



Connecticut Online Training Programs

**Evaluation Report from Boston University
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**Center for Aging and Disability
Education and Research**

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Center for Aging and Disability Education and Research (CADER), is dedicated to workforce development in both the aging and the disability fields through educational innovation, workforce change, and research. Located at Boston University School of Social Work, CADER builds upon the School's historical commitment aging and disability research and practice.

CADER partnered with the Center on Aging at the University of Connecticut Health Center (UCHC) and Connecticut's Department of Social Services to provide competency-based online training that addresses the core skills, knowledge, and values needed for effective practice to staff in the Money Follows the Person (MFP) program, ADRC staff, and learners from the Connecticut Community First Choice (CFC) program. Providing consistent, well-coordinated, and measurable training was deemed essential, particularly at a time of rapid change in the health and social services field. In addition, the online training was designed to be an integral part of a mandatory Connecticut Community Aging and Disability Specialist Certification.

The training included a core set of CADER's online courses that were reviewed and selected by Connecticut's Department of Social Services and the UCHC's Center on Aging. The six core courses needed to earn the ADRC certificate were: Introduction to the Options Counselor Job; Core Issues in Aging and Disability; A Guide to the Aging and Disability Network; Assessment with Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities; Aging in Place; and Consumer Control, Choice, and Direction for Options Counseling. The six core courses needed to earn the MFP certificate were: Core Issues in Aging and Disability; Assessment with Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities; Consumer Control, Choice, and Direction for Options Counseling; Working with Informal Caregivers; Aging in Place; and A Guide to the Aging and Disability Networks. The two courses required for the CFC program were: Core Issues in Aging and Disability; Consumer Control, Choice, and Direction for Options Counseling.

CADER programs and courses apply a competency-based approach. Participants were asked to complete a pre-course competency assessment to rate their knowledge, skills, and values prior to beginning the courses. After completing each of the online courses, participants were asked to rate their skill level at each of the learning competencies by completing a post self-assessment of learning competencies. Participants rated themselves using a scale of zero to four (0, Not skilled at all: I have no experience with this skill; 1, Beginning skill: I have minimal experience with this skill; 2, Moderate skill: I have moderate experience with this skill; 3, Advanced Skill: I have advanced experience with this skill; 4: Expert skill: I am an expert in this skill area). Ratings collected at pre and post were compared to determine if the training was effective.

At the end of each of the courses, participants were also asked to complete a course evaluation in order to gauge whether they felt that the training benefitted their practice. Participants rated their satisfaction level with each course using a scale of one to five (1, strongly disagree; 2, disagree; 3, neutral; 4, agree; 5, strongly agree). Participants are also asked for their opinions on course improvements and what other types of courses they would like to see offered through CADER.

II. PARTICIPANT PROFILES

1. Connecticut ADRC Online Training Program

There were 8 participants who were expected to complete the ADRC Online Training Program. All 8 of the learners (100%) have completed the program.

The following is a description of the 8 participants who completed the ADRC Online Training Program:

- Gender 87.5% (7) were female and 12.5% (1) was male.
- Age: The average age of participants was 38.5-years-old.
- Race:
 - The majority of participants (7 or 87.5%) self-identified as White
 - One (1) or 12.5% self-identified as Hispanic/Latino
- Job Setting:
 - Four participants (50%) worked for Independent Living Centers
 - Two participants (25%) worked for Area Agencies on Aging
 - One participant (12.5%) worked in Housing
 - One participant (12.5%) identified their agency setting as “Other”
- Education:
 - Most participants had higher education degrees (7 or 87.5%)
 - Five (5) or 62.5% have a Bachelor’s degree
 - One (1) or 12.5% has a Master’s degree
 - Only one (12.5%) have no degree
- Professional Experience:
 - The average number of years participants have worked in the field of aging was 4.28 years (range was 0-15 years).
 - The average number of years participants have worked in the field of disability was 4.34 years (range was 0-13 years).

2. Connecticut Community First Choice (CFC) Training Program

Twelve (12) of the 17 (70.6%) who are expected to complete the Community First Training Program have enrolled in the program. Thus far, two of the 17 participants (11.8%) who are expected to complete the program have done so.

