Factors Affecting the Prospect for Survival of a Jointly Sponsored Program for the Elderly

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IMPLICIT in the beginning of any new service or program is the commitment on the part of the sponsor to continue it, if it is valid. To do otherwise would be to raise false expectations on the part of the client population. Support of, and belief in, this commitment, however, does not in and of itself guarantee the survival of a new program or service beyond the demonstration period. Certain exigencies, including the availability of private or community funds, the willingness on the part of funding bodies to allocate those funds to the program, and the priority which the program is accorded by its sponsor can contribute to its demise or continuation.

In recent years there has been a rapid development of programs for the aged by both private and governmental bodies. Funds provided through the Revenue Sharing and Older Americans Acts have enabled local municipalities and other public bodies to provide many diverse services to the elderly. Private agencies, volunteer organizations, and central planning bodies have implemented a wide variety of programs and services for the elderly at the local level. Some of these have been implemented on a planned and coordinated basis, while others have developed in response to needs of the moment.

This growth of new services for the aged has provided several models from which a community may choose in beginning a new service or program for the elderly; each has its own advantages and disadvantages. Usually, the selection of the particular model for the delivery of new and innovative services in a particular community is dependent upon a number of factors at a given moment in time, including the availability of funds and other resources, the variety of services already existing, and the initiative of the sponsoring agency or organization. The selection of the specific model may have far-reaching consequences, and can affect to a significant degree, or even determine, the prospect for the survival of the program beyond its demonstration period.

This paper analyzes the factors contributing to the probable demise of one such program for the elderly. It is suggested that the original choice of the model from which the program was begun has led to certain major problems which now threaten the program's continuation. It is hoped that the experience reported herein shall prove helpful to other communities.

A Model for Development of a New Program

Two of the most important factors affecting the likelihood of the continuation of a new program or service beyond the demonstration period are the amount of its autonomy and the degree to which it has relatively direct access to available community resources. It is suggested that the program or service which has more autonomy and more direct access to available resources will be more likely to survive its demonstration period than the program or service which has less autonomy and less direct access to community resources. By access to community resources. By access to resources is meant not only access to funding sources but, in addition, other resources as well (including access to those individuals within the power structure of the community who may be in a position to foster a supportive climate for the program). By autonomy is meant the ability of the program's or service's governing body to make decisions relatively independent of considerations or influences external to the program or service.

Figure 1 presents a conceptual four-cell model from which a new program or service can be developed along the dimensions of autonomy and access to resources. Cell 1 depicts a program or service which has a greater amount of autonomy and more direct access to community resources; cell 2 depicts the program or service which has more direct access to resources, but less autonomy; cell 3 depicts the program or service having more autonomy but less direct access to available resources; finally, cell 4 depicts that program or service which has relatively less autonomy as well as less direct access to resources.

	More Direct Access to Resources	Less Direct Access to Resources
More Autonomy	cell 1	cell 3
Less Autonomy	cell 2	cell 4

Fig. 1. Model for development of a new program or service.

An example of the cell 1 model is the independent agency created by the central planning and funding body of the community. This agency may be initiated in response to a need recognized by the funding body but which heretofore has not been met by existing agencies. The agency developed according to this model is a separate, incorporated agency and, by the fact of its having been created by the funding body, has a relatively direct access to funding sources and other resources. In addition, it has the implied commitment of continued support by the funding body, as long as the services it provides are valid.

An example of the cell 2 model is the commission or committee created by the central funding body for the provision of direct services to a client population. Because it is not a separate agency, this body has somewhat less autonomy than the agency developed from the model depicted in cell 1; it does, however, retain a relatively direct access to the funding source as well as the implied commitment of continued financial support.

An example of the cell 3 model is the jointly-sponsored program begun by two or more separate agencies. Because this program or service is not a separate agency, it does not have direct access to community resources, but is, instead, dependent upon its sponsors for financial support. Although it may have an independent status, its autonomy is no greater than that granted to it by its sponsors. Because of the joint nature of joint sponsorship, this autonomy can be considerable in certain instances. Because the program was begun by an agency in response to a need which may not have been shared by the central funding bodies, the commitment by the funding sources to continue support of the program may be lacking.

