



Celebrating 25 years of service!

Program Summary

The Gatekeeper Program is designed to identify vulnerable people who are isolated and may need help and support. Social services have typically relied on traditional methods such as posters, presentations, public service announcements and brochures to inform people about available services. The expectation is that those in need will call and ask for help. These efforts have proven to be successful in serving higher functioning older adults who are able to seek help on their own and those with a family support system who advocate on their behalf. However, such efforts have not been successful in reaching those most isolated in the community. The Gatekeeper Program addresses this issue. The Gatekeeper Program enlists the help of people, who, in their normal course of their jobs or their life, may have contact with older adults or adults with disabilities.

Who are Gatekeepers?

Gatekeepers are employees of local businesses, friends and neighbors who come into contact with older adults on a regular basis, including utility employees, bank personnel, public employees, apartment and mobile home managers, letter carriers, police, fire department, paramedics, Native American Elders, neighbors, church members, etc. Through the Gatekeeper program, these non-traditional referral sources are trained to identify and refer older adults and adults with disabilities who appear to have problems that may place them at-risk of hospitalization and/or premature out of home placement. They then learn the steps to take to make a Gatekeeper Referral. The Gatekeeper's willingness to be aware and alert while in the presence of an older person or an adult with disabilities is what makes the program work.

Stats and Facts:

- During the 2010-2011 Fiscal year 13 gatekeeper presentations/trainings were conducted in the community for over 250 people.
- Gatekeepers made nearly 500 referrals to the ADS Helpline.
- Just over half of these referrals were issues of abuse, neglect or exploitation and thus were referred to Adult Protective Services.
- Just under half of the referrals were for people who were NOT already receiving services or support and thus truly isolated!

- So far this fiscal year there have been 21 Gatekeeper presentations/trainings conducted in the community—12 by ADS and 9 by community partners who are “Gatekeeper Champions” and have integrated the training into their staff meetings and new employee orientation.
- Over 450 people have been trained or had the information refreshed.
- We have received 223 referrals from Gatekeepers in the community.
- The trend we are observing is that more and more of these referrals are serious and dire—68% of Gatekeeper referrals are sent directly to Adult Protective Services for follow up and about 45% of the Gatekeeper referrals are for people who are new to the system.

*By recognizing “red flags” and making a call to report the issues,
Gatekeepers may be saving a life!*

The Gatekeeper Program is a best practice outreach effort for Multnomah County!