

SERVICE COORDINATORS ADDRESS SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



A CASE STUDY PRESENTED BY:



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ABOUT AASC

The American Association of Service Coordinators (AASC) is a professional membership association and a national resource for service-enriched housing professionals. AASC's 4,000 members assist elderly and disabled residents and families living in affordable housing communities to identify, locate, and acquire the services and supports necessary to become and remain self-sufficient. Established in 1999, AASC provides education, advocacy, best practices, leadership, and networking opportunities for its members.

IMPACT OF SERVICE COORDINATION ON HEALTH AND WELLBEING

By meeting residents of affordable housing where they are, holistically addressing their needs, and connecting them with services and resources in their communities, service coordinators play a powerful role in impacting resident outcomes related to the social determinants of health.

Every time a service coordinator connects a resident to transportation, food, financial assistance, health benefits, internet access, or other services, they are making an impact on the health and wellbeing of that resident. Access to transportation or the

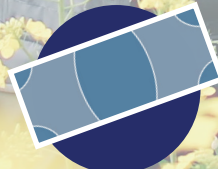
internet may result in fewer missed doctor's office visits and learning how to prepare healthy meals from free food boxes could help manage chronic medical conditions.

Understanding options to save on health care and medication costs means it's less likely a resident will be forced to make the choice between their housing and their health.

This work is more important than ever as the nation focuses its attention on improving health outcomes while reducing health care costs.



93% of residents in HUD affordable housing with a service coordinator continued to live independently instead of moving to facilities that provide higher levels of care in 2021



Supportive Services at Home (SASH) participants who receive support from a service coordinator saw an average annual Medicare savings of \$1,467 because of reduced hospital, emergency room and specialist visits.



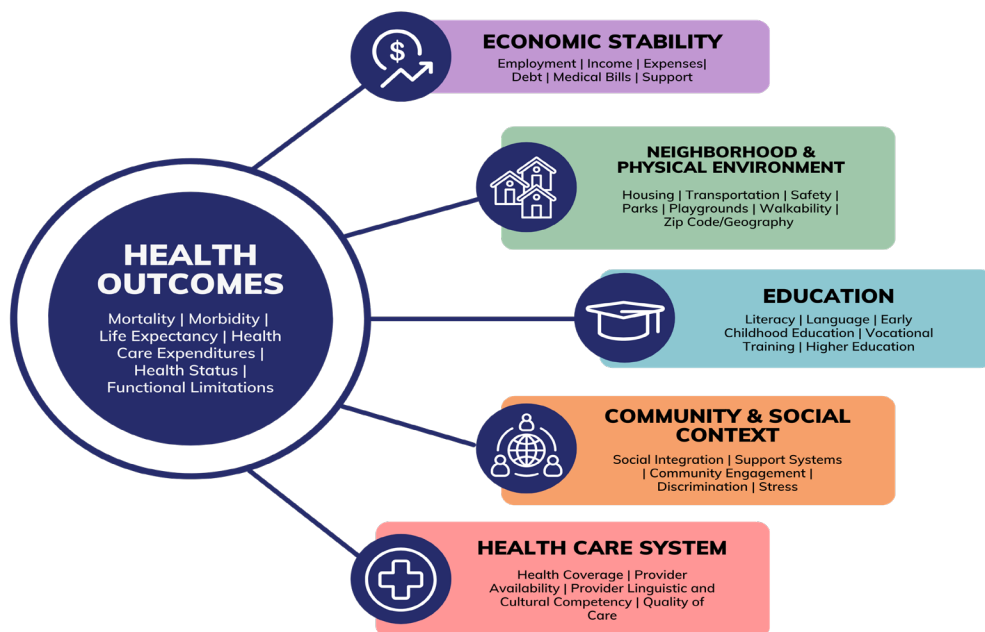
Residents receiving assistance from a service coordinator as part of the Selfhelp Active Services for Aging Model (SHASAM) had a 33% lower hospitalization rate.



25% of residents saw a decline in the total number of days admitted to the hospital when they worked with service coordinators as part of the R3: Right Care, Right Place, Right Time initiative.

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) define social determinants of health as conditions in the places where people live, learn, work, and play that affect a wide range of health and quality of life risks and outcomes. The social determinants are encompassed in five categories that service coordinators are addressing daily. When these issues aren't addressed, individuals are more likely to experience negative health outcomes including increased likelihood of developing chronic illnesses, higher medical costs related to unplanned hospital visits, and premature death.



