
Appendix A

Case Study Methodology

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1.1 Selection of Sample Projects

The site visits were designed to generate comprehensive descriptive data from nine established Service Coordinator Programs (SCPs) and nine new SCPs. Resulting data allowed us to describe the projects, their implementation, and the perceptions of residents on the quality of service delivery. The established SCPs included Round One grantees, funded in fiscal year (FY) 1992. The new SCPs included Round Two and Round Three grantees, funded in FY 1993 and FY 1994.

We expected that the established SCPs would provide data on issues related to project administration and operation, service delivery, and reporting requirements, because these projects had been in operation between 1.5 and 2.5 years. New SCPs, in operation at least 6 months, were to provide information about program implementation issues.

1.1.1 Site Selection Process

Two independent samples were drawn: one for the established SCPs and another for the new SCPs. Although the two samples were drawn independently, the site selection process was similar. This process, described below, points out where the selection criteria and the site selection process differ for the two samples.

For the site selection process, the unit of selection was an application form that represented an SCP at a specific HUD project. In this discussion, we refer to the unit of selection as a project, an application, or an SCP. Ideally, we would have received one hard-copy application for each HUD project served by an SCP. However, in some cases, a single application was used for an SCP with one service coordinator who served multiple HUD projects. As part of the site selection process, we created "applications" to be used as units of selection to represent the individual HUD projects served by the same service coordinator. In these cases, we assumed that the projects were the same size for the site selection process; that is, we divided the total number of units served by the number of projects sharing the service coordinator.

1.1.1.1 Classification Process

The initial step in the selection process was to convert the final application database of SCPs into a statistical software dataset. The dataset enabled the projects to be classified by the following dimensions:

- **Size**—Small, medium, or large
- **Geographic Area**—Northeast, South, Midwest, or West

- **Affiliation**—Affiliation with a national housing management organization or no affiliation
- **Sharing Status**—Service coordinator serving more than one HUD project, or service coordinator serving only one HUD project
- **HUD Programs**—Section 202 or Section 8 (new SCPs only)

Each combination of size, geographic area, affiliation, and sharing status defined a selection cell for the established SCPs. For example, one selection cell for the established SCPs would consist of all applications from small Midwestern affiliated programs that do not share service coordinators. The total number of selection cells for established SCPs was 48. This number was calculated by multiplying the number of size criteria (3) times the number of geographic area criteria (4) times the number of affiliation criteria (2) times the sharing status criteria (2). The selection cells for new SCPs included the possible combinations for established SCPs plus those combinations with the HUD classification of Section 202 and Section 8. The number of possible selection cells for new SCPs was 96.

Size Classifications. We classified the projects by size according to the definitions provided by HUD. These definitions were small (50 units or less), medium (51 to 100 units), and large (more than 100 rental units).

Geographic Classifications. For the selection criteria and analysis, the projects were classified geographically as Northeast, South, Midwest, or West. These geographic areas are defined below:

- **Northeast**—HUD Geographic Areas I, II, and III
- **South**—HUD Geographic Areas IV and VI
- **Midwest**—HUD Geographic Areas V and VII
- **West**—HUD Geographic Areas VIII, IX, and X

Although these geographic definitions are arbitrary, we believe that they are consistent and logical.

Classification by Affiliation. A list of projects affiliated with a national housing management organization, supplied by HUD, was used to classify the projects in the dataset. The list of affiliated SCPs included the projects associated with the National Council of Senior Citizens and the National Church Residences.

Sharing Status Classification. Applications include data that indicate whether projects shared service coordinators with other projects. A service coordinator who works part time at one project and part time at another is considered "shared."

HUD Project Type. All established SCPs are at Section 202 projects. New SCPs may be at either Section 202 or Section 8 projects. New SCPs at Section 236 and 221(d) projects were excluded from the sample, following HUD's recommendation.

1.1.2 Site Selection Criteria

HUD established the following selection criteria that applied to both analytical groups:

- Each sample will contain nine projects.
- The percentage of SCPs selected from each of the four geographic areas will reflect the distribution of SCPs across geographic areas.
- The percentage of SCPs selected from each of the size groups will reflect the size distribution of SCPs across size groups.
- Three SCPs will have national affiliation, and six will be nonaffiliated programs.¹
- Four projects will represent Section 8 projects, and five will represent Section 202 projects (new SCPs only).
- Projects should include both those that share service coordinators and those that do not.
- New SCPs must have been in operation for at least 6 months.

