Biennial Evaluation, Performance, and Analysis Report
October 2020–September 2022

Administration for Community Living

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) implements programs and initiatives as authorized through a variety of statutes. These programs and initiatives aim to support the independence, well-being, and health of older adults and people with disabilities across the lifespan and support their families and caregivers. ACL strives to ensure that all people, no matter their age or disability, are allowed to live with dignity, make their own choices, and fully participate in society.

Following the adoption of the Foundations for Evidence-based Policymaking Act in 2019, ACL and other agencies were encouraged to make agency data publicly available and to plan and develop evidence to support policymaking. In keeping to the Evidence Act's requirements, ACL outlined the agency's priorities in an evaluation plan.[1] See **ES Exhibit 1** for ACL priority questions that pertain to this report.

ES Exhibit 1. ACL Priority Questions

Priority Question 1
- What is the efficacy and effectiveness of ACL programs and initiatives?

Priority Question 2
- What are states funded by ACL doing to enhance and promote aging and disability services and programs?

Priority Question 3
- How does ACL prepare its staff to better support the aging and disability networks?

Priority Question 4
- What are the current avenues for collaboration and coordination between the aging and disability networks that ACL works with? How can ACL encourage better collaboration and coