



MICHIGAN OFFICE OF SERVICES TO THE AGING

Operating Standards For Service Programs

Access Services

SERVICE NAME	<u>Information and Assistance</u>
SERVICE NUMBER	A-4
SERVICE CATEGORY	Access
SERVICE DEFINITION	Assistance to individuals in finding and working with appropriate human service providers that can meet their needs which may include; information-giving (e.g., listing the providers of a particular service category so an individual may make their own contact directly); group presentations; referral (making contact with a particular provider on behalf of an individual); advocacy intervention (negotiating with a service provider on behalf of a client); and, follow-up contacts with clients to ensure services have been provided and have met the respective service need.
UNIT OF SERVICE	Provision of one hour of component information and referral (I&A) functions (Note: newsletters and media spots are encouraged but are not to be counted as information-giving units of service).

Minimum Standards

1. Each I&A program shall have a resource file, which is current, that includes a listing of human service agencies, services available, pertinent information as to resources and ability to accept new clients and eligibility requirements. The program shall be able to provide adequate information about community resources and agencies to all callers so they may make their own contact directly.
2. Each program located in areas where non-English or limited English speaking older persons are concentrated shall have bilingual personnel available or have the capacity to acquire interpretation services as necessary. In addition, each program must have the capacity to serve hearing impaired persons and visually impaired persons in a manner appropriate to their needs, such as through the Michigan Relay Center.
3. Where walk-in service is available, there shall be adequate space to ensure comfort and confidentiality to clientele during intake and interviewing.
4. Each program shall maintain records (for three years or until audit has been closed) of the nature of calls received, the agencies and/or organizations to which referrals are made and the service for which referrals are made, the results of follow-up contacts, and any client files maintained. Such information regarding service transactions shall be reported to the AAA upon request for monitoring and/or planning purposes.
5. A follow-up contact shall be made on all referrals, whether services are negotiated or not, within ten working days to determine whether services were received, the identified need met, and client satisfaction. Follow-up contacts are not required for information-giving only contacts.
6. Each program must determine the quality of I&A services provided, through a sampling of no less than 10% of clients, at least annually



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7. Each program shall demonstrate effective linkages with agencies providing long-term care support services within the program area (i.e., case coordination and support, care management, and MI CHOICE waiver programs).
8. Funded I&A providers, responsible for the entire PSA service area, must have the capacity to provide training and technical assistance to local I&A providers, especially designated Community Focal Points. Funded PSA wide I&A providers are expected to foster coordination among, and collaboration with, local comprehensive I&A systems.
9. Each program is encouraged to seek Certified Information and Referral Specialist (CIRS) certificates from the Alliance for Information and Referral Systems (AIRS) for individual I&A employees and volunteers.