



# **The Center for Aging & Disability Education & Research (CADER)**

*Dedicated Strengthening the Workforce for a Rapidly Changing Society  
Through Research, Education and Training*

## **Final Report New York State Case Management Certificate Program**

Prepared by:

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## **BACKGROUND**

Over the past 10 years, long-term care policy and practice have been rapidly changing. New models of health and mental health delivery are shifting the balance towards community-based services, stronger integration between long-term services and supports with primary and acute care, and improved coordination between aging and disability networks. Developing a qualified, adaptable and sustainable workforce within the aging network to support and coordinate services to older adults and younger adults with disabilities is a critical public policy challenge. Service providers in the aging network face a number of complex and interrelated issues in meeting this challenge, including:

- **Capacity** – Increasing numbers of older adults and people with disabilities entering our service delivery systems
- **Services** – A rapidly changing service landscape in which new service models emphasize integration and coordination of care between the aging network and medical care and managed care organizations, and the use of evidence-based interventions
- **Competencies** – Lack of clarity related to the competencies needed
- **Training** – Lack of training and education tied to new and emerging job requirements.

As a consequence, many AAAs are experiencing a “skills gap” – a significant gap between an organization’s skill needs and the current capabilities of its workforce. A recent study by The Institute of Medicine<sup>1</sup> confirms the skill shortages in all key provider groups; another study by the California Aging Initiative Labor Study<sup>2</sup> finds that in over half of the programs surveyed direct line staff had no formal training in geriatrics or gerontology.

Now more than ever, the AAA network needs to invest in their case management workforce to build the capacity to meet the rising demand and changing dynamics of the rapidly increasing and diverse older population. It was the state of New York’s commitment to this challenge that led to the implementation of the *New York State Case Management Certificate Program*, which was offered in collaboration and funding through New York Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) and coordinated by the Association on Aging in NY. The program was designed by Boston University’s Center for Aging and Disability Education and Research (CADER) where a competency-based certificate program for professional development was delivered to this critical workforce.

Located at Boston University’s School of Social Work, CADER is a national leader in developing validated skill-based online courses for practitioners who work with older adults and people with disabilities. Established in 2002, CADER has trained over 20,000 workers and worked with more than 450 agencies and organizations around the country. Leveraging the resources of one of the nation’s leading research universities with the latest in online learning technology, CADER online courses and programs are developed to meet organizational training needs today and in the future. The CADER team includes leading experts in topics surrounding issues in aging and disability, care management, behavioral health, in addition to upholding a strong commitment to advancing workforce development research and policy efforts. CADER is dedicated to the success of organization learners. CADER provides end-to-end management for training programs from registration, to

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<sup>1</sup>Committee on the Future Health Care Workforce for Older Americans, Institute of Medicine. "Summary." *Retooling for an Aging America: Building the Health Care Workforce*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Labor Force Research Group. "Aging Initiative Labor Force Survey II: Community Based Services for Older Adults", 2008: [http://128.32.59.238/CalSWEC/AI\\_Labor\\_Force\\_Survey\\_Progress\\_Brief\\_121708\\_FINAL.pdf](http://128.32.59.238/CalSWEC/AI_Labor_Force_Survey_Progress_Brief_121708_FINAL.pdf)



customer and technical support, monthly reporting, and evaluation of program outcomes. Our program has proven outcomes in enhancing the skills and knowledge needed for effective practice showing large gains in competencies and improved consumer outcomes.

## **METHODOLOGY**

CADER has been involved in workforce development in case management for many years. After a careful assessment of the long-term services and supports environment, a thorough review of competencies for effective practice in key areas, and in-depth content development with subject matter experts, a comprehensive, validated, competency-based online certificate training program in case management was developed. This certificate was selected by NYSOFA to train case managers in the state of New York. The goal of this program was to ensure that case managers have the knowledge and skills needed to meet the long-term services and support needs of consumers and families. Participants who successfully completed the program received a *New York State Case Management Certificate* from Boston University, along with 19 CEUs accredited through the New York Office of the State Board for Social Work and through the Commission for Case Manager Board for Certified Case Managers.