The following is a description of the 12 participants who have enrolled in the Community First Training Program:

- Gender 91.7% (11) were female and 8.3% (1) was male.
- Age: The average age of participants was 38.9-years-old.
- Race:
 - Six (6) or 50% self-identified as African-American/Black
 - Six (6) or 50% self-identified as White

- Job Setting:
 - Five participants (41.7%) identified their agency setting as “Other”
 - Three participants (25%) worked for Home Health Agencies
 - Two participants (16.7%) worked for Independent Living Centers
 - One participants (8.3%) worked for an Area Agency on Aging
 - One participant (8.3%) worked in Housing
- Education:
 - Most participants had higher education degrees (10 or 83.3%)
 - Two (2) or 16.7% have an Associate’s degree
 - Six (6) or 50% have a Bachelor’s degree
 - Two (2) or 16.7% has a Master’s degree
 - Only two (16.7%) have no degree
- Professional Experience:
 - The average number of years participants have worked in the field of aging was 5.42 years (range was 0-25 years).
 - The average number of years participants have worked in the field of disability was 5.58 years (range was 0-25 years).

3. Connecticut Money Follows the Person (MFP) Training Program

All 17 (100%) of the participants in the 2015-2016 cohort who are expected to complete the MFP Training Program have enrolled in the program. Thus far 9 of the 17 participants (52.9%) who are expected to complete the program have done so.

The following is a description of the 17 participants who have enrolled in the MFP Training Program:

- Gender 70.6% (12) were female and 29.4% (5) were male.
- Age: The average age of participants was 30.7-years-old.
- Race:
 - Eleven (11) or 64.7% self-identified as White
 - Five (5) or 29.4% self-identified as African-American/Black
 - One (1) or 5.9% self-identified as Hispanic/Latino
- Job Setting:
 - Six (6) participants (35.3%) worked for an Area Agency on Aging
 - Five (5) participants (29.4%) identified their agency setting as “Other”
 - Two (2) participants (11.8%) worked for Independent Living Centers
 - Two (2) participants (11.8%) worked in Housing
 - One (1) participant (5.9%) worked for Adult Protective Services
 - One (1) participant (5.9%) worked in a Long-Term Care Facility/Nursing Home

- Education:
 - All participants (100%) had higher education degrees
 - Twelve (12) or 70.6% have a Bachelor's degree or BSW (2)
 - Five (5) or 29.4% has a Master's degree or MSW (1)
- Professional Experience:
 - The average number of years participants have worked in the field of aging was 3 years (range was 0-18 years).
 - The average number of years participants have worked in the field of disability was 3.4 years (range was 0-18 years).

III. RESULTS: COURSE EVALUATION DATA

1. Connecticut ADRC Online Training Program

Following is a summary of the course evaluation data from the six core courses in the Connecticut ADRC Training Program.

A. Course #1: *Introduction to the Options Counselor Job*

Course Completion:

Of the 8 original participants that enrolled, all 8 (100%) completed this course.

Course Evaluations:

Six (6) participants completed the course evaluation for this course.

- Of these participants, 100% agreed or strongly agreed that **the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or with people with disabilities.**
- One-hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training would help them apply practice skills in the topic area.**
- One-hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training expanded their knowledge and understanding in the topic area.**

B. Course #2: *Core Issues in Aging and Disability*

Course Completion:

Of the 8 original participants that enrolled, all 8 (100%) completed this course.

Course Evaluations:

Six (6) participants completed the course evaluation for this course.

- Of these participants, 100% agreed or strongly agreed that **the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or with people with disabilities.**
- One-hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training would help them apply practice skills in the topic area.**
- One-hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training expanded their knowledge and understanding in the topic area.**

C. Course #3: A Guide to the Aging & Disability Networks

Course Completion:

Of the 8 original participants that enrolled, all 8 (100%) completed this course.

Course Evaluations:

Five (5) participants completed the course evaluation for this course.

- Of these participants, 80% agreed or strongly agreed that **the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or with people with disabilities.**
- Eighty percent (80%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training would help them apply practice skills in the topic area.**
- Eight percent (80%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training expanded their knowledge and understanding in the topic area.**

D. Course #4: Assessment with Older Adults & Persons with Disabilities

Course Completion:

Of the 8 original participants that enrolled, all 8 (100%) completed this course.

Course Evaluations:

Four (4) participants completed the course evaluation for this course.

- Of these participants, 100% agreed or strongly agreed that **the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or with people with disabilities.**
- One hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training would help them apply practice skills in the topic area.**
- One hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training expanded their knowledge and understanding in the topic area.**

E. Course #5: Aging in Place

Course Completion:

Of the 8 original participants that enrolled, all 8 (100%) completed this course.

Course Evaluations:

Six (6) participants completed the course evaluation for this course.