More selection cells existed than projects to be selected. Therefore, the selection criteria were viewed as the number of projects that could not be exceeded for a specific classification. For example, for new SCPs, a maximum of three SCPs could have come from nationally affiliated programs and four from Section 8 projects.

1.2 Sampling Procedure

The site selection process was run separately for established SCPs and new SCPs. The logic of the site selection process, which was the same for both samples, is presented below. New SCPs differed from established SCPs in that they had an additional criterion for the number of Section 202 and Section 8 projects.

- **Step 1**—Establish the maximum number of projects that fulfilled each selection criterion.

¹ New SCPs did not have enough affiliated programs to select the numbers originally proposed by HUD. Only one affiliated project was originally selected, and it was replaced by a nonaffiliated project.

- **Step 2**—Assign the individual projects to the selection cells. Each cell was described as meeting one of each of the five criteria described above; that is, each cell meets a geographic criterion, a size criterion, an affiliation criterion, a sharing status criterion, and a HUD classification criterion.
- **Step 3**—Remove any selection cells that did not have any projects described by the selection cell. For example, if no projects were affiliated and nonsharing at small Section 8 projects in the Midwest, then the cell representing that classification was deleted.
- **Step 4**—Randomly select a selection cell from among the remaining selection cells. Each remaining selection cell had an equal probability of being selected. This probability was equal to one divided by the total number of remaining selection cells.
- **Step 5**—Randomly select a project from within the selection cell picked in Step 4. Each project had an equal probability of being selected. The probability of being selected was equal to one divided by the total number of projects within the selection cell. After the project was selected, it was removed from the list of projects in the cell.
- **Step 6**—Subtract one from the maximum number of the selection criteria met by picking the selection cell.
- **Step 7**—Determine whether any criterion had been fulfilled. A criterion was defined as fulfilled if the maximum number remaining was zero. If a criterion was fulfilled, then the selection cell described by that criterion was deleted from the list of remaining cells.
- **Step 8**—Determine whether nine projects within this analytic group had been selected. If the number was less than nine, we returned to Step 3. If the number of projects selected was nine, the selection process was complete.

1.3 Replacement Selection

Replacement projects were selected on an as-needed basis for projects that were originally selected and either refused to participate or had not been operating their SCP for at least 6 months. Replacements were selected from the sample selection cell containing the original SCP. For some new SCPs, it was necessary to select several replacements because the programs had not been operating for at least 6 months. For some selection cells, all of the SCPs in the cell either refused or did not meet the 6-month limit. After consulting with HUD, we then selected replacements from selection cells that had as many as possible selection criteria in common with the original selection cell. In addition, an effort was made to ensure that replacement cells were similar to the originally selected SCP in an urban/rural context.

Exhibit A-1 presents the original selection criteria for established SCPs and new SCPs. The selection criteria originally established were met by the final sample of projects for established SCPs. No established SCPs refused to participate. Five new SCPs in the original sample were unable to participate in the study. The original selection criteria were met for project type and region but not for size, national affiliation, or sharing status.

Exhibit B-1. Site Selection Criteria for Service Coordinator Programs

Selection Criteria	Established SCPs		New SCPs	
	Original Sample	Projects Visited	Original Sample	Projects Visited
Project Type				
Section 202/8	9	9	5	5
Section 8	0	0	4	4
Region				
Northeast	3	3	2	2
South	2	2	3	3
Midwest	2	2	3	3
West	2	2	1	1
Size				
Small	2	2	2	4
Medium	3	3	3	3
Large	4	4	4	2
Affiliation				
Yes	3	3	1	0
No	6	6	8	9
Share				
Yes	4	4	4	6
No	5	5	5	3

1.4 Comments on the Site Selection Process

Given the number of selection criteria used in the process and the number of projects selected, establishing a weighting procedure to reflect some "average" SCP was impossible. However, our selection process established an objective method of selecting projects.

