NAAPSA

National Association of Adult Protective Services Administrators

SURVEY REPORT

State Adult Protective Services Data Management Systems 2001

THE NATIONAL CENTER ON ELDER ABUSE

The National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) is administered by the National Association of State Units on Aging as the lead agency and funded by grant No. 90-AP-2144 from the U.S. Administration on Aging. NCEA consists of a consortium of six partner organizations.

NCEA exists to provide elder abuse information to professionals and the public; offer technical assistance and training to elder abuse agencies and related professionals; conduct short-term elder abuse research; and assist with elder abuse program and policy development. NCEA's website and clearinghouse contain many resources and publications to help achieve these goals.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Sara Aravanis, Director
Carol Downs, Elder Rights Specialist
National Center on Elder Abuse
National Association State Units
on Aging
1201 15th Street, NW, Suite 350
Washington, DC 20005-2800
(202) 898-2586 / Fax: (202) 898-2583
NCEA@nasua.org

Mary Twomey, Director
Elder Abuse Prevention Program
Goldman Institute on Aging
3330 Geary Blvd.
San Francisco, CA 94118
(415) 750-4180 / Fax: (415) 750-4136
mtwomey@gioa.org

Eva Kutas, President
National Association of Adult Protective Services
Administrators
Mental Health & Developmental
Disabilities Services Division
P.O. Box 14250
2575 Bittern Street, NE
Salem, OR 97309-0740
(503) 945-9491 / Fax: (503) 378-3796
eva.kutas@state.or.us

Karen Stein, Director
Clearinghouse on Abuse and
Neglect of the Elderly (CANE)
Department of Consumer Studies
University of Delaware
Newark, DE 19716
(302) 831-3525 / Fax: (302) 831-6081
kstein@udel.edu

Lori Stiegel, Associate Staff Director
Commission on Legal Problems
of the Elderly
American Bar Association
740 15th Street, NW, 8th Floor
Washington, DC 20005-1022
(202) 662-8692 / Fax: (202) 662-8698
lstiegel@staff.abanet.org

Bob Blancato, President
National Committee for the
Prevention of Elder Abuse
c/o Matz, Blancato & Associates
1101 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 1001
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 789-0470 / Fax: (202) 682-3984
msbrb@erols.com

National Center on Elder Abuse
1201 15th Street, NW, Suite 350 - Washington, DC .- 20005-2800
(202) 898-2586 – Fax: (202) 898-2583 – NCEA@nasua.org – www.elderabusecenter.org

State Adult Protective Services Data Management Systems – 2001

NAAPSA

National Association of
Adult Protective
Services Administrators

Table of Contents

* The Comprehensive Table from 2000 Survey of States and all of Appendix B are not available online. They are part of the printed copy of this document, available for $15.00 (includes shipping and handling) from:

> Joanne Otto
> Executive Director
> NAAPSA
> 960 Lincoln Place
> Boulder, CO 80302-7234
> 720-565-0906 (phone)
> 303-443-3361 (fax)
> **joanne.otto@naapsa.org**

<div align="center">

SUMMARY
State Adult Protective Services Data Management Systems
December 2001

</div>

Methods

Two sources of information were used to prepare this report. The first source of information on states' data management capabilities is the National Survey of States which was designed and administered in 2000 by NAAPSA and the National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse in their role as partners in the National Center on Elder Abuse. It was sent to all fifty state Adult Protective Services offices, as well as the District of Columbia and the U.S. territories. Fifty of the states as well as Guam and the District of Columbia responded.

The second is a Survey of States' Adult Protective Services Information Systems which was conducted by the National Association of Adult Protective Services Administrators in 1997 in cooperation with Toshio Tatara, Ph.D., of the National Center on Elder Abuse. In July 1997, a three-page questionnaire was developed and sent to all the state Adult Protective Services administrators. Responses to this survey were received from 34 states and the territory of Guam. Information from the survey was entered and analyzed by National Center on Elder Abuse staff.

Findings

Of the fifty-two respondents to the 2000 survey, only one state, Texas, was able to provide information on all 28 of the questions which required numerical responses. Twelve states were able to answer 75% or more of the questions. Thirty-one states were able to provide specific data on at least 50% of the questions, and nine states were able to only answer 25% or fewer of the data questions on the survey.

Only four questions were answered by at least 75% of the respondents. Only 65% of the states were able to answer questions regarding total annual expenditures for their APS programs and the sources of funding for these programs. Overall, there was little data available on perpetrators.