HEALTH PROFILE OF FEDERALLY SUBSIDIZED AFFORDABLE HOUSING RESIDENTS

Based on their demographics, affordable housing residents are more likely to experience health disparities and lack access to the supports that would improve health outcomes. This can have negative consequences for individual health as well nationwide financial impacts as a result of increased Medicare and Medicaid spending.

By connecting residents to services and supports and reducing real and perceived barriers to taking advantage of community resources, service coordinators are helping residents improve their health outcomes while reducing health care costs.

Avg. HUD Section 202 Resident



POOR

*Average Income:
\$13,238 annually*



AGING

*Average Age:
79*



DIVERSE

*13% Hispanic,
19% Black, 56%
White, 19% Other*



**CHRONICALLY
ILL**

*Average # of
Chronic Medical
Conditions: 4*



**DUALLY
ELIGIBLE**

*68% are enrolled
in both Medicare
and Medicaid*



My COMMUNITY DIRECTORY

A Virtual Resource Guide for Service Coordinators

Service coordinators who are AASC members now have access to My Community Directory, where they can connect directly with community based organizations that provide free and reduced-cost services. With at least 1,400 resources in every zip code nationwide, My Community Directory can locate accurate community resources, log a history of their residents' needs, and make direct referrals to service providers.

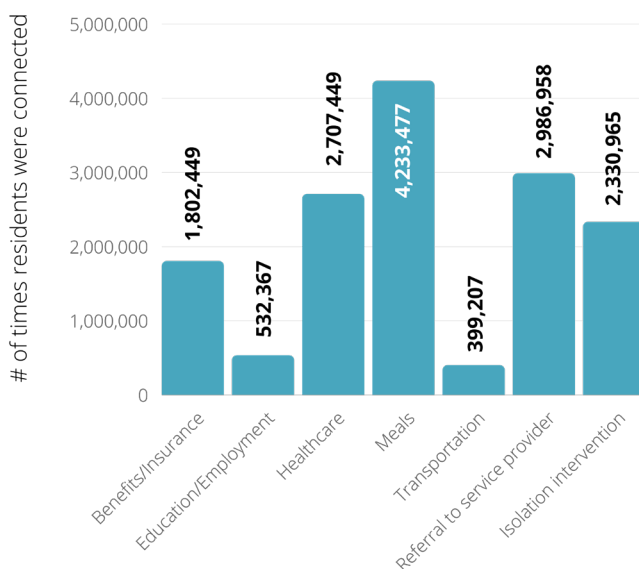
More than 800 service coordinators searched My Community Directory for free and reduced-cost supports in the first year of its availability. They conducted more than 17,000 searches with the most searched resources including in-home supportive services, dental care, help paying for housing or utilities, food delivery and emergency food.

ADDRESSING SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

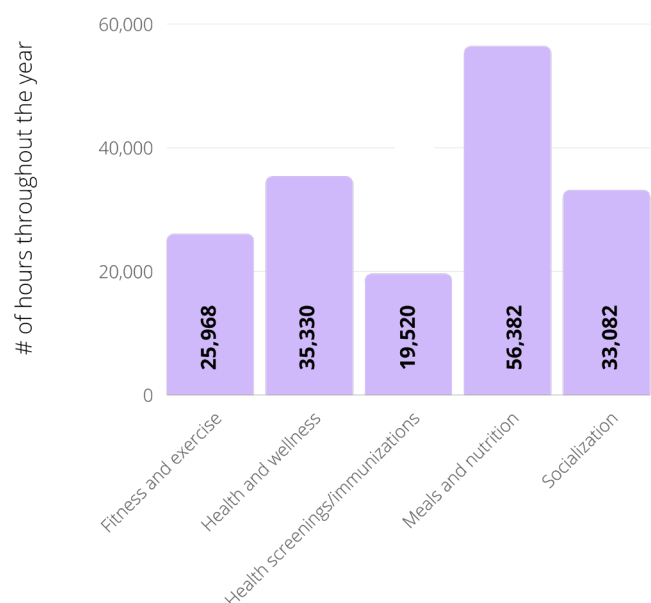
Every interaction a service coordinator has with a resident is a step toward addressing the social factors that can impact one's overall health and wellness. This is evident in the data reported through AASC Online, a case management system used by 65% of HUD-funded service coordinators to track resident interactions. The service connections and programming displayed below are just a snapshot of the types of support provided daily by service coordinators across the country.

