

POMP6 Recipient Survey: Sampling Instructions Version 7-5-05

Introduction

The recipient survey instrument was developed to collect information on client satisfaction and self-reported outcomes for clients receiving one or more core services supported by the Older Americans Act. Although some questions are service-specific, the intent of the survey is to probe for the impact of services overall and provide a composite picture of the results achieved by the Older Americans Act service system.

Which service recipients are eligible for the survey?

It is important to obtain a random sample of service recipients based on a client master list. The criteria for being included on the list are:

- 60 years old or older
- Current/active service recipient, meaning at least one of the following core services was received for all 3 of the 3 most recent months of service reported:
 1. Congregate Meals
 2. Home-Delivered Meals
 3. Transportation
 4. Homemaker
 5. Personal Care
 6. Adult Daycare

Clients may have received additional services within this 3-month timeframe. If so, the mix of services will be noted on the sample list. However, the basic eligibility criteria is that the client must have received at least one core service for all 3 of the 3 most recent months of service reported.

Additional information to include on the client master list - The list of active, eligible clients needs to include certain information to draw a sample using the guidelines. Additional information will be needed for post-survey weighting of responses. Therefore, it is recommended that the comprehensive list of active, eligible clients also include:

- A unique client identifier (client id) for each service recipient - necessary in order to eliminate duplicates across services as well as for tracking outcomes and identifying entries in the dataset.
- Each client's association with the population of interest for data analysis - e.g., to report on client responses by the county in which they reside, there needs to be a field for "county", or to report on the service area of a particular Area Agency on Aging, there needs to be a field for the name of the AAA or a code that represents the AAA name.

- Gender, age, and race/ethnicity - necessary for weighting and adjusting for non-response bias.
- A column for each of the six core services (and “other services” if applicable) with a code indicating whether or not the client received that service in the 3 most recent months of service reported (1=yes; 1=no).
- An additional field should be provided for calculating case mix (*see the attached Microsoft Excel spreadsheet as an example in which the yes/no codes for core services have been used in a formula to calculate a case mix code, allowing the list to be sort by case mix rather than specific services only*).

What type of estimates are desired - statewide, AAA, county, provider, or some other level of estimate?

The first step in developing a sampling plan is to determine whether data estimates are desired for the whole state or for an individual service population, such as the service recipients in a single county or the service area of an Area Agency on Aging (AAA). Usually, a state estimate is sufficient unless you want to compare the results of one AAA or county to another. Resources (e.g., dollars and staff hours) will influence the decision to obtain either state estimates or estimates for individual AAAs/counties. For state level estimates, smaller numbers of service recipients are required. By contrast, obtaining estimates at the individual AAA or county level requires a larger number of participants from each AAA or county.

Steps for Obtaining State-Level Estimates:

Step 1: Develop a comprehensive, unduplicated master list of all clients that meet the eligibility criteria, and determine the total population size. This list will eliminate all ineligible clients and names duplicated across services.

Step 2: Sort the unduplicated master list by service or service mix, similar to the following example:

Recipient 1	Home-delivered only
Recipient 2	Home-delivered only
... Rec. 3-139	Home delivered only
Recipient 140	Home-delivered and homemaker
Recipient 141	Home-delivered and homemaker
... Rec. 142-153	Home-delivered and homemaker
Recipient 154	Homemaker only
etc.	

Step 3: Use the Sample Size Calculator (the calculator and installation instructions can be downloaded at www.pomp6.net) to determine the

appropriate sample size by entering values for the following components of the Calculator:

- **Population** = the total number of service recipients on your unduplicated client master list.
- **Confidence level** = what degree of uncertainty in the estimates is tolerable - typically, 95%, meaning 5% chance of being wrong.
- **Confidence interval** = desired level of precision - typically, 3%-5% in many surveys - the more precision (smaller %), the larger the sample you will need.
- **Assumed response rate** - often based on past experience - 50% recommended to allow for a low response rate.
- **Expected value of population proportion to be estimated** - for example, what proportion of the population will report satisfaction with the service - if this is not known, 50% is recommended.

This information will determine the number of names that need to be drawn for the Recipient Survey sample.