At the time of the 1997 survey, states were in various stages of data system development. Thirteen states said that they already had a statewide system in place. Eleven states reported being in the planning and design phase for a new system, one was awaiting approval, one was in contract negotiations, and one was installing equipment. Of the 35 responders, 25 states indicated that there were a total of 11,184 users of their data management systems at the state and local level. Funding for their systems was provided through a variety of sources including federal, state, local and combined state/local funds.

Of the functions supported by 28 state data management systems, 41.7% tracked sources of referrals; 66% supported intake; 41.7% included a risk assessment

component; 47% supported assessment; 63.9% supported case assignment; 44% monitored service delivery and 52.8% included outcome measures. Of the 35 responders, 22.2% reported that their APS data management system was part of the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information Systems (SACWIS) which was funded in part through federal child welfare grants.

Discussion

Neither of the surveys referred to in this study provides a complete picture of states' APS data management systems. The 1997 study is already four years old. It is assumed that since that time, more states have implemented statewide information systems for APS. The relatively poor ability of the states to provide basic data for the 2000 survey indicates that information gathering is still uneven.

In the 2000 survey, one third of the states were unable to provide information about the amounts or sources of funds for their own APS programs. Without this most basic information it is impossible to make projections about the actual cost of APS, much less to project how much additional funding might be needed or where it may come from.

Currently, many states lack even basic information on perpetrators/abusers. This information is vital to researchers, as it will help to shape the most effective abuser treatment programs and/or strengthen the need for enhanced criminal sanctions or better enforcement of existing criminal laws. Additional information on victims is also needed in order to develop intervention strategies. The ability to accurately assess risk is essential in providing prompt and often life-saving responses. In addition, outcome measures are paramount to assure program accountability.

Policy Implications

As we know, information is power. The lack of reliable data regarding abuse of vulnerable adults continues to prevent policy makers and advocates from telling a credible story to legislators and the public. The end result is that elder/disabled adult abuse remains invisible, despite the thousands of victims who suffer each year. In the 1990's, state Child Welfare programs were provided with federal start-up funds to develop their data management systems. This incentive, combined with federal Child Welfare reporting requirements, has resulted in more accurate and timely information regarding child welfare programs and the families they serve. A similar approach would help to stimulate better data collection in the field of Adult Protective Services.

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ADULT PROTECTIVE
SERVICES ADMINISTRATORS**

**REPORT ON STATES' ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES
DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

December 2001

INTRODUCTION

The problem of elder/adult abuse is not a recent development. It was first recognized in the United States by the Administration on Aging in the mid 1960's when a handful of demonstration projects were funded to "determine the effect of certain service delivery systems on the group of elderly identified as in need of protective services."[1] By the early 1980's, most states had mandatory reporting laws in place, but had not addressed the issues of data collection and reporting. Now, twenty years later, there are still many states unable to provide much more than a basic count of the number of elder/adult abuse reports they receive in a given year.

Information on reports of abuse, exploitation and neglect of elderly and disabled adults is collected by state protective service agencies. Since there is no federal agency charged with gathering these data, current information at the national level about the number of reports, as well as the source of these reports, types of abuse, characteristics of victims and perpetrators and treatment outcomes is unavailable on a regular basis

Over the years, there have been numerous attempts to collect national data on the incidence and prevalence of elder abuse. Ad hoc studies have been developed every few years. However, each study reinvents the wheel, and each time the wheel looks slightly different, resulting in difficulties in data comparison from year to year. These attempts have also been frustrated by inconsistent information collected by state programs serving abused elderly and younger persons with disabilities. In the Introduction to a study conducted by Jonathan Heller, a Kiplinger Fellow at Ohio State University, the author states, "The wide disparity in the findings…leave many elder abuse experts feeling in the dark as to the true prevalence of elder abuse in the U.S."[2].

As part of a Baseline Survey of Adult Protective Services, the National Association of Adult Protective Services (NAAPSA), a partner in the National Center on Elder Abuse, agreed to compile information on states' Adult Protective Services Data Management Systems. The purpose of this survey is to gain information on the status of states' data collection systems, as well as what kinds of data are available.

---

[1] Dunkle, R.E. 1984. "Protective Services: Where Do We Go From Here?" *Social Casework:The Journal of Contemporary Social Work.* Family Service America.
[2] Heller, Jonathan 2000. *Victimization of the Elderly and Disabled,* Vol.3, No4, Nov./Dec: 49-63.

