART FACTS.
    - At the local level, expectations or guidance are already in place at most SMPs which include:
      - Individual SMP (or state agency) policies and procedures,
      - and training which is performed by each individual SMP
  - AoA has both short-term and long-term goals for moving towards **more** national guidance and expectations for the SMP program in the future.
    - Our first short-term goal is that you will begin using the national training which is being rolled out at this conference.

- **National Volunteer Training**

- As you all hopefully know by now, one of our major areas of focus at this conference will be on our National Volunteer Training program, which has been developed specifically for SMP volunteers and staff.
- *In order to achieve the Administration on Aging's (AoA) objective of national program visibility and consistency, it is essential that the heart and soul of the program—SMP volunteers—be provided the skills, tools, and resources necessary to meet the needs of the communities and people they serve.*
- *The long-term vision of the SMP Volunteer Training Program: To develop a corps of SMP volunteers who are qualified to engage in consumer outreach and education, and consistently and effectively respond to beneficiary complaints and concerns related to health care fraud, waste, and abuse.*
- *Long-term volunteer training program goals include:*
  - *To enhance the professionalism and overall level of expertise of the SMP volunteer workforce*
  - *To enhance beneficiary confidence in and reliability of the information and assistance provided by SMP volunteers on health care fraud and abuse*
  - *To enhance the credibility of the SMP program at the local, state, and national level by developing recognized expertise in health care fraud prevention, identification, and reporting.*
- Phase 1: Foundations
  - The first phase of the National SMP Volunteer Training Program is called “SMP Volunteer Foundations Training” and will provide volunteers with a foundation of knowledge in three key areas:
    - The SMP Program,
    - Medicare Basics, and
    - Medicare Fraud & Abuse.
  - We are very excited to roll out this first phase of national training TODAY at the national conference, and you will learn more about SMP Volunteer Foundations Training throughout the day today.
- Phase 2: Specialty training for specific job functions
  - In Phase 2 of training, which will take place in about a year, we will roll out specialty training for specific job functions performed by SMP volunteers and staff. In phase 2 we will also make updates to the SMP Volunteer Foundations Training based on your feedback during phase 1.
- Since the SMP Volunteer Foundations Training program is new to the SMPs, and because it has not yet been written into your program announcements and cooperative agreements, we are considering it to be ‘pilot’ training during phase 1. However, please keep in mind that extensive work has gone into developing this

- training and it is fully ready for SMP use. Your input is especially important to us during this pilot phase of training, since your feedback will help us make enhancements to the next version of training. AoA's expectation is that eventually all SMPs will use the national training program.
- *We acknowledge that many SMPs already have a thorough volunteer training program in place. After reviewing the Phase 1 training materials, if you consider your current volunteer training program to be more comprehensive than this pilot version of the training, you may choose one of the following two options.*
    - *Use the SMP Volunteer Foundations materials in full and supplement them with your own materials. If possible, this is the preferred option because it not only allows you to try the training and suggest improvements for Phase 2, but it also moves the SMP program as a whole closer to the goal of standardized training for all SMP projects.*
    - *If you feel that the first option is not appropriate for your SMP, you may choose not to participate in the pilot training program during Phase 1. Your request to opt out should be provided in writing to the SMP Resource Center by September 30, 2009, along with a copy of your current training materials. SMPs who decide not to participate in the Phase 1 / pilot training will receive additional information and instructions from The Center.*
  - AoA has several short-term expectations for SMPs in using the national training.
    - AoA encourages ALL SMPs to use this SMP Foundations Training program and provide your suggestions for improvement.
    - This training should be provided not only to new SMP volunteers, but also to existing volunteers AND SMP staff.
    - SMP Volunteer Foundations is NOT intended to provide job-specific training. Until such time that the specialty training modules are ready for SMP use in Phase 2, SMPs should continue to provide additional function-related training to volunteers as you have done in the past.
    - Later this afternoon, take advantage of the opportunity to learn about this training program and see it in action.
    - After the conference, read the Implementation Guide and follow the instructions provided. Many of the comments that I am making today are included in this guide.
    - If you choose not to participate in the pilot training program, please notify the Center by Sept 30.
    - Attend the SMP Foundations Training Implementation Webinar series starting in October. This webinar series will provide you with a forum to ask questions about the implementation and delivery of SMP Volunteer Foundations Training.

- **Program Management and Risk Management in the SMP Program**
  - Now that we have discussed the national training for SMPs, I'd like to talk briefly about some of the goals that AoA has for the SMP program which go beyond training.
    - Please note that in the short term, we expect that you will follow any program management and risk management procedures already in place at your SMP.
  - In the long-term...
  - *AoA and The Center are also developing a risk management plan and a volunteer program management guide to help SMPs manage their large volunteer work force. Volunteer program best practices dictate that volunteer training is just one piece of an overall volunteer program management process. Once developed, the volunteer program management guide will be designed to interface with the national SMP Volunteer Training Program.*
  - AoA is moving into a 3 year process of overall risk management for the SMPs.
  - AoA also has a contract proposal for Volunteer Program Management which is being referred to as the 'SMP national volunteer program management **quality improvement** project'. In this project, we will address areas of uniform national expectations and guidance.
    - AoA's expectations will eventually be included in future program announcements and appear in future cooperative agreements.
    - AoA's guidance will come to you in the form of resources such as the SMART FACTS Operations Manual and other support that will come through the SMP Resource Center.
  - All of these areas that we are discussing today – training, program management, and risk management – will be part of a staged rollout. This will allow AoA and the Center time to properly develop each component, and will also allow all of you sufficient time to implement each phase within your SMPs.
  - Here's a sneak preview of what we are working toward:
    - Guidance in key areas of potential risk: Confidentiality, Conflict of Interest, Code of Conduct, etc.
    - Standardized Job Descriptions for SMP staff and volunteers
    - Resources for SMPs to help you achieve the goals that are being set by AoA
  - Now, Linda will give you more details on the volunteer involvement cycle and risk management process. We look forward to your input as we work through this process of developing a national training program and a volunteer management program, and identifying and addressing risks related to working with volunteers.