CADER's online certificate is an established and tested program in which workers obtain proficiency in core case management competency areas leading to the attainment of increased advanced practice skills. Collectively, the competency areas cover the range of knowledge and skills essential for effective practice and successful job performance. Additionally, for each course, Supervisor Guides and other tools were provided to maximize the effectiveness of the online learning. The program was designed to be completed by an individual worker in six to twelve months, with the following five online courses:

1. Core Issues in Aging and Disability
2. Assessment with Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities
3. A Guide to Aging and Disability Networks
4. Care Management Practice
5. Care Transitions

CADER programs and courses apply a competency-based approach. Participants were asked to complete a pre-course competency assessment prior to beginning the courses. After completing each of the five online courses, participants were asked to rate their skill level at each of the learning competencies by completing a post self-assessments of learning competencies. At the end of each of the five online courses, participants were also asked to complete a course evaluation in order to gauge whether they felt that the training benefitted their practice and if the training met its intended learning objectives. CADER also followed up with a 3-month post-training survey to assess the sustainability and impact of training on their practice and organization.

## **RESULTS**

Of the 485 enrolled participants, 476 completed the program and received the *New York State Case Management Certificate* (98% completion rate). These are exceptional completion rates and speaks to the commitment to this training for all involved. The average age of the participants was 49 years old, and 90% identified as female. Ninety percent (90%) self-identified as White/Non-Hispanic, 5% as Hispanic/Latino, and 5% as "other." The majority of participants had a Bachelor's degree or higher (61.4%).

Online Course #1: Core Issues in Aging and Disability

All of the 476 learners completed both the pre and post-course self-assessments of competencies. Increases in the mean scores from pretest to posttest were statistically significant across all of the eight learning competencies and increases ranged from 22% to 42% (p<.05). [Please see chart 1 for the three competencies that had the greatest gains from pre to post-test.]

- Eighty-nine percent (89%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they now ***understand the philosophy of consumer choice, control, and person-centered planning.***
- Eighty-seven (87%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the course ***expanded their knowledge and understanding of core issues in aging and disability.***
- Eighty-five percent (85%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they are now able to ***demonstrate knowledge of resources and programs that support older adults and persons with disabilities.***
- Eighty-five percent (85%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the training ***will help them apply practice skills in the topic area.***
- Eighty-five percent (85%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they are ***now able to describe the ways in which an individual’s cultural, ethnic, or religious background, or sexual orientation can influence the experience of aging or having a disability.***

As stated by a participant in the program, “Overall I found the course to be extremely informative. The information has enhanced my knowledge and skills, which will in turn directly improve my ability to assist in providing long-term services and support programs in relation to older adults and people with disabilities.”

Online Course #2: Assessment with Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities

All of the 476 learners completed both the pre and post-course self-assessments of competencies. Increases in the mean scores from pretest to posttest were statistically significant across all of the nine learning competencies and increases ranged from 13% to 40% (p<.05). [Please see chart 1 for the three competencies that had the greatest gains from pre to post-test.]

- Ninety-one percent (91%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they are now able to ***explain how the assessment process supports choice, self-determination, and participation.***
- Ninety-one percent (91%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they are ***now able to explain the role of the consumer as a partner in assessment.***
- Ninety percent (90%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they are ***now able to describe the role of the worker in the assessment process.***
- Eighty-nine percent (89%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed ***that they are now able to identify the legal and ethical considerations during assessment.***
- Eighty-nine (89%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they are ***able to respect the diversity of consumers using cultural humility.***
- Eighty-eight (88%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that ***the training will help them apply practice skills in the topic area.***

As one participant reported, “I am truly enjoying this course. I can honestly say that it has opened my eyes to many areas that I had no knowledge of. I look forward to obtaining my certificate. I would not change a thing to this course. I highly recommend it.”