METHODOLOGY

In order to write this report, NAAPSA relied on two sources of information. The first source of information on states' data management capabilities is the National Survey of States which was designed and administered in 2000 by NAAPSA and the National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, in their roles as partners in the National Center on Elder Abuse, to collect information regarding state statutes, administrative procedures, reporting, investigation and funding related to the delivery of adult protection/elder abuse services. The survey also collected essential information on both victims and perpetrators. It was sent to all fifty state Adult Protective Services offices, as well as the District of Columbia and the U.S. territories. Fifty of the states, Guam and the District of Columbia responded.

The second source of information is a Survey of States' Adult Protective Services Information Systems, which was conducted by NAAPSA in the fall of 1997 in cooperation with Toshio Tatara, Ph.D. of the National Center on Elder Abuse. In July 1997, a three-page questionnaire was developed and sent to all the state Adult Protective Services administrators. Responses to this survey were received from 34 states and the territory of Guam. Information from the survey was entered and analyzed by National Center on Elder Abuse staff. Due to Dr. Tatara's retirement, results of the Survey were never published, and are being presented here for the first time.

Questions about the states' data management systems were not included in the 2000 Survey. However, an analysis of the number of states which responded to Survey questions requiring specific data, as well an examination of the kinds of questions they were most likely to answer, provides a picture of states' data management capabilities.

FINDINGS

2000 Survey of States

Of the fifty-two respondents, only one state, Texas, was able to provide information on all 28 of the questions which required numerical responses.
Twelve states were able to answer 75% or more of the questions. Thirty-one states were able to provide specific data on at least 50% of the questions, and nine states were able to answer only 25% or fewer of the data specific questions on the Survey.

Only four questions were answered by at least 75% of the respondents. They were: Categories and number of cases investigated, total number of complaints investigated, total number of complaints confirmed/substantiated/validated, and the reasons for case closures. Only 65% of the states were able to answer questions regarding total annual expenditures for their APS programs and the sources of funding for these programs.

Questions answered by 25% or less of the states included the ages of substantiated victims excluding self-neglect, ages of substantiated victims of self-neglect only and the age of perpetrators in substantiated reports. Overall, there was little data available on perpetrators.

1997 Survey of States' Adult Protective Services Information Systems

At the time of the survey, states were in various stages of data system development. Thirteen states said that they already had a statewide system in place. Eleven states reported being in the planning and design phase for a new system, one was awaiting approval, one was in contract negotiations, and one was installing equipment. One state reported that there was no plan for an APS data system. Of the 35 responders, 25 states indicated that there were a total of 11,184 users of their data management systems at the state and local level. Funding for their systems was provided through a variety of sources including federal Social Services Block Grants, state general funds, local dollars and combined state/local funds. Only 5 states provided information on the costs of their systems which ranged from a low of $2,500 in Guam to a high of $26,000,000 in Florida. (It is assumed that the Florida system also included Child Welfare, although the survey did not ask for that information.).

Of the functions supported by 28 state data management systems, 66% supported intake, 63.9% supported case assignment, 52.8% included outcome measures, 47% supported assessment, 44% monitored service delivery, 41.7% tracked sources of referrals, and 41.7% included a risk assessment component. Of the 36 states, 22.2% reported that their APS data management system was part of the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information Systems (SACWIS) which were funded in part through federal child welfare grants. Five states indicated that they would be willing to share their APS software with other states. And 69.4% of the respondents said that they would be interested in a tele-conference to share information on data management system development. This teleconference was never held, due to Dr. Tatara's retirement.

DISCUSSION

Neither of the surveys referred to in this study provides a complete picture of states' APS data management systems. The 1997 study is already four years old. It is assumed that since that time, more states have implemented statewide information systems for APS. However, the relatively poor ability of the states to provide basic data for the 2000 survey indicates that information gathering is still uneven. The majority (63%) of states queried in the 1997 study relied on state funding only for their information system development. The states which also use Social Service Block Grant funds have experienced steady erosion of these funds since 1996. The fact that only four states could provide information on the cost of their data management systems indicates that separate allocations for this purpose are rare.