Finally, cell 4 depicts that model which has the least likelihood of surviving the demonstration period—an experimental program or service begun by one or another already existing

agency. Although having, perhaps, somewhat of an independent status, it is, nonetheless, similar to a department within the agency, and therefore has no direct access to resources but is, instead, dependent upon its sponsoring agency for continuation. This continuation, therefore, is directly related to how well the sponsoring agency can compete in the funding arena and the priority with which it (and indirectly, the funding bodies) views the new program or service. Thus, the program depicted by this model is several steps removed from direct access to community resources. In addition, its autonomy is directly related to that which is granted to it by its sponsor. As in the cell 3 model, there is no commitment on the part of central funding bodies to continue support of the program.

Program Formation

The formation and development of the Older Adult Community Action Program (OACAP) has been described elsewhere.[1] This non-sectarian program, begun in the spring of 1969 by the St. Louis Jewish Family & Children's Service (JF&CS), had the goal of affording the elderly of a limited geographic area in University City, Missouri the opportunity of continuing to participate actively in community life in the retirement years. One of the objectives of this experimental program—originally funded by a now-ended grant from a private foundation—was to demonstrate that the stereotype of the older person as being too weak, too sick, and without the resources necessary to effect change that would have a positive effect on his well-being was false, and that, instead, the over-65 population could be motivated and stimulated to

[1] Lawrence E. Blonsky, "An Innovative Service for the Elderly," *The Gerontologist, 13* (Summer, 1973), pp. 189-196.

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effect change in the community that would enhance its potential for continued active and independent living in the mainstream of community life. This goal would be achieved by encouraging and stimulating the elderly to identify and share their common needs, to determine their priorities, and to work for the implementation of new and innovative services that would meet their unfulfilled needs. The philosophy of the program recognized and stressed that "older persons, simply because of advanced age, have not lost the resources, and therefore continue to have the responsibility, for determining their own fate and for participating in community change for the enhancement of their well-being."[2]

Uniqueness of the program. There were several factors which, taken together, made this program, at the time of its creation, unique from those of other established agencies offering services to the elderly: an emphasis on self-determination on the part of the client population, in which subsequently a board of directors composed entirely of the elderly was given the opportunity and responsibility for the program's direction; an emphasis upon a community organization methodology that would, it was hoped, lead to the creation and provision of new services deemed necessary by the elderly with, however, their being provided by other agencies and organizations; utilization of community action, including norm-testing techniques; and a unique form of co-sponsorship (in the fall of 1970 the program's sponsorship was extended to two other agencies) in which three already-established agencies came together to cooperatively sponsor an independent program. Each of these components, while promising to contribute to the attainment of the pro-

[2] Ibid., p. 189.

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gram's objectives, has created major problems which have made the program's survival and continuation seem most problematic at the present time.

The Problems

Service development. Efforts of the elderly, through a community action methodology, have led to some notable achievements, including the creation of a senior center in quarters provided by the local municipal administration, a retarding of the process of gradual deterioration of the neighborhood in which the program was begun through the formation and "watchdog" activities of a neighborhood improvement committee, convincing the local municipal administration to purchase a new bus for use by the elderly, and focusing community attention on the unmet needs of older persons. However, in the five years of the program's existence there has been a gradual development of, and emphasis upon, supportive services, including transportation, information and referral, a food cooperative, and the formation and staffing of a tenants council in an apartment building for senior citizens; this trend, although considered natural and consonant with the program's goals at the time, has, nonetheless, been viewed in retrospect as having prevented the program from devoting its full energies to working for the implementation of needed new services that would be provided by other, established (and perhaps more appropriate) agencies.

This trend toward the development of supportive services has been partially reversed by a recent decision of the program's board of directors. Following an extensive self-evaluation, the board reaffirmed the program's original methodology—community action—and objectives. In recent months, the program has sponsored a series of public forums to enable the elderly to question

candidates for election to local, county, and state office about their views on the needs of the elderly; it was instrumental in achieving the passage of a tax levy increase requested by the municipality's school district, the first such in five years; it conducted a survey of local municipalities to determine how federal revenue sharing funds had been allocated over the past two years; it began a campaign of community action to redirect local priorities so that the elderly would obtain their "fair share" of these funds; it is working to have the laws pertaining to a new state program of property tax relief for the elderly revised so that benefits will be increased and application forms and instructions will be simplified; it is preparing to initiate a statewide campaign to work for the elimination of the sales tax on food and prescription drugs; finally, it has formed a coalition of groups within the local community to express priority needs for the usage of new funds coming to the community under a new H.U.D. program—the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.