Step 4: Use a sampling rate method to determine which recipients on the unduplicated client master list will be included in the sample. Divide the total population size by the sample size to select every n^{th} client on the list. For example, if the total population is 1000 and the sample size is 351, the sampling rate is $1000/351$ or every 3^{rd} client. It is best to avoid automatically choosing the first person on the list, so choose a random number between 1 and the sampling rate (in this example, 1 to 3) to begin sampling. Select every n^{th} client on the list for the sample. In this example, if you flipped 3 coins and the "odd" coin was the 2^{nd} coin, you would choose clients 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, etc. Random number tables or generators or various kinds of dice can be used for sampling rates larger than 1 in 3.

Steps for Obtaining Estimates for Smaller Populations of Interest

If estimates are desired for an individual AAA, county, or provider, then a sample size must be determined and a sample must be drawn for each one separately. However, different considerations apply and somewhat different procedures must be used, depending on whether data analysis will be limited to describing each AAA, county, or provider separately or if it will include both descriptive information about each component and also comparisons among them.

Procedures for both contingencies are provided below. However, agencies are urged to consider human nature in making your choices. If you provide descriptive data only, it is highly likely that someone will use the information comparatively even if samples were not been drawn for the purpose of making

comparisons. If this is likely to happen, it is preferable to go to the extra trouble and expense of being able to detect statistically significant differences.

Descriptive Information Desired - Follow the steps given above for state-level analysis to draw a sample for each AAA, county, or provider of interest, using an unduplicated master list for each, computing a sample size and sampling rate for each, and determining a random starting point for each.

Comparative Information Desired - Sample selection for comparative data is more complicated, but possibly worth the cost and effort. Selecting a sample adequate for comparative data will permit contrasts to be made between a single unit and the other units of a group or between 2 large units (e.g., between County A and the group of all other counties in a region or between Provider 1 and Provider 2).

In time there may be a more complex sample size calculator on the POMP website to guide agencies through the choices required for selecting samples adequate for comparative data analysis. Until such a tool is available, Dwight Brock at Westat (dwightbrock@westat.com) will calculate needed sample sizes for the Standard POMP6 grantees. Grantees will need to give Dwight the same information required by the Sample Size Calculator (population, confidence level, confidence interval, estimated response rate, and expected value of your most important finding). However, in this case grantees will need the population size for each AAA, county, or provider that will be compared.

Once your sample size is determined, the remainder of the steps will be the same as for descriptive analysis only. That is, you will do steps 1 through 4 separately for each AAA, county, or provider that you want to describe and compare.

Information Needed to Weight the Data

Since you are conducting sample surveys, it is important to weight the data so that the results can be generalized to the total population. It is necessary to track the results for every person who is included in your sample (see Information Needed for Adjusting for Non-response Bias below) and to maintain counts from the client lists from which your sample was drawn for weighting the data. If a State or AAA/county does not provide a particular service, you will need to record that information as well. You will report these population counts and a description of the exact procedures you used on the Service Recipient Sampling Procedures Report, available on the website www.pomp6.net.

Information Needed for Adjusting for Non-response Bias

Sometimes a completed sample may be biased by the type of people who participated in the survey. For instance, in some samples a particular subgroup may participate in the survey to a greater extent than another subgroup. (Typically, women are more likely to answer surveys than men, for example.) This introduces a non-response bias in survey results, so whenever practicable adjustments are made for non-response bias. This requires recording a result code for each person in the drawn sample (e.g., whether a person participated in the survey, refused, was ineligible, or was not locatable). Information on demographic characteristics (age, gender, race/ethnicity), which you obtained when you made up your client list and drew your sample, will be used to adjust for non-response bias. Remember to include information about **every** person in the sample, and for those who did not complete a survey you will need to code the reason each one did not participate. Grantees may find it useful to collect and record information during the interview process on the Recipient Sample List--Interviewer Worksheet.

After interviewing is complete, send an e-version of this information to Westat so that data can be weighted. See the "Recipient Results Reporting Form" for an Excel file to transmit this information to Westat (with client identifiers, but without client names, phone numbers, or record of attempts to contact).