

Chapter 8 – Outreach and Marketing

Outreach and marketing can mean different things to different people, and although they have similar meanings, they may suggest slightly different activities to some. Conversely, some may use the terms interchangeably to encompass their total efforts to bring their services to their target audiences as well as their efforts to make their target audience aware of their services through advertising and informational/educational materials.

One-Call/One-Click Centers should address both outreach and marketing (raise awareness and make their services available) in their outreach and marketing plan. If the target population does not know the services exist, they cannot take advantage of them.

The target population is not static nor homogeneous, so efforts to reach them cannot be static either. To address the differences within the population, it is a good idea to employ several different types of outreach and marketing efforts, recognizing that different approaches may work better with different segments of their target population. For example, the needs and preferences of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) /Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)/Operation New Dawn (OND) Veterans, Women Veterans, Vietnam Veterans, etc., may be different.



Involve partners and target population in developing the outreach and marketing activities

Understanding the characteristics of the target population is important in order to plan effective outreach and marketing activities. Social media activities may be effective with younger populations, while local newspaper articles or ads may be effective for an older population. In addition, large print or interpreters may be appropriate for certain outreach activities.

Outreach and Marketing Plan

A plan on how the center plans to make its services known and utilized by its target population(s) can be the road map for how and when budget dollars are spent. The plan should generally cover one year and should contain the following:

- Target population(s) identified

Basics – Outreach and Marketing

- Written Plan
- Involve Partners/Collaborators
- Identify and learn about target population
- Budget for activities
- Evaluate

- Target population goal (Number/percentage of population expected to be reached with marketing and outreach activities)
- Budget
- Specific Outreach Activities
- Specific marketing/advertising Activities
- Timeline for each activity
- Roles of partners/collaborators
- Evaluation Mechanism for each activity

Population Targets

Although the primary population targets for One-Call/One-Click Centers are Veterans and military families, there may be other target populations included in the center's scope. This is particularly true if the One-Call/One-Click Center is part of an existing center, such as an ADRC. The existing center may have outreach and marketing activities in place for their existing target population(s) but not for Veterans and their families. In this case, the existing center's outreach and marketing plan should be amended to incorporate activities targeted to Veterans and their families.

Veterans and Military Families

Reaching Veterans and military families requires coordination with other Veteran organizations. A good place to start is with Easter Seals Project Action's Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative, The Route to Community Engagement Tool Kit -



Holding an educational meeting in a Hispanic community with a Hispanic presenter is one method that might be effective to reach this population.

<http://www.projectaction.org/Initiatives/Veterans/VTCLICommunityEngagementToolkit.aspx>

Other websites that provide resources for reaching out to Veterans include:

FTA VTCLI Community Resources

http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/12305_13537.html

Veterans Transportation Resources

<http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vts/>

Office of Rural Health - Rural Veteran Outreach Tool Kit

<http://www.ruralhealth.va.gov/resource-centers/western/outreach-toolkit.asp>

Types of Marketing and Outreach Activities

There are a variety of activities that can reach the target population(s), but budget and involvement of partners should be considered in determining which outreach methods to adopt. There are many types of outreach that can be done with little cost, such as those that partner organizations can provide. Outreach efforts should include outreach to other community organizations since they provide opportunities for collaboration on activities that are mutually beneficial.

Some of the outreach and marketing methods that can be utilized include:

- Center newsletter and website
- Partner/collaborator newsletters
- Partner/collaborator websites
- Briefing and collaborating with Veterans and other community organizations, such as churches, community health providers, physicians, social workers, and mobility managers
- Hosting educational briefings and fairs
- Newspaper articles and ads
- Posters
- Brochures
- Radio and television Public Service Announcements
- Ads and announcements in publications read by target population, e.g., publications circulated to Veterans
- Participating in other community organization's fairs and events

Projecting Volume and Evaluating Outreach and Marketing Activities

Outreach and marketing activities are conducted for a purpose – to maintain or increase usage of the One-Call/One-Click Center (depending upon the functional capacity of the center). If the center is a new center, the initial needs analysis and discussions with partners in defining the scope would have provided a baseline of what volume of calls to expect initially. In addition, the number of people in the target population that could potentially take advantage of the One-Call/One-Click services would have been identified. If an existing center, the center's projected volume should consider the initial and projected volume for the new activity – outreach to Veterans and their families.



In order to track by outreach and marketing activity, how the caller learned about the service should be one of the questions asked at the time of the call.

In projecting future volume, the center should consider the number or percent of the target population each outreach and marketing activity is expected to reach. Although this can be challenging to predict, this makes it especially important to track volume as a result of the activity over a specified period of

time to assess the effectiveness of the outreach and marketing activity. (The time period may vary depending upon the type of activity since some have a longer period of impact -- such as brochures and posters.) Adjustments in the plan can then be made based on the activities that provide the best result, and activities that are not producing the desired results can be discontinued.