In the 2000 survey, one third of the states were unable to provide information about the amounts or sources of funds for their own APS programs. Without this most basic

information it is impossible to make projections about the actual cost of APS, much less to project how much additional funding might be needed or where it may come from.
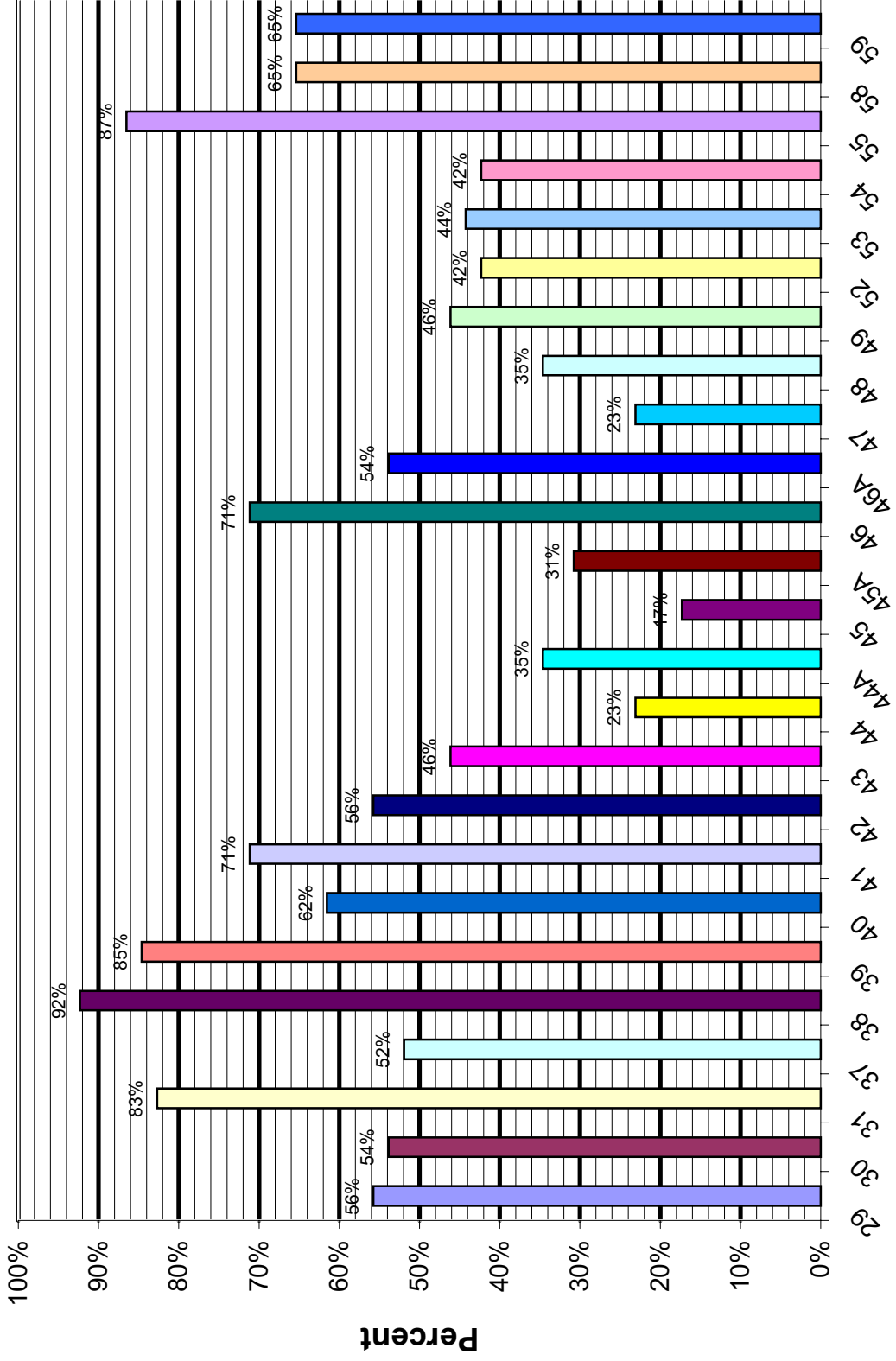
Currently, many states lack even basic information on perpetrators/abusers. This information is vital to researchers, as it could help to shape more effective abuser treatment programs and/or support the need for enhanced sanctions and/or better enforcement of existing criminal laws. Additional information on victims is also needed in order to develop intervention strategies. The ability to accurately assess risk is essential in providing prompt and often life-saving responses. In addition, outcome measures are paramount to assure program accountability.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

In the 1990's, state Child Welfare programs were provided with federal start-up funds to develop their data management systems. This incentive, combined with federal Child Welfare reporting requirements, has resulted in more accurate and timely information regarding child welfare programs and the families they serve. A similar approach would help to stimulate better data collection in the field of Adult Protective Services.

