Social Work Interns and Service Coordination:
A Win-Win Proposition

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Getting to know you......
Today’s Learning Objectives

▪ Gain understanding of unique contributions of social work interns to programming for residents

▪ Understand how to leverage your program’s strengths and challenges to support social work interns’ educational needs

▪ Create your unique plan for engaging local university programs to explore internship opportunities
Aging and Service Coordination

- What’s the connection here?
- Provide context on experience with service coordination and social work interns
Support from HUD for the connection....

• “The Service Coordinator Program provides funding for the employment of Service Coordinators in insured and assisted Multifamily housing that is designed for the elderly and persons with disabilities. The Service Coordinator plays a critical role to support HUD assisted housing as a platform for financial security, physical security, social connections, and the delivery of long-term community based supportive services, especially for vulnerable populations such as the elderly....
• Shift away from the “refer and link” approach and towards a proactive and collaborative approach
• Assess resident’s needs; help identify, access and coordinate services and monitor receipt and follow through of services
• Seek to establish and sustain strong coordination that help residents to identify and effectively manage their preventative health and social service needs
• Create and sustain partnerships with community based supportive service providers, hospitals, health agencies service providers and other community stakeholders.

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/housing/mfh/scp/scphome
Demographics Trends in Aging

- **47.8 million** = the number of people age 65 and older in the United States on July 1, 2015. This group accounted for 14.9 percent of the total population. The age 65 and older population grew by 1.6 million people since 2014.
  

- Today, and every day until 2030, about 10,000 people will turn 65.

- **98.2 million** = the projected population of people age 65 and older in 2060. People in this age group will comprise nearly one in four U.S. residents. Of this number, 19.7 million will be age 85 or older.
  
  [https://www.census.gov/population/projections/data/national/2014/summarytables.html](https://www.census.gov/population/projections/data/national/2014/summarytables.html)
Workforce Issues Facing Social Work

▪ How can social workers support healthy aging for our growing population?
▪ More qualified social workers needed to provide effective services
▪ 60,000-70,000 qualified social workers needed by 2020
▪ Bureau of Labor Statistics projects 12 percent growth in jobs for social workers by 2024, a rate that is much faster than the average for all occupations. The greatest growth (19 percent) is expected to be in the health care arena, with the aging of the baby boomer generation cited as a contributing factor.

http://online.brescia.edu/social-work-news/geriatric-social-work/
Aging Boomers and Healthcare

http://hin.com/blog/2013/06/27/infographic-how-baby-boomers-consume-healthcare
Aging Boomers and Mental Health and Substance Use Issues

- According to SAMHSA, between 2005 and 2030, the number of older adults with major psychiatric illnesses will more than double from an estimated 7 to 15 million individuals.
  (http://gsa-alcohol.fmhi.usf.edu/Substance%20Abuse%20and%20Mental%20Health%20Among%20Older%20Adults-%20The%20State%20of%20Knowledge%20and%20Future%20Directions.pdf)

- The number of older Americans with SUD is expected to rise from 2.8 million in 2002–2006 to 5.7 million by 2020.
Effects of Ageism on SW Practice

- Fewer students report interest in geriatrics
- Misperceptions about focus of clinical work
- Lack of awareness of opportunities available
- Other evidence?
The Field Education Effect

- As the signature pedagogy, field experience can “tip the scales” for a student.
- Research shows that having a positive experience with an older adult is the most predictive factor for a career in gerontological social work.
- Think about what experiences you have had that connect you to geriatrics…….
Goals of the GRACE Program

- To increase the number of professional social workers serving older adults
- To provide quality field education to MSSW students interested in gerontology
- To contribute to improving services provided to older adults
- To create mutually beneficial partnerships between the university and community
Brief History of the GRACE Program

- Hartford Partnership Program
- Field Instructors and Community Agencies
- Program growth since 2010
Overview of Program Components

▪ Field education
▪ Educational enrichment
▪ Curriculum coordination
▪ Professional support
▪ Fellowship funding
Building a Successful Internship Program

Required components:
- Master’s level social worker with 2+ years of experience
- Management structure and support
- Programming to adequately support student learning
- Dedicated physical space
- Computer access

Useful ingredients:
- Energy and commitment to next generation of social workers
- ‘School spirit’
- Ability to advocate for and ‘protect’ interns
- Stipend or fellowship funding
- Creativity and challenge
Brainstorming Activity
References and Resources

- Council on Social Work Education Gero-Ed Center
- [www.cswe.org/CentersInitiatives/GeroEdCenter.aspx](http://www.cswe.org/CentersInitiatives/GeroEdCenter.aspx)
- Grant Makers in Aging: [https://www.giaging.org/issues/affordable-housing/](https://www.giaging.org/issues/affordable-housing/)
- Institute of Medicine, The Mental Health and Substance Use Workforce for Older Adults: In Whose Hands?