- Of these participants, 83.3% agreed or strongly agreed that **the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or with people with disabilities.**
- Eighty-three percent (83.3%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training would help them apply practice skills in the topic area.**
- Eighty-three percent (83.3%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training expanded their knowledge and understanding in the topic area.**

F. Course #6: Consumer Control, Choice and Direction in Options Counseling***Course Completion:***

Of the 8 original participants that enrolled, all 8 (100%) completed this course.

Course Evaluations:

Six (6) participants completed the course evaluation for this course.

- Of these participants, 100% agreed or strongly agreed that **the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or with people with disabilities.**
- One hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training would help them apply practice skills in the topic area.**
- One hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training expanded their knowledge and understanding in the topic area.**

2. Connecticut Community First Choice (CFC) Training Program

Following is a summary of the course evaluation data from the two courses in the Connecticut Community First Choice Training Program.

A. Course #1: Core Issues in Aging & Disability***Course Completion:***

Of the 12 participants that enrolled, four (33.3%) completed this course.

Course Evaluations:

Three (3) participants completed the course evaluation for this course.

- Of these participants, 100% agreed or strongly agreed that **the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or with people with disabilities.**
- One hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training would help them apply practice skills in the topic area.**
- One hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training expanded their knowledge and understanding in the topic area.**

B. Course #2: *Consumer Control, Choice and Direction in Options Counseling*

Course Completion:

Of the 12 participants that enrolled, two (16.7%) completed this course.

Course Evaluations:

One (1) participant completed the course evaluation for this course.

- This participant, (100%) agreed that **the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or with people with disabilities.**
- This participant (100%) agreed that **the training would help them apply practice skills in the topic area.**
- This participant (100%) agreed that **the training expanded their knowledge and understanding in the topic area.**

3. Connecticut Money Follows the Person (MFP) Training Program

The following is a summary of the course evaluation data from the six courses in the Connecticut MFP Training Program.

A. Course #1: *Core Issues in Aging and Disability*

Course Completion:

Of the 17 participants that enrolled, 15 (88.2%) completed this course.

Course Evaluations:

All fifteen of the participants who completed this course completed the course evaluation.

- Of these participants, 100% agreed or strongly agreed that **the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or with people with disabilities.**

- One hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training would help them apply practice skills in the topic area.**
- Ninety-three percent (93.3%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training expanded their knowledge and understanding in the topic area.**

B. Course #2: *Assessment with Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities*

Course Completion:

Of the 17 participants that enrolled, 13 (76.5%) completed this course.

Course Evaluations:

All thirteen of the participants who completed this course completed the course evaluation.

- Of these participants, 100% agreed or strongly agreed that **the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or with people with disabilities.**
- One hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training would help them apply practice skills in the topic area.**
- One hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training expanded their knowledge and understanding in the topic area.**

C. Course #3: *Consumer Control, Choice, and Direction*

Course Completion:

Of the 17 participants that enrolled, 13 (76.5%) completed this course.

Course Evaluations:

Twelve of the participants who completed this course completed the course evaluation.

- Of these participants, ninety-two percent (91.6%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or with people with disabilities.**
- Eighty-three percent (83.3%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training would help them apply practice skills in the topic area.**
- Ninety-two percent (91.6%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training expanded their knowledge and understanding in the topic area.**

D. Course #4: *Working with Informal Caregivers*

Course Completion:

Of the 17 participants that enrolled, 13 (76.5%) completed this course.

Course Evaluations:

All thirteen of the participants who completed this course completed the course evaluation.

- One hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or with people with disabilities.**
- One hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training would help them apply practice skills in the topic area.**
- One hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training expanded their knowledge and understanding in the topic area.**

E. Course #5: *Aging in Place*

Course Completion:

Of the 17 participants that enrolled, 13 (76.5%) completed this course.

Course Evaluations:

All thirteen of the participants who completed this course completed the course evaluation.

- One hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or with people with disabilities.**
- One hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training would help them apply practice skills in the topic area.**
- One hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training expanded their knowledge and understanding in the topic area.**

F. Course #6: *A Guide to the Aging & Disability Networks*

Course Completion:

Of the 17 participants that enrolled, 12 (70.6%) completed this course.

Course Evaluations:

Eleven of the twelve participants who completed this course completed the course evaluation.

- One hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or with people with disabilities.**

- One hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training would help them apply practice skills in the topic area.**
- One hundred percent (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that **the training expanded their knowledge and understanding in the topic area.**

IV. RESULTS: PRE & POST SELF-ASSESSMENTS OF COMPETENCIES

The training cohorts for the ADRC and Community First Choice Training Programs were too small to facilitate a meaningful analysis of participants' pre and post-course self-assessments of competencies. The following is a summary of the results for the MFP Training Program.