The National Elder Abuse Incidence Study of 1998 was prepared for the Administration on Aging and the Administration for Children and Families, by the National Center for Elder Abuse at the American Public Human Services Association in collaboration with Westat, Inc., a Maryland-based social science and research firm. The study concluded that reports of elder abuse represented only "the tip of the iceberg" in terms of the actual national incidence. However, without accurate, consistent data management systems in the states, and information which is collected and disseminated regularly at the national level, we will continue to guess at the real dimensions of the problem. This lack of reliable data continues to prevent policy makers and advocates from telling a credible story to legislators and the public. The end result is that elder/disabled adult abuse remains invisible, despite the hundreds of thousands of victims who suffer each year.

Percent of Data Submitted By Question

Chart showing "Percent of Data Submitted By Question" with Question Number on the horizontal axis and Percent on the vertical axis.

Values by question number:
- 29: 56%
- 30: 54%
- 31: 83%
- 37: 52%
- 38: 92%
- 39: 85%
- 40: 62%
- 41: 71%
- 42: 56%
- 43: 46%
- 44: 23%
- 44A: 35%
- 45: 47%
- 45A: 31%
- 46: 71%
- 46A: 54%
- 47: 23%
- 48: 35%
- 49: 46%
- 52: 42%
- 53: 44%
- 54: 42%
- 55: 87%
- 58: 65%
- 59: 65%
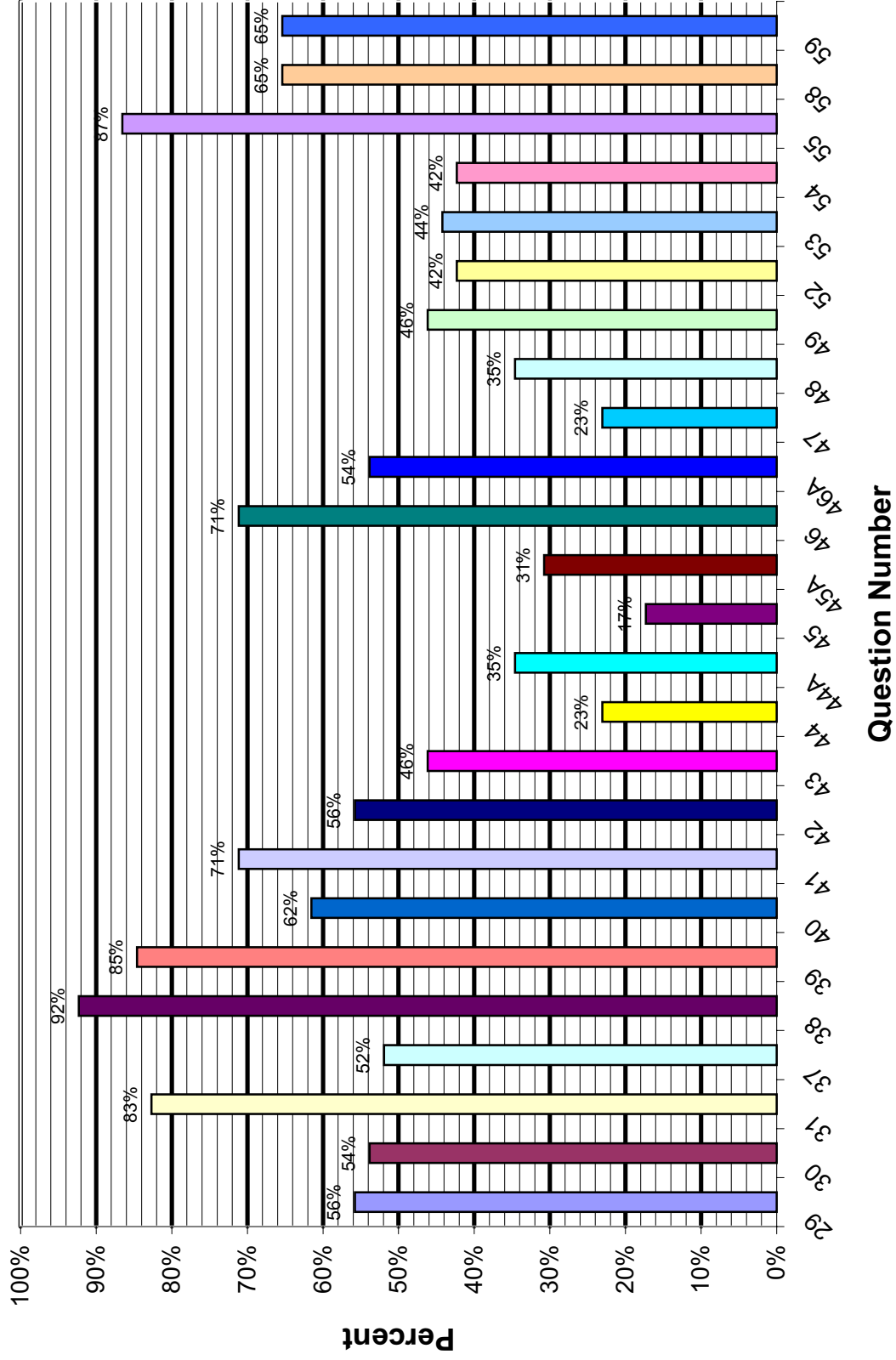
KEY TO QUESTIONS ON THE NCEA SURVEY OF STATES

29.   **Sources of complaints**
30.   **Reporter data not available**
31.   **Categories and number of cases investigated**
37.   **Average length of investigation**
38.   **Total number of complaints investigated**
39.   **Total number of complaints confirmed/substantiated/validated**
40.   **Number of substantiated reports age 18-59**
      Total population in state of persons age 18-59 with disabilities
      Number of substantiated reports age 60 +
      Total population in state of persons age 60+
41.   **Types of mistreatment found in substantiated cases**
42.   **Gender of victims in substantiated reports**
43.   **Race of victims in substantiated reports**
44.   **Age of substantiated victims excluding self-neglect**
44a   **Age of substantiated victims excluding self-neglect**
45.   **Age of substantiated victims self neglect only**
45a   **Age of substantiated victims self neglect only**
46.   **Number of reports tracked by setting in which victim lives**
46a   **Number of reports tracked by setting in which victim lives**
47.   **Age of perpetrators in substantiated reports**
48.   **Gender of perpetrators in substantiated reports**
49.   **Relationship of perpetrator to victim in substantiated reports**
52.   **Average length of time an APS case remains open**
53.   **How many and what percent of clients refused services**
54.   **How many and what percent of cases involved court actions/legal interventions**
55.   **What were the reasons for case closures**
58.   **Total state expenditures for APS program in the reporting year**
59.   **Sources and amounts of funding for APS program in the state**

Percent of Data Submitted By Question

Question Number

Percent

Question	Percent
29	56%
30	54%
31	83%
37	52%
38	92%
39	85%
40	62%
41	71%
42	56%
43	46%
44	23%
44A	35%
45	17%
45A	31%
46	71%
46A	54%
47	23%
48	35%
49	46%
52	42%
53	44%
54	42%
55	87%
58	65%
59	65%

State APS Data Management Systems 2001

9

Quick Facts

- Number of states reporting   52 including Guam and DC

- Average percent of questions
  answered per state   53%

- States submitting most data
  12 (75% or more)

Texas	100%
Florida	88%
Maine	88%
Illinois	84%
Nevada	84%
Tennessee	84%
Utah	84%
Indiana	80%
Louisiana	80%
Wisconsin	76%
Nebraska	76%
New Jersey	76%

- States submitting least data
  9 (25% or less)

Montana	4%
North Dakota	8%
Alabama	12%
Washington	12%
Maryland	16%
Minnesota	16%
New York	16%
Georgia	20%
West Virginia	24%

- Questions answered by 75%
  or more of the states

38	92%
55	87%
39	85%
31	83%

- Questions answered by 25%
  or fewer of the states

45	17%
44	23%
47	23%

COMMENTS FROM NAAPSA SURVEY OF STATES

"Our state captured information on reports and does not specify and capture information on substantiated cases specifically. This information is available only through ad. hoc reports." Arizona Aging and Adult Administration

"The APS Program in the state of California was significantly enhanced by the passage of Senate Bill 2199, which expanded the reporting requirements, became effective 1/1/99; expansion of investigative requirements became effective on 5/1/99. Standards are being developed based on the new law." California Department of Social Services

"With an ever eroding source of funding under the Social Services Block Grant, the District of Columbia Adult Protective Services Program has not been able to invest in client tracking and database development." District of Columbia Department of Human Services

"The number is highly inflated due to workers frequently making errors by checking the incorrect category." Kentucky Cabinet for Families and Children

"Louisiana has two separate adult protective services programs for ages 18 to 59 and for 60 and above. The program for ages 18 to 59 is the Bureau of Protective Services under the Department of Health and Hospitals. The program for ages 60 and above is the Elderly Protective services under the Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs." Louisiana Elderly Protective Services Program