Online Course #3: A Guide to the Aging and Disability Networks

All of the 476 learners completed both the pre and post-course self-assessments of competencies. Increases in the mean scores from pretest to posttest were statistically significant across all of the six learning competencies and increases ranged from 12% to 35% ( $p < .05$ ). [Please see chart 1 for the three competencies that had the greatest gains from pre to post-test.]

- Ninety-one percent (91%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that ***they are now able to discuss methods for identifying and accessing resources for older adults and their families.***
- Eighty-eight (88%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that ***they are now able to identify key federal, state, and local resources available to older adults, persons with disabilities, and their families.***
- Eighty-eight percent (88%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed ***the training will help them work with older adults and/or people with disabilities.***
- Eighty-six percent (86%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed ***the training will help them apply practice skills in the topic area.***
- Eighty-five percent (85%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed ***that they are now able to explain how eligibility and accessibility impact the use of federal, state, and local programs.***

As stated by one of the participants, “*This course was very valuable to me. The large assortment of services (Federal, State and local) that are available became clearer. Now I know where to look for information at the various levels of need by clients and myself.*”

Online Course #4: Care Management Practice

All of the 476 learners completed both the pre and post-course self-assessments of competencies. Increases in the mean scores from pretest to posttest were statistically significant across all of the ten learning competencies and increases ranged from 15% to 65% ( $p < .05$ ). [Please see chart 1 for the three competencies that had the greatest gains from pre to post-test.]

- Ninety percent (90%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that ***they are now able to understand the role of the social service practitioner in care management.***
- Ninety percent (90%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they are ***now able to apply the necessary skills of care management to their practice.***
- Eighty-nine percent (89%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed ***that the course expanded their knowledge and understanding of care management.***
- Eighty-nine (89%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed ***that the training will help them apply practice skills in the topic area.***
- Eighty-eight (88%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed ***that the training will help them work with older adults and/or people with disabilities.***

As stated by one of the participants, “*I strongly feel that this course should be a requirement for physicians, social workers, basically anyone in the direct care field.*”

Online Course #5: *Care Transitions*

All of the 476 learners completed both the pre and post-course self-assessments of competencies. Increases in the mean scores from pretest to posttest were statistically significant across all of the eleven learning competencies and increases ranged from 31% to 69% ( $p < .05$ ). *[Please see chart 1 for the three competencies that had the greatest gains from pre to post-test.]*

- Eighty-seven percent (87%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed ***that the course expanded their knowledge and understanding of care transitions.***
- Eighty-five (85%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that ***the training will help them work with older adults and/or people with disabilities.***
- Eighty-five percent (85%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed ***that they are now able to explain how culture, ethnicity, and health literacy impact care transitioning.***
- Eighty-four percent (84%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed ***that the training will help them apply practice skills in the topic area***
- Eighty-three percent (83%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed ***that they are now able to understand how health care policy and law affect older adults.***

A participant from this course stated, *“I can truly say that I have learned so much from this course (some things I knew), but the overall course taught me so much in regard to people with disability, older adults with disabilities. I learned about the different transition models, some I had never heard of. The information has made me even more sensitive to the process of self-determination that all people have. I have started to implement some of the things I have learned with my consumers or client's.”*