*All data represents interactions reported in AASC Online from 2019 to 2021.

Service Connections



Programming





CASE STUDIES

Service coordinators in affordable housing for older adults are supporting each resident an average of 35 times every year. The following AASC member experiences are a glimpse into the ways service coordinators in affordable housing for older adults ensure their residents' basic needs are met and therefore address the social determinants of health.



ECONOMIC STABILITY

The average HUD Section 202 renter lives on a fixed income of about \$1,000 per month. Their extremely low incomes often qualify them for myriad programs and benefits that can reduce their costs for utilities, prescriptions, medical care, food, transportation, and more. But because the social safety net is vast, it's also complex and can deter those who need it most. Service coordinators help simplify and streamline complicated eligibility and application processes as well as assist residents with understanding benefits options. They also serve as advocates for their residents who are hit with unexpected expenses, such as surprise medical bills or costly home and car repairs. Preventing evictions is also a priority.

A resident was unable to pay rent after an accident that caused significant water damage in their unit left them with a \$5,000 bill that insurance wouldn't cover. Their service coordinator contacted the social worker at the resident's adult day health center to assess the situation. Together they petitioned the center's resource committee to provide funding from its special fund for emergency cases to help pay down the debt. The service coordinator then worked with the property's manager and assistant manager to set up a payment plan to cover all remaining expenses at a level that would ensure the resident wouldn't be evicted for nonpayment of rent.

NEIGHBORHOOD & BUILT ENVIRONMENT



Ensuring residents have access to healthy foods and transportation are primary focuses for service coordinators. Those who track resident interactions in AASC Online report assisting residents with these two needs more often than any others. In this category, service coordinators also assist residents with applying for home modification programs and reasonable accommodations.

When residents at a property in Illinois began sharing concerns about the safety of a crosswalk that they used daily to get to the grocery store and bank across the street, the service coordinator empowered them to advocate for change. He organized a meeting between local government officials and his residents to bring awareness about the dangerously little amount of time that was allowed for crossing the street. Within days the light was updated to provide residents more time to cross the street and the residents formed an age friendly committee with the goal of keeping local officials better informed about the needs of older adults in their community.



EDUCATION ACCESS & QUALITY

Learning is a lifelong endeavor that service coordinators help residents achieve through informational programming about benefits programs, managing chronic conditions, and personal finances. In recent years, service coordinators have prioritized technology training to familiarize residents with their phones and other devices. This allows them to take advantage of online grocery and medication ordering, telehealth, and social video calls.

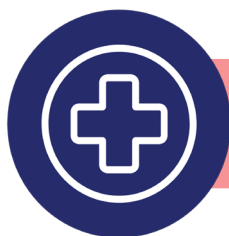
At one southern California property, onsite English as a second language courses facilitated by the service coordinator have been lifesaving. Ninety percent of residents are Asian American and many feared becoming victims of hate crimes spurred by the COVID-19 pandemic's origin, particularly after one of their neighbors was attacked. Gaining English skills gives them the confidence to ward off or report any verbal or physical attacks.

SOCIAL & COMMUNITY CONTEXT



Through every program they organize and every resident they visit, service coordinators are combating social isolation and working to create a positive community culture. Building connections with and among residents is vital, particularly in senior housing where half of residents with service coordinators live alone. Of the more than 100,000 events organized by service coordinators reporting data in AASC Online, those targeted toward socialization were among the most attended.

While residents were social isolating as a pandemic precaution, service coordinators of a Florida-based housing provider took note of residents reporting more often that they felt lonely or sad. To address this, service coordinators at multiple properties took part in a social isolation challenge called Distant but not Alone with the goal of convening community partners to host programs that would foster a sense of togetherness. They arranged for intergenerational pen pals, outdoor exercise classes, a fundraising walk to end Alzheimer's, pet therapy, community gardens and more.



HEALTH CARE & QUALITY

Service coordinators have long sought partnerships with healthcare providers who can care for residents. They often arrange for podiatrists, mobile dentistry services, and nurses who provide blood pressure checks and medication management to host events on their properties. During the pandemic, they've relied on health provider connections to organize COVID-19 vaccination clinics and informational sessions.

At Mount Rubidoux Manner in Riverside, California, the service coordinator collaborates with a health navigator from the Inland Empire Health Plan to better support residents who are dually eligible for Medi-Cal and Medicaid. The service coordinator refers residents with health plan benefit questions or who require hands on health care and behavioral health referrals to the health navigator.