"Our attempts to coordinate a unified survey response with Elderly Protection before 6/5 were not successful." Louisiana Bureau of Protective Services

"All data is based only on those cases that were assigned for investigation. It does not include data on cases that were screened out at the intake level. It does not include new reports made on case management cases." Maine Department of Human Services, Bureau of Elder and Adult Services

"Adult Protective Services expenditures are included in the total expenditure amount for all Adult Services programs." Maryland Department of Human Resources/Community Services Administration

"No funding source specific to APS." Missouri Division of Aging

"There is no APS-Specific funding, and 90% of the social workers involved in APS are not APS dedicated workers; they carry a generalist Adult and Elderly Services caseload." New Hampshire Division of Elderly and Adult Services

"A complete reporting and data collection system will be launched in the year 2000. Presently data such as perpetrator information is reported in the case files but not collected at the State level." New Jersey Division of Senior Affairs

"We hope to develop a statewide data collection system." New York State Office of Children and Family Services

"Counties receive a consolidated allocation which consists of Social Services Block Grant, TANF, general APS funds." Ohio Bureau of Child and Adult Protection

"One report may contain multiple allegations. However for data collection purposes, only one is counted per referral, with the field staff making the decision of which is counted. May have multiple reports on cases for each fiscal year." Oklahoma Department of Human Services

"Our complaint data is for the investigation only. If services are needed, the cases are changed from APS to ""case management" or "risk intervention." Oregon Senior and Disabled Services

"Generally speaking, we can collect the same information (on perpetrators) as we do on victims, such as age, gender, ethnicity, living arrangement, language spoken, etc. However, workers do no consistently enter the information, so the data are not as complete as they are for victims." Texas Department of Regulatory and Protective Services.

"We have 3 categories, Substantiated (meaning we believe there is a preponderance of evidence to support the findings), Suspected but Unsubstantiated (meaning we believe it happened, but less than a preponderance of evidence), and Unsubstantiated (we don't believe it happened)" Utah Division of Aging and Adult Services

"Reporter data is not currently available as requested. We launched a new automated system for our APS program in fall of 1999. Though a number of reports have been identified, they have not yet been developed." West Virginia Department of Health and Human Services

"The information I provided above is specific only to Wisconsin's elder abuse reporting system which applies to the 60+ population. We do have adult protective services laws that apply to protection for the 18-59 population, however there is no reporting system for that population We are currently redesigning the APS system in Wisconsin and we will be addressing the reporting system for the 18+ population."   Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services

Appendix A

PRESENTATION TO THE ELDER ABUSE RESEARCH PANEL

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCE

MAY 24, 2001

by Joanne Otto, Executive Director, NAAPSA

The purpose of this presentation is to give panel members an overview of the states' Adult Protective Services (APS) data collection and reporting capabilities. The information in this report is by no means comprehensive, since there was not sufficient time to query all the states directly about their data management systems. Instead, information was used from a National Survey of States, conducted in 2000 by the National Center on Elder Abuse through two of its partner organizations, the National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (NCPEA) and the National Association of Adult Protective Services Administrators (NAAPSA).

<u>Background</u>

The problem of elder/adult abuse is not a recent development. It was first recognized in the United States in the mid 1960's when a few grants were given by the Administration on Aging for the support of local adult protective services programs. By the early 1980's, most states had mandatory reporting laws in place, but had not addressed the issues of data collection and reporting. Now, almost twenty years later, there are still many states unable to provide much more than a basic count of the number of elder/adult abuse reports they receive in a given year.

The National Survey of States was designed to collect information regarding state statutes, administrative procedures and funding related to the delivery of adult protection/elder abuse reporting and investigation. The survey also collected essential information on both victims and perpetrators. It was sent to all fifty state Adult Protective Services offices, as well as the District of Columbia and the U.S. territories. Every state, the District of Columbia and Guam responded.

Questions about the states' data management systems were not included in the Survey. However, an analysis of the number of states which responded to Survey questions requiring specific data, as well an examination of the kinds of questions they were most likely to answer provides a picture of states' data management capabilities.

<u>Findings</u>

- Of the fifty-two respondents, nine jurisdictions were only able to answer 25% or fewer of the data questions on the Survey

---

- Thirty-one jurisdictions were able to provide specific data on at least 50% of the questions.

- Twelve jurisdictions were able to respond to 75% or more of the questions.

- Only one state, Texas, was able to provide information on all of the questions.