This reaffirmation of a community action methodology has created certain problems which may directly affect the hope for the program's continuation. By deemphasizing certain of its services (which are tangible demonstrations to the community of its accomplishments), OACAP will have a more difficult time justifying its usefulness and service to the community, because a service such as transportation is more visible (and thus more easily justifiable to a funding body) than is a goal and a methodology such as community action (which is not as visible and whose benefits are not as tangible). Second, one of the by-products of a community action methodology at times is a negative feeling which accrues to the program which uses it, especially if that

methodology involves the utilization of norm-testing techniques. (For example, when OACAP "convinced" the local municipal administration to allocate funds for the purchase of a new bus to be leased to it for its transportation service there was some feeling on the part of some of the city officials and council members that inappropriate tactics had been used.[3]) Unless careful interpretation is made, unless there is a recognition of the value and benefits to be achieved from community action, and unless there is acceptance of it as valid and appropriate these negative feelings can be shared (perhaps unconsciously) by funding bodies, which may come to view the program as making unnecessary trouble in the community.

Funding. Begun with a three-year grant from a private foundation, additional financial inputs were provided as necessary by JF&CS during the first several years of the program. When co-sponsorship was extended to two other agencies (Jewish Center for Aged and Jewish Community Centers Association) in 1970, a decision was made that co-sponsorship would *not* necessitate their providing financial resources; rather, "new" monies would be sought jointly by all sponsoring agencies for their co-operatively sponsored program. The values and advantages of a co-operatively sponsored program— minimization of service duplication and maximal usage of community resources—would be pointed out to central funding bodies and private foundations.[4] Thus, a second grant was

3 Lawrence E. Blonsky, "Community Action and Transportation for the Elderly," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service,* Vol. L, No. 4 (Summer, 1974), pp. 313-321.

4 Each sponsoring agency was to make a distinct contribution to the program: Jewish Family and Children's Service divided bookkeeping service and financial administrations, Jewish Community Centers Association assumed responsibility for programmatic supervision and Jewish Center for Aged provided consultation.

obtained from another private foundation, and JF&CS continued to provide the balance of needed monies.

In 1971, the Jewish Federation made an allocation of $10,000 to OACAP through JF&CS. This pattern of funding has continued to the present with, however, one important exception: in December, 1973 a Jewish Federation committee concluded an evaluation of the program and validated it. Thus, the Federation recognized, officially, for the first time, a program that was not an independent agency.

The United Fund of Greater St. Louis, however, has consistently refused to recognize, for funding purposes, the existence of a separate, co-operatively sponsored program which is not a member agency. Instead, it views OACAP as only one more of the JF&CS's many services. Thus, it makes a lump-sum allocation to that agency which, based upon its own needs and priorities, allocates some monies to OACAP as they are available. Although JF&CS has, in the past, provided monies to OACAP even at the expense of some of its own other priorities, continuation of funding in this manner not only is precarious but must, of necessity, be unworkable as it is on a year-to-year basis and does not allow for appropriate or sound fiscal planning for the program. While co-sponsorship may have certain advantages, funding—at least in its present form— is not one of them.

A decision was made not to seek additional funding from other private foundations or the government; the consensus of feeling was that it would be futile to expect a foundation or governmental body to support a program which local funding bodies and sponsors would not. Discussion has been held as to the possibility of the program's incorporating as a separate agency and then making application to the United Fund but this, too, was

ruled out. Thus, a pattern of funding has developed where one of two central funding bodies has refused to recognize the program's existence for funding purposes and the other has, historically, provided only slightly less than one-quarter of the annual budget (and cannot realistically be expected to increase its level of support to the extent needed), where the private-foundation option has been ruled out, and where two of the three sponsoring agencies have agreed *a priori* not to fund the program. Furthermore, there has been a general reluctance on the part of the sponsoring agencies to face the problem of long-term funding realistically until June, 1974 when there was a clear recognition that as of January, 1975 there would be, only, perhaps $5,000 remaining from the second private foundation grant and an expectation of being granted $15,000 from the Jewish Federation (representing a 50 percent increase over the previous year), thereby leaving the program a deficit in the amount of almost $20,000 for 1975. At the present time, there are no realistic funding options to be pursued, short of ending the program as an independent entity and making it a department of one of the sponsors.

Continuation of sponsorship. This option, too, has been ruled out by the recommendation of a committee composed of the professional staff members of the agencies sponsoring OACAP: to continue sponsorship of the program in a modified form.

