

**The Evaluation of Select Consumer, Program, and System
Characteristics under the Supportive Services Program
(Title III-B) of the Older Americans Act
(The Evaluation of the Title III-B Program)**

The Evaluation of the Title III-B Program found that the Title III-B program effectively served the targeted population - vulnerable older adults at risk for institutionalization. Program clients confirmed the benefits of the program.

Lead Agency:

Administration on Aging
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Washington, DC 20001

Agency Mission:

The mission of the Administration on Aging (AoA) is to help elderly individuals maintain their dignity and independence in their homes and communities for as long as possible. AoA does this by serving as the Federal agency responsible for advancing the concerns and interests of older people, and by working with and through a nationwide network of 29,000 community-based organizations, known as the Aging Services Network, to promote the development of comprehensive and coordinated systems of care at the community-level that respond to the needs and preferences of older people and their family caregivers.

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Partner agency:

Research Triangle Institute International

General Description:

This study evaluated the Older Americans Act (OAA) Title III-B program including its role in planning, coordinating, and providing community services for older people. The OAA was established in 1965 to help provide older Americans with the supportive services they need to live independently in the community for as long as possible.

The Title III-B program is one of the largest components of the OAA. Title III-B funds helped to develop the infrastructure that constitutes the Aging Network, the system of state agencies, called State Units on Aging (SUAs), Area Agencies of Aging (AAAs), and local community service providers that plan, coordinate and deliver services. The Title III-B program helped the Aging Network to serve as the entry point into the long-term care system, providing critical information, case management services, and direct funding of long-term care services for individuals who otherwise might go without needed assistance.

The overarching research question for this study was, “how, to what extent, and with what results has the Aging Network implemented Title III-B of the Older Americans Act?” This study question was addressed through the following three sub-questions:

1. What is the role/importance of providing information and assistance and care planning (case management) services for older persons through the Aging Network and what is the role/importance of providing assessment and care planning for community-based long-term care services to the Aging Network?
2. What is the role/importance of providing transportation and home care (personal care, chore, and homemaker) services for older persons through the Aging Network and what is the role/importance of providing transportation and home care services to the Aging Network?
3. What is the role/importance of financing long-term care services for older persons (via home care, transportation, and other Title III-B in-home services) through the Aging Network and what is the role of financing and delivering long-term care services to the Aging Network?

The project used a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to evaluate the Aging Network’s involvement with key services supported by the Title III-B program: case management, information and assistance, personal care, chore services, homemaker services, transportation, and assisted transportation services.

Research Triangle Institute International (RTI) used several data sources to examine the characteristics of participants and Title III-B services and to evaluate the role/importance and administration of Title III-B services for older persons and their families. The quantitative data sources used for this study included the 2003 and 2004 National Surveys of OAA Program Participants, the 2001 through 2004 National Aging Program Information System State Program Performance Report data, and the 2006 National Survey of AAAs. Information from the AARP and the Urban Institute also was used to help understand the financial role of Title III-B services within the universe of home and community-based services. In addition, RTI conducted six focus group sessions with AAA directors, SUA directors, and community-based providers in order to more fully examine the issues that could not be addressed by the quantitative data.

The study found that the Title III-B program had successfully extended services to the targeted population – vulnerable older adults at risk for nursing home placement. The percent of program participants that were at high risk of institutionalization increased. The population that received home care services was older (aged 75+), lived alone, and had three or more Activities of Daily Living (ADL) impairments. Users of transportation services relied heavily on these services, with over half reporting that the service was used for at least 75% of their trips. Most of these participants lived alone and were at least 75 years old. In addition to reaching the program’s target population, participants were highly satisfied. For example, over 80% of survey respondents rated home care services as positive. Finally, Title III-B program funds were highly leveraged. Depending on the service, the study found that for every \$1 of Title III-B funding, local programs leverage \$2 to \$6 from other sources. Overall, the Title III-B program was a key component of the OAA and it was performing as intended; assisting vulnerable older adults to remain independent and active in their communities.

Excellence What makes this project exceptional?

This evaluation is the first time that the Title III-B program has been analyzed to examine the programs results, financing and characteristics of program implementation. Multiple years of data from a new annual performance survey at the participant level were now available and combined with annual program data and Aging Network data to provide a robust assessment of a program that is highly valued by participants and has helped the Aging Network serve as the entry point into the long-term care system. The Title III-B program helped the Aging Network to serve as the entry point into the long-term care system and provided critical information, case management services, and direct funding of long-term care services for individuals who otherwise might go without needed assistance.

Significance How is this research relevant to older persons, populations and/or an aging society?

Understanding the impact of the program and how it operates affects a significant number of older persons and their families. The Title III-B program services a substantial number of older adults and indirectly their families. Specifically, over 400,000 participants annually relied on Title III-B case management services during the years 2001 to 2004. Similarly, over 9 million hours of Title III-B personal care services were delivered annually, over 10 million hours of Title III-B homemaker services were provided, and over 1 million hours of chore services were supplied to older persons and their families during this 4-year period. In addition, over 34 million one-way trips were provided to general transportation users, and approximately 2 million assisted transportation trips were supplied annually to individuals with physical or cognitive impairments needing help to get to their appointments.

Title III-B transportation services facilitated access to health, wellness, and social activities, which were key factors to living a meaningful life in the community. Title III-B participants relied on these transportation services a great deal.

Effectiveness What is the impact and/or application of this research to older persons?

This research evaluated how and with what results the Title III-B program achieves its purpose of promoting the economic independence and social well-being of individuals and families across the lifespan.

The research found that Title III-B service participants valued these services highly. Over 80% of survey respondents rated aspects of homemaker service as good or better, while the vast majority of respondents rated Title III-B transportation services as good, very good, or excellent. Overall, Title III-B provided older Americans with a range of needed services and helped them navigate a complex and confusing long-term care system.

Innovativeness Why is this research exciting or newsworthy?

The Evaluation of the Title III-B program is exciting and newsworthy because the grants by the AoA and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services for Aging and Disability Resource Centers consciously built on the expertise and infrastructure developed by Title III-B on information and assistance and case management. The Aging and Disability Resource Center Program initiative supported state efforts to develop “one-stop shop” programs at the community level that would help people make informed decisions about their service use and support options and serve as the entry point to the long-term care system.