We examined the possibility of collapsing the number of geographic areas to three in order to have nine basic selection cells—three geographic and three size classifications. When we examined this issue, it became apparent that any possible grouping of HUD geographic areas into other geographic configurations implied an unequal distribution of SCPs across the geographic areas. In addition, the geographic distribution of established SCPs and new SCPs differs. In order to have roughly an equal number of projects in each geographic area, the geographic areas would have to be defined differently for the two samples.

The sample selection process was completed with the assistance of the HUD study directors. A project's willingness to be visited and have records reviewed, as well as maintaining a diversity of projects, were key determinants to final sample selection.

1.5 Data Sources

Multiple data sources were used during the on-site data collection at the established SCPs and new SCPs. Prior to the visits, data were obtained from project applications. During the visit, the following data sources were used:

- Send-ahead questions
- In-person interviews with program staff
- Resident case records
- Resident focus groups
- Project observation guide

At each project visited, data were collected during in-person interviews with the service coordinator, property manager, and, as appropriate, contract employee supervisors and service coordinator employers. At one of the three affiliated projects visited, we interviewed the administrator from the national office. This person had supervisory responsibility for service coordinators at the three affiliated projects visited.

Other sources of data included a sample of resident case records, focus groups or in-person discussions with project residents, and a project observation guide. The procedures for conducting the on-site data collection are described in the following section.

1.6 On-Site Data Collection Procedures

The on-site data collection procedures were the same for both established SCPs and new SCPs. The procedures were pretested prior to their use in the full study.

The protocol for conducting the visits included the following steps:

- Mail letters from HUD to appropriate field offices and projects selected for visits.
- Conduct followup telephone calls to service coordinators to schedule visits.
- Mail confirmation letters to service coordinators.
- Obtain lists of residents and randomly select focus group participants.

- Randomly select case records for file review.
- Conduct interviews with the property manager, the service coordinator, and, if applicable, the service coordinator employer.
- Conduct focus groups.
- Complete case record abstractions.
- Mail thank-you letters to service coordinators, property managers, and residents.

The process used to schedule, arrange, and conduct these visits was the same for both established SCPs and new SCPs. A brief description of the process is given below.

Mail Letters to Projects Selected for Visits. HUD mailed letters to field offices and to each grantee at each of the projects selected to be visited. The purpose of the letter was to announce the study, describe its purpose, and inform projects that KRA Corporation (KRA) was conducting the study under contract with HUD. The letter also informed projects that they had been randomly selected as one of the nine projects to be visited, and that they should expect a telephone call from KRA with more information about the visit.

Conduct Followup Telephone Calls to Service Coordinators. One week after HUD mailed letters to the selected projects informing them that they were randomly selected to participate in this study, we telephoned the service coordinator to discuss the purpose of the visit and to schedule the visit. During this call, we discussed all the activities related to the visit and requested the service coordinator's assistance.

The following points were covered during the telephone call:

- Reviewed the purpose of the visit and the activities to be conducted during the visit
- Established tentative dates for the 2-day visit
- Discussed a preliminary agenda for the visit
- Scheduled time for the service coordinator and property manager interviews
- Obtained a list of residents
- Requested assistance in notifying residents selected for the focus group
- Obtained access to case records for review and abstraction
- Requested completion of the send-ahead questions

Mail Confirmation Letters to Service Coordinators. Immediately after the telephone call, we mailed a letter to each service coordinator confirming the scheduled visit. In addition to confirming the date of the visit, the letter outlined the activities to be completed by the service coordinator prior to the visit and described in detail the activities to be completed during the visit. The letters were tailored to project specifics. All letters were intended to accomplish the following functions:

- Thank the service coordinator for agreeing to participate in the evaluation.
- Confirm the dates, starting time, and initial meeting place for the visit.
- Name the site visitors and the person whom the service coordinator could contact if she had any questions.
- Provide a brief overview of the 2-day site visit schedule.
- Request that the service coordinator complete the send-ahead questions prior to the visit so that they could be picked up while visitors were on site.
- Request a list of residents from the service coordinator and include a tentative date that she would mail the list to KRA.
- Review case record procedures (e.g., how the records would be selected).
- Review the process for selecting residents for focus groups; we later called the service coordinator to review the list of residents and to determine those residents who were unable to participate in such a group.
- Request the service coordinator's assistance in providing information to the residents about the focus groups.

A sample 2-day site visit schedule and the data collection activities completed during the visit are shown in Exhibit A-2.

Obtain Lists of Residents and Randomly Select Focus Group Participants. The conduct of the focus groups required that preliminary activities be completed before the study team arrived on site. Each service coordinator was asked to send a list of all residents by the date mutually agreed upon during the confirmation telephone call. After we received this list, we randomly selected up to 24 residents for the focus groups.

A three-step random sampling method was used to select residents for participation in the focus groups. The first step was to randomly select a starting point on the list of residents. The second step was to select 24 residents at evenly spaced intervals from the starting point. The third step was to replace residents who were unable to participate in the focus groups.

We anticipated that 12 residents would participate in the focus groups. The other 12 residents were used as replacements for those who were unavailable or inappropriate for participation in a focus group. In all projects, we attempted to have at least nine focus group participants. If fewer than nine participants were suited for a group, we attempted to conduct individual in-person interviews.

Exhibit B-2. Two-Day Site Visit Schedule

	Senior Visitor	Midlevel Visitor
DAY 1: a.m.	Orientation to project (meet with property manager and service coordinator, discuss procedures, locate relevant files).	
	Interview property manager.	Review send-ahead questions for completion; pull 10 records for case record review; begin reviewing files.
DAY 1: p.m.	Complete review of resident case record data; finalize resident selection for focus groups.	
	Interview service coordinator.	Interview other related staff, such as employer.
DAY 2: a.m.	Two focus groups.	
DAY 2: p.m.	One focus group.	
	Brief meeting with property manager and service coordinator to thank them.	

After we selected the residents, we informed the service coordinator of those residents who had been selected as participants and of those residents who would serve as alternates. We conferred with the service coordinator to determine whether any of the selected residents was unable to participate in a focus group and needed to be interviewed in person.

Before going on site, we consulted with the service coordinator about the best time and place to hold the focus group. The site visit schedule was designed to be flexible enough to accommodate resident needs. Service coordinators were very helpful in arranging appropriate space for conducting interviews and focus groups. Service coordinators also distributed letters to both selected residents and alternates. Service coordinators were available to answer any immediate questions residents had about how they were selected.

Randomly Select Case Records. The list of residents provided by the service coordinator for the selection of the focus groups was also used to select records for abstraction. Standard random sampling techniques were used to select the records. The steps followed those used for selecting residents for focus groups. Records were selected after the study team arrived at the project. Replacements were made on site. If a resident’s record was missing, we then took the first name on the replacement list to replace the missing record. If additional residents had missing records, we substituted residents listed on the replacement list.

Review of Resident Case Records. During the visit, the case records of 10 residents were reviewed using a data abstraction form developed for this study. The abstract form was used to obtain assessment information related to activities of daily living, service needs, and service referrals. The case records were randomly selected from the list of residents provided by service coordinators. The purpose of the case record review was to supplement interview data and to obtain additional information about how the SCP was operating.

Conduct Focus Groups. The focus group lasted no more than 1 hour. One study team member served as the group moderator. Another study team member served as the note taker. The moderator opened the group by making introductions and explaining the purpose of the group. If residents were confused about the terms used, site visitors referred to a list of SCP activities, services, and equipment that was developed for the study to clarify terms.

At the conclusion of the focus group, residents were thanked for their participation. Site visitors reviewed their notes and summarized findings and conclusions as soon as possible after the focus group.

Conduct Interviews With the Property Manager, the Service Coordinator, and, If Applicable, the Service Coordinator Employer. While at the project, site visitors interviewed the property manager and service coordinator. To ensure that interviewees understood all of the terms being used during the interviews, we referred to a list of service coordinator activities and/or services and equipment as needed.

If the service coordinator was a contract employee, we used the contract employer discussion guide to obtain information.

Mail Thank-You Letters to Projects. Immediately following the visits, thank-you letters were mailed to all site visit participants, including property managers, service coordinators, and residents.

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