With the program's joint sponsorship, a Joint Policy Making Committee was created in 1970, to be representative of the older adult board and the boards of the sponsoring agencies. This group—composed of three board members and one professional staff member from each sponsoring agency, along with four representatives from

the OACAP board of directors—was formed to represent the interests of the sponsoring agencies and to give guidance to the board of directors in terms of "overall" policy and funding matters. The responsibilities, duties, and limits of authority of this group were never clearly defined, however, until, at the insistence of a new chairman of this group, a process of self-inquiry was initiated in April, 1973 which led to a meeting of the presidents and executive directors of OACAP, its sponsoring agencies, and the Jewish Federation. At that meeting, held in the fall of 1973, the problems of joint sponsorship— funding, limitations of authority, and lack of clarity as to the responsibilities of the Joint Policy Committee—were pointed out. There was general agreement that the primary responsibility for the delegation of any authority to this committee rested with the sponsoring agencies.

As a result of this meeting, a subcommittee composed of the professional staff of the agencies represented was formed to study the questions raised and to make specific recommendations. That committee reported its conclusions (following half a dozen sessions spanning as many months), making the following recommendations: (1) that joint sponsorship of the program be continued, (2) that the Joint Policy Making Committee representative of the sponsoring agencies be eliminated as a separate body because it denied the client population the fullest opportunity for self-determination and superimposed upon it another decision-making structure, and (3) that the board of directors be given full responsibility for all matters pertaining to the operation of the program, including funding. Representation on this board, however, would be extended to the boards of the sponsors in the ratio of 75 percent elderly to 25

percent non-elderly. (Recognition was given to the possibility that the program's board might make decisions so inconsistent to a sponsoring agency's objectives that it would be compelled to withdraw its continued sponsorship.) For all intents and purposes, then, the program has been given independent status by its sponsors.

No matter how pure the motivation behind this decision—that of maximizing the program's philosophical cornerstone of self-determination—a board of directors which until this time has not had to deal with budgets and funding has suddenly been faced with the reality of having to acquire the sophistication necessary to compete successfully in the funding arena.

The Promise

Three recent developments offer some hope that the program will be continued. Perhaps it is as it should be, but these developments have stemmed not from the deliberations of the sponsoring agencies, not from the deliberations of the professionals associated with the program, and not from the recommendations of the Joint Policy Making Committee. Rather, these developments have originated through the efforts of the elderly themselves.

Membership. In November, 1973 the board of directors made a decision to convert the program into a membership organization. This decision was made for two reasons: to enable the board to determine more precisely whom it actually was serving and to enable it to develop the "clout" necessary for it to achieve its social action goals (e.g., passage of legislation of benefit to the elderly and working for the creation of needed new services) by obtaining as large a membership as possible. Membership was extended to all elderly at a nominal fee of $1.00 per year.

A decision was made to highlight the past five years of service to the elderly by the Older Adult Community Action Program and to focus community attention on the many facets and accomplishments of the program with a birthday party to which all older adults in the community would be invited. This event would formally launch the membership drive. (Even prior to this, however, a low-key drive was mounted in which over 600 persons joined the organization.)

A viable membership organization has been created in a matter of a few months. The purpose of this action was not to raise funds, but to create an interest in the program on the part of the elderly and the general community. Soon, a "Friends of the Older Adult Community Action Program" will be launched; relatives of the elderly members and younger persons in the community will be invited to join the program for a minimum of ten dollars. Although it is anticipated that this drive will generate some badly-needed funds for the program, its primary purpose, also, is to widen the circle of interest in the program.

In the last analysis, it is believed that the creation of a strong and large membership organization will give the program's leadership a reprieve—time in which this membership can be motivated to rally to the organization's side at the coming financial crisis, time in which this membership can be stimulated to write letters, sign petitions and, if need be, plead vocally and vociferously at the doors of funding bodies and sponsoring agencies for funds with which to continue the program.

Action. The second element offering hope for the program's continuation is the renewed emphasis upon community and social action and a corresponding de-emphasis upon service development. With a renewed commitment to working for the passage of

legislation of benefit to the elderly, to pointing to the unmet needs of this group, and to working for the implementation of new services to meet those needs (with, however, these services being provided by other organization[5]) there has come a corresponding sense of urgency (even, perhaps, of militancy) that will prove useful in the present funding crisis. Thus, the program and its leadership has matured and come "of age;" it has ceased to accept the "pat" answers which on previous occasions it had been content to do.

Geography. The final component offering some hope for the program's survival is a growth from serving only the elderly in the neighborhood in which the program was begun to a commitment to serve and work in behalf of all elderly in the community, wherever they may live. This thrust to serving the total community has not only broadened the basis of the program's membership but it has, in addition, increased its importance to, and its visibility in, the general community.

