

TRUMBULL ADVOCACY & PROTECTIVE NETWORK (TAPN)

Organizational Summary

The Trumbull County human service systems often face the challenge of addressing the needs of older adults and their families whose problems are multi-dimensional. Addressing their needs requires the specialized expertise offered by numerous systems. These older adult high-risk cases, often Adult Protective Services cases, can involve systems from the usual human service areas like mental health, Area Agency on Aging, and senior support agencies to systems such as hospitals, courts, and law enforcement. Yet the existing systems were like islands in an ancient sea. The communications between lands were tenuous at best. The multiple systems bring with them inherent differences in rules, procedures, philosophies, funding requirements, regulations, missions and goals. They were not necessarily organized for the rapid response needed for high-risk cases, nor were they routinely experienced in working with high-risk clients or with all the other organizations. TAPN enhances the administrative and casework structures, allowing for the communication and coordination necessary for complex, high-risk cases¹ to be managed appropriately.

TAPN organized to improve the services for older adults in Trumbull County, especially those at high risk. The TAPN Full Network consists of the CEOs, or a similar titled person, from specific agencies and organizations that represent a multitude of systems and serve older adult throughout the county. Their charge is to look at systems issues, including resources and cross-training, and find the means to promote the delivery of efficient and effective services. The Full Network quickly created a Clinical Committee, comprised of selected individuals directly involved in the casework of member agencies. Working with a multiple system, wraparound approach, this committee focuses on increasing the ability of each organization/system to address the individual, complex needs of their most difficult cases. For clarification, it is important to note that TAPN is not a direct service provider, only a forum for case collaboration/education between agencies and systems.

TAPN addresses systems-level integration and coordination of programs and case-level coordination and integration of services. The enduring goal, as stated in the TAPN Mission Statement, is to promote the highest level of collaboration for the ultimate good of older adults, their families and the community.

¹ A high risk older adult will be defined for the purpose of this paper as a person of 60 years of age or older who by their actions or inactions or by the action or inaction of another is at personnel risk to their health or safety or places another at such risk, and a reasonable man would find such action or inaction dubious and requires the intervention of one or more human service or other entity to meliorate the situation.