A. Course #1: *Core Issues in Aging & Disability*

Increases in mean scores from pre-test to post-test were statistically significant across seven of the eight learning competencies and ranged from 17.6% to 66.4% ($p < .05$). A participant commented, "I think anyone working in this field would benefit from taking this course."

B. Course #2: *Assessment with Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities*

Increases in mean scores from pre-test to post-test were statistically significant across eight of the nine learning competencies and ranged from 32.3% to 189.3% ($p < .05$). A participant commented, "I enjoyed the interviews with clients and workers."

C. Course #3: *Consumer Control, Choice, and Direction in Options Counseling*

Increases in mean scores from pre-test to post-test were statistically significant across seven of the ten learning competencies and ranged from 26.0% to 108.0% ($p < .05$). A participant commented, "I thought that this course went into all aspects of the topic in depth. It did a very good job teaching me about what I need to do in the field."

D. Course #4: *Working with Informal Caregivers*

Increases in mean scores from pre-test to post-test were statistically significant across all of the seven learning competencies and ranged from 54.6% to 100.0% ($p < .05$). A participant commented, "I think that this course had everything I needed to know about caregivers."

E. Course #5: *Aging in Place*

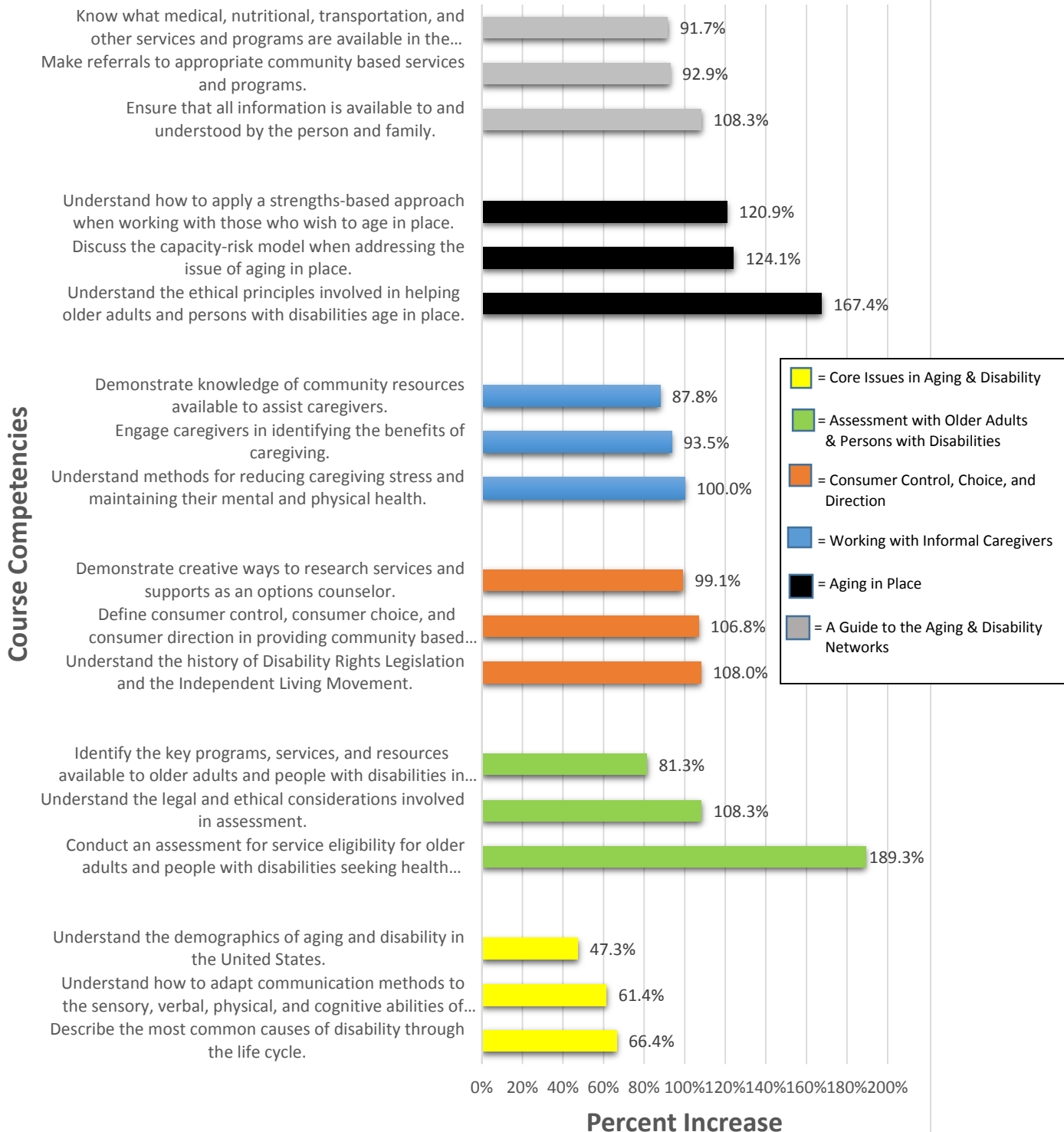
Increases in mean scores from pre-test to post-test were statistically significant across all of the eight learning competencies and ranged from 74.0% to 167.4% ($p < .05$). A participant commented, "I like the case studies as they get you to think."

F. Course #6: *A Guide to the Aging & Disability Networks*

Increases in mean scores from pre-test to post-test were statistically significant across all of the six learning competencies and ranged from 52.3% to 108.3% ($p < .05$). A participant commented, “This course covered all topics relevant to my field.”

The competencies with the three greatest increases pre-test to post-test in each of the six courses are illustrated in the chart on the following page.

CT MFP - Greatest Competency Increase by Course



V. SUMMARY

Participants in the Connecticut Online Training Programs reported that they learned a great deal of relevant information that they will use in their work with aging and disability populations.

Highlights include:

- An average 74.5% completion rate across the three programs.
- An average of one hundred percent (100%) of participants in the Connecticut Community First Choice Training Program agreed or strongly agreed that **the training would help them apply practice skills in the topic area.**
- An average of ninety-nine percent (98.6%) of participants in the Connecticut Money Follows the Person (MFP) Training Program agreed or strongly agreed that **the courses will help them in their work with older adults and/or with people with disabilities.**
- An average of ninety-four percent (93.8%) of participants in the Connecticut ADRC Training Program agreed or strongly agreed that **the courses expanded their knowledge and understanding in the topic area.**

VI. WHAT'S NEXT?

CADER utilizes a number of measures to assess the effectiveness of the training, including course quizzes to assess knowledge, learner course evaluations, and learner pre- and post-course self-assessments of competency. From this data, we believe the courses in the program are the right courses for the next cohort of new learners.

We also believe that the 2015 cohort of learners would benefit from additional training. The pre- to post-changes in competency indicate additional training in legal and ethical issues would be helpful. We recommend the CADER courses, A Foundation in Ethics, Critical Thinking, and Problem Solving and Legal Principles & Decision Making in Practice.

In addition, based on the literature on MFP and transitions, we suggest adding training related to behavioral health. We recommend the following CADER courses: Mental Health Training in Options Counseling OR Mental Health and Aging Issue and Substance Use among Older Adults.

We look forward to our continued partnership and moving ahead to expand this important workforce training effort.

VII. QUALITATIVE FEEDBACK

The following is qualitative feedback gathered from Connecticut learners across courses in all three of the training programs, including elective courses.

Core Issues in Aging and Disability

- Very useful course, appreciate the information that was given to me
- I think anyone working in this field would benefit from taking this course

- I believe this was an excellent course. Many of the information I gained here has already help me in current job especially the LGBT
- Excellent course. I enjoyed this course and will use elements learned from it in trainings with my colleagues.

Assessment with Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities

- Very informative, this course was perfect in how the information was presented.
- Had no problems with the course. Very well put together.

Consumer Control, Choice, and Direction for Options Counseling

- Excellent course. I have 20 years in the IL movement and learned new things.
- The course was very useful for future interviews with clients.
- I thought that this course went into all aspects of the topic in depth. It did a very good job teaching me about what I need to do in the field.

Aging in Place

- Nothing to change, this course was perfect.

Working with Informal Caregivers

- I think that this course had everything I needed to know about caregivers.

A Guide to the Aging and Disability Networks

- This was a good course.

Mental Health in Options Counseling

- This is an exceptional course. I have been in the disability rights and independent living movement for over 25 years and I learned new things and gained new perspectives. Exceptional insight and research into IL movement and some new perspectives on the Recovery movement. Some of the YouTube videos were extraordinary. Thank you!

Legal Principles & Decision Making in Practice

- As an advocate working with people with disabilities and elders, I come across legal and ethical dilemmas on a regular basis. This course strengthen my confidence in what I already knew and gave me additional tools to consider in my future work.