This poor showing and the comments offered by the Survey respondents demonstrate the following problems:

Problems Collecting the Data

- **There is no federal agency or organization charged with collecting elder/adult abuse data on a regular basis.**

- **With the exception of a handful of states, most APS programs have relatively limited data management systems.**

- **State APS administrative offices may be housed in many different agencies such as regulatory, human services, family services, aging, health and rehabilitation and even law enforcement.**

- **Frequent administrative reorganizations impact the program.**

- **Many APS casework staff also have duties in other programs such as child protection and in-home services.**

- **Some states such as Wisconsin, Louisiana and Massachusetts have bifurcated APS systems which serve elderly and younger disabled abuse victims separately**.

Problems Analyzing the Data

- **There is no national statutory authority providing consistent definitions of elder/adult abuse, exploitation and neglect.**

- **There is no federal funding to encourage states to develop uniform elder abuse/adult protection data management systems.**

Implications

- **Lack of consistent national definitions**

  - Each state is collecting different information on different populations.
  - It is difficult to develop standard outcome measures without consistent definitions

- **Lack of regular national data collection**

  - There is no accurate understanding of the dimensions of the problem. The National Elder Abuse Incidence Study conducted by the Administration on Aging in 1999 concluded by saying that their findings represented only "the tip of the iceberg" in terms of the actual national incidence of elder abuse.

  - There is no consistent information on victim and/or perpetrator characteristics.

  - It is difficult to evaluate program and/or treatment effectiveness.

  - There is a lack of accountability.

  - Some data collection at the national level is done on an ad hoc basis, primarily using volunteer time donated by state APS administrators who lack expertise in research methodology.

  - Some states such as California are now in the process of developing data management systems without guidelines about what data is needed at the national level.

- **Lack of federal funding for data management system development and program support at both the national and state level**

  - APS programs rely heavily on state funds which are prime targets for funding cutbacks. As examples: this March the Iowa state APS program was threatened with a 50% reduction in staff as well as the cancellation of statewide APS training, and Oregon was in the process of passing legislation mandating an APS response to neglect cases without funding for staff to conduct the investigations.

  - New York, a heavily populated state, has no unified data management system, and no immediate plans to develop one.

  - Many states are unable to identify how much money is being allocated for Adult Protective Services delivery, or where the funds come from. This makes it virtually impossible for them to earmark funds for the development of data management systems.

  - Funding for the National Elder Abuse Incidence study was so limited that it compromised the research findings.

- **State APS programs housed in many different agencies**

  - This leads to uneven programmatic and data management systems.

- **Frequent administrative reorganizations**

  - This results in a lack of APS program visibility which makes it difficult to obtain adequate program funding.

- **APS casework staff with other duties such as child abuse investigations**

  - Responding to child abuse reports is a priority over elder/adult abuse reports.

  - Child protection reporting requirements are extensive and drive federal funding allocations to the states.

- **Elder and disabled adult programs separately administered in some states**

  - Consistent data on both programs are not available.

  - As an example, in Louisiana the lack of communication between two protective services programs, one for the elderly and the other for younger disabled victims makes consistent statewide protective services data collection difficult.

Recommendations

- **Passage of federal legislation for the provision of Adult Protective Services to vulnerable adults age 18 and over, including those who are self-neglecting, with standard definitions of terms.**

   In 1994, the Adult Services Task Force of the American Public Welfare Association conducted a national survey of states regarding their support for federal legislation relating to Adult Protective Services. Of the 47 states responding to the survey, seventy-nine percent said that they supported a federal statute requiring state APS programs to serve vulnerable adult victims of abuse age 18 and older, and ninety-six percent said that a federal APS statute should require states to serve self-neglecting adults.

- **Passage of federal requirements for automated data collection systems in the states.**

   In the same 1994 survey, sixty percent of the states supported standardized data collection that was federally mandated.

- **Federal funding to states to provide data management and program support.**

   Ninety-eight percent of the states surveyed in 1994 supported federal funding for the program and eighty-five percent said that it should be in the form of a separate appropriation specifically earmarked for this purpose. In the mid 1990's, federal

funds were given to states for the development of child welfare data systems. In a few states such as Texas, APS was able to join with Child Welfare in creating a statewide Protective Services data management system. The success of this collaboration is evident. Of the fifty-two respondents to the NCEA Survey, Texas was the only state able to provide data for every question.

- **The identification of one federal agency to collect national data on elder/adult abuse on a regular basis, to report to Congress and to make this information available to the public.**

- **Development of national APS outcome measurement standards.**

- **Funding for state APS programs tied to performance outcomes, with special incentive grants to states which need assistance in meeting national program standards**.