

Implementing a Community-Based Collaborative Project During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Process Evaluation

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BACKGROUND

- In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) caregivers are linchpins in our long-term care system, but little research exists to examine strategies for enhancing their role working in the homes of persons living with dementia (PLWD).

IHSS+ ADRD TRAINING PROJECT AIMS

- Implement a 10-week competency-based dementia training program for 600 IHSS caregivers and their consumers.
- Evaluate the training program's impact on caregiving, long-term services and support, and health systems.

SHIFTING TO REMOTE STRATEGIES

- Funding and research design were established just prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- With the pandemic, the project pivoted from in-person to remote and virtual recruitment, training, and evaluation strategies.
- **Recruitment revisions** – Enhanced phone, text message, internet, and social media outreach.
- **Training revisions** – Added orientation session to familiarize IHSS caregivers with Zoom and navigating other online platforms.
- **Evaluation revisions** – Offered mail-and-return paper surveys and electronic surveys (Qualtrics) to accommodate IHSS caregivers' preferences and comfort.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS: IHSS CAREGIVERS (N=88)

DEMOGRAPHICS

- **83%** Female
- **64%** Non-Hispanic
- **55%** Black/African American
- **11%** Asian/Asian American
- **5%** White/Caucasian
- **5%** Two or more races
- **2%** American Indian/Alaska Native
- **2%** Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

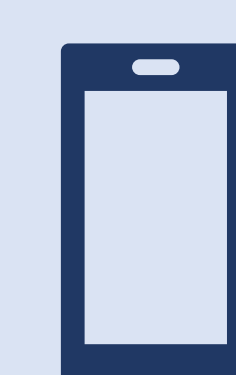
Highest education level:

- **24%** Some college, no degree
- **18%** High school or GED equivalent
- **18%** Associate's degree
- **17%** Trade, technical, vocational school
- **16%** Bachelor's degree
- **3%** Advanced degree

TECHNOLOGY ACCESS



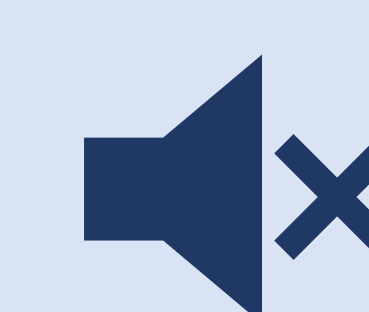
87% had a stable internet connection.



97% had a smartphone or tablet with camera.



75% had a computer with camera.



83% had a quiet space.

CONCERNS ABOUT THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

61% felt the pandemic severely impacted their personal life.

49% felt severely worried about having enough **finances** to meet basic needs.

61% felt the pandemic severely impacted their **work** as an IHSS caregiver.

TRAINING SATISFACTION (N=66)

- ✓ **97%** felt they learned **new caregiving skills** from the training.
- ✓ **97%** were **satisfied** with the training.
- ✓ **97%** felt the training was **beneficial**.

Select quotes:

- [I learned] caregivers have to practice self-care because we can't pour water from an empty cup.
- "Understanding the person with dementia helps to provide person centered care and support. Sometimes people need support to express their memories, thoughts and feelings. Finding the right support for people with dementia makes a big difference to their quality of life."
- [I learned] a sense of empowerment of education."

PRELIMINARY LESSONS LEARNED

BENEFITS

- Ensured social distance and safety needs of IHSS caregivers and community partners.
- Bolstered online and social media presence for outreach and recruitment.
- Improved IHSS caregiver digital literacy and technology skills.
- Reduced IHSS caregiver transportation and commute burden.
- Minimized IHSS caregiver isolation.
- Smaller online class sizes were beneficial for adult learning.

CHALLENGES

- Decreased visibility in the field challenged outreach and recruitment.
- Heightened concerns about online scams and telephone scams for IHSS caregivers.
- Unfamiliarity with technology or online learning for IHSS caregivers.
- "Hands-on" skill-building difficult to implement, e.g., CPR training.
- Precarious employment for IHSS caregivers with death or loss of consumer.
- Multi-model data collection and evaluation tracking is resource intensive.

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