Conclusion

It is to the credit of the Jewish Family and Children's service that the creation of the Older Adult Community Action Program anticipated by several years the interest of the community in meeting the needs of the elderly for creative supportive services and predated the recent expansion of central planning bodies into this arena. However, in retrospect the wisdom of that agency having launched into this area without the active participation, support, and commitment of the central funding and planning bodies of the community to this program can be questioned in view of the present expectation that continuation of the program is directly dependent upon, and related to, the support of these bodies. In effect, a situation has been created where a

member agency of the Jewish Federation and the United Fund created an innovative program in response to a need of a client population which had, heretofore, not been met by other agencies in the community, where the program has achieved its objectives and met the diverse needs of the client population, and where continuation of the program and its expansion in order to meet new needs previously unrecognized by the community now is directly dependent upon the support of and commitment to the program by central funding bodies which neither approved the creation of the program nor were actively involved in its development. Whether or not the program ranks high enough within the present structure of priorities of these bodies to warrant new levels of financial support is questionable; whether the program's leadership can effect the changes necessary to restructure those priorities in the time remaining is problematic. In theory, all parties— sponsoring agencies, central funding bodies, and general community—are committed to the provision of needed services to the elderly and all have indicated their belief that the program has served a useful purpose and filled a need which exists in the community. Their response to the present financial crisis will indicate the validity of the choice of a jointly-sponsored program as a model for the provision of new services.

Summary

An experimental program which utilizes a community action methodology has demonstrated its ability to motivate elderly individuals to participate actively in community life in the retirement years and has achieved its objectives of assisting older individuals to work for the implementation of new supportive services to enhance their po-

tential for continued independent living in the community. Although offering certain distinct advantages, the unique nature of joint sponsorship has led to major funding problems which, unless solved in the near future, will lead to the program's demise. A renewed emphasis upon the program's original goals and objectives and a renewed commitment to a community action methodology on the part of the program's elderly board of directors offer, however, hope that the program will be continued in some fashion. This remains to be seen, and the outcome should prove instructive to other communities offering or contemplating similar cooperatively-sponsored programs.

Poverty in The Third Jewish Commonwealth: Sephardi-Ashkenazi Divisions

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FOR 3,300 years—from the time of Joshua to today—Jews have lived in the land of Israel. After the destruction of the First Temple by the Babylonians in the fifth century B.C.E., the First Commonwealth was destroyed and the people of Israel were spread around the Mesopotamian Valley. When the Roman legions attacked Jerusalem and crushed the Second Commonwealth in the year 70, they exiled what remained of the Jewish people to other lands of Roman conquests such as Turkey and Greece and then spread them all over Europe. Over the centuries, faced with constant calamities, pogroms and persecution, many Jews eventually fled to the Western Hemisphere.

However, for the last 35 centuries, a small remnant of the Jewish people have always remained in the land of Israel. Their continuity was never broken. But the majority of the Jewish people were dispersed around the globe: the Sephardi dispersion, which dates back to the First Commonwealth when Israel was attacked by the Babylonians, and the Ashkenzai dispersion resulting when the Second Commonwealth was conquered by the Romans.

With the return of the two groups to Israel, beginning in mass numbers in 1948, the Jewish people commenced the Third Commonwealth. But the Third Commonwealth is by no means a fact that can be taken for granted. We're still in the middle of the experiment. Surprisingly, a lot of people take Israel for granted and it cannot be.

After two thousand years of dispersion, the Jewish people inevitably picked up many of the characteristics of the people in the various host countries where they lived. The Jews of the first exile, the Sephardim, lived among the Arab lands of the Mesopotamian Valley—Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Egypt. Over the centuries, and not through intermarriage, their skin took the color of the people who lived in those regions. Living in Middle-Eastern societies and culture, they adopted a different approach to life from that which people in Western society have known. For example, there was a very strong accent on religion, on fatalism, and on the patriarchal rather than a matriarchal type of family structure. They were familiar with non-democratic, non-participatory forms of government. The Jews of the second exile, the Ashkenazim, dispersed among the European countries, picked up a different approach, different sets of skills and values—with emphasis on technological innovation and industrialization.

Over half a million of exiles returning to Israel came from the Moslem countries, the largest group that came back after the War of Independence. The Nazis had murdered half of the Jewish exiles from the Second Commonwealth. The returning Sephardi Jews were either chased out or ran for their lives from the Moslem countries