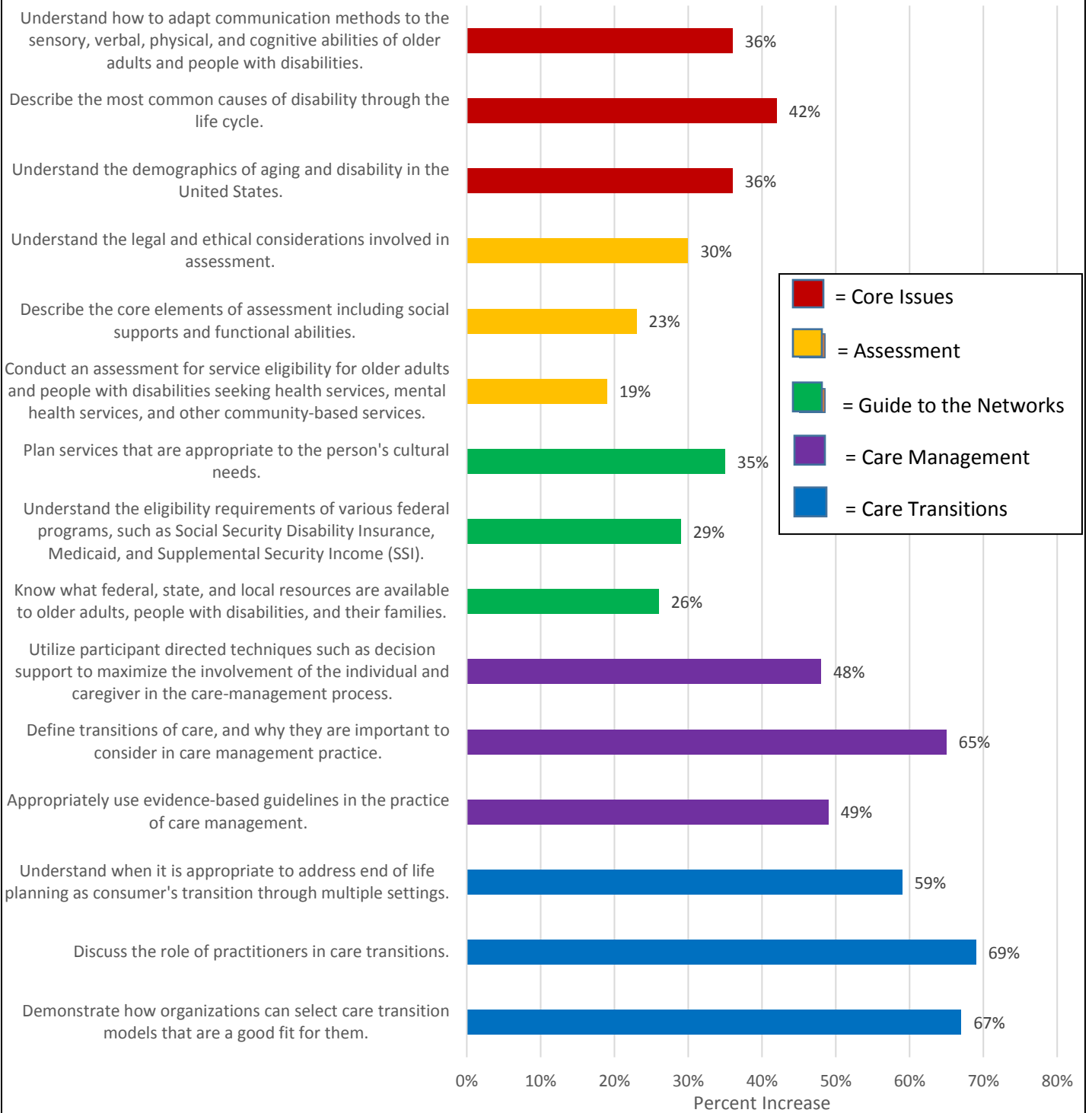
Overall, participants in this training program appreciated the CADER online courses and reported that they learned a great deal of relevant information that they will use in their work with aging and disability populations. Across all five courses:

- An average of 88% of participants agreed or strongly agreed ***that the overall training program expanded their knowledge and understanding of the topic area.***
- An average of 88% of participants agreed or strongly agreed ***that the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or people with disabilities.***
- An average 87% of participants agreed or strongly agreed ***that the training will help them apply practice skills in the topic area.***

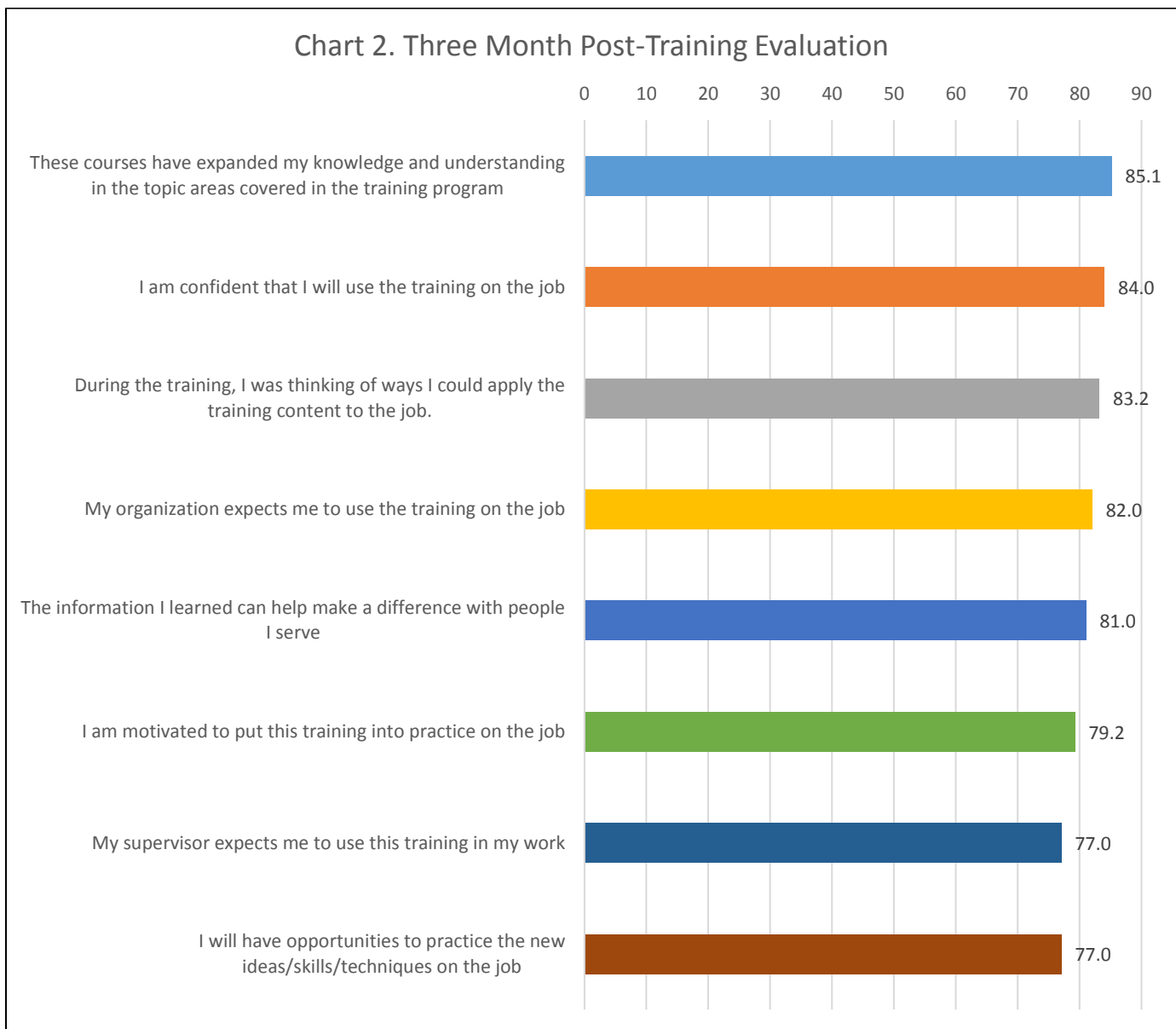
To read more about what program graduates have to say about the *New York Case Management Certificate* program, please visit the following link: <http://sites.bu.edu/agingny/learner-testimonials/>.

The competencies with the three greatest increases pre-test to post-test in each of the five courses are illustrated in Chart 1 on the following page.

**Chart 1. Greatest Competency Increase by Course**



In order to gain additional information on the impact of the training on the workforce, organization, and population they serve, we distributed a follow-up survey. We wanted to assess long-term results; therefore this survey was only distributed to people who were 3 months post completion. This survey was distributed to 260 people and 101 people completed it, which only captures 20% of participants who completed the training. Some highlights follow: 84% agreed or strongly agreed that they were confident that they will use the training on the job. Eighty three percent (83%) agreed or strongly agreed that during the training, they were thinking of ways they could apply the content to their job. Eighty two percent (82%) agreed or strongly agreed that their organization expects them to use the training on the job, and almost 80% are motivated to put this training into practice. When asked whether they thought the training would make a difference with the people they serve, 81% agreed or strongly agreed. Chart 2 shows the results from the 3-month post-training follow-up survey.





## **IMPLICATIONS**

Recent developments in health and long-term policy will certainly create new challenges as well as opportunities for the AAA network. The passage of the Affordable Care Act reinforces the movement towards more integration between community-based service providers and health care and managed care organizations, and will provide increased funding for long-term services and supports to older adults and younger people with disabilities.<sup>3</sup> One attraction of the AAA network to health care organizations is that states with well-defined community-based aging and disability service networks have been found to do a better job at controlling costs than states with weaker networks.<sup>4</sup>

The evolving practice of case management is in many ways at the center of these changes, and, the AAA case management workforce is well positioned to take advantage of these emerging policy trends. Having an established infrastructure for providing community-based long-term living supports and services is a key strength of the network, and the case managers in the network. AAA case managers are a trusted resource for many thousands of consumers and their families, and have a strong record in addressing the long-term service and support needs of the communities they serve.

This program brought a university-based training program developed and delivered by BU's CADER to almost 500 case managers across the state of New York, providing 19 hours of training to a workforce on the frontline of delivering services to older adults and people with disabilities. This program used an online curriculum that is standardized and proves to be a cost effective and efficient way to provide much needed training. The state of New York has taken a great step forward in addressing pressing needs in both the workforce and population in need of services and supports. With administrative and organizational support across all partners, almost 100% of participants completed this program within a relatively short period of time over six months. This type of organizational support and universal access to online learning can provide agencies and organizations with the assurance that staff can be trained with relative ease and reasonable costs. Having an online curriculum provided organizations in NY with a clear understanding of what staff is learning and consistency across the network. In addition to training within an organization, cross training across systems has built a workforce that shares similar knowledge and practice skills – all of which can have a significant impact on the delivery of care.

## **CONCLUSION**

The *New York Case Management Certificate Program* was successful in achieving its aims to train workers at different skill and experience levels, by providing basic foundational skills to new workers and enhancing the skills and providing a refresher and update to more experienced case managers. This collaboration showed that with motivated learners and organizational support, we were able to reach almost all participants.

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<sup>3</sup> Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. (2012). Medicaid managed care: key data, trends and issues. Retrieved from: <http://www.kff.org/medicaid/upload/8046-02.pdf>. Also, see Center for Health Care Strategies (2012). Medicaid rate-setting strategies to promote home and community-based services. Available at: [http://www.thescanfoundation.org/sites/scan.lmp03.lucidus.net/files/CHCS\\_Incentivizing\\_HCBS\\_in\\_MLTS-5-12.pdf](http://www.thescanfoundation.org/sites/scan.lmp03.lucidus.net/files/CHCS_Incentivizing_HCBS_in_MLTS-5-12.pdf). Also, O'Shaughnessy, C. V. (February 23, 2012). The Basics: National Spending for Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS). The National Health Policy Forum. Washington, DC: The George Washington University. Available at: [http://www.nhpf.org/library/the-basics/Basics\\_LongTermServicesSupports\\_02-23-12.pdf](http://www.nhpf.org/library/the-basics/Basics_LongTermServicesSupports_02-23-12.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Kaye, H.S., LaPlante, M.P. & Harrington, C. (2009). Do noninstitutional long-term care services reduce Medicaid spending? Health Affairs, 28, 262-272.



Through this training program, the case management workforce in New York was able to develop and refine the skills needed to meet the demands of an ever-changing practice landscape with older adults and people with disabilities.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

This project was offered in collaboration and funding through New York Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) and coordinated by the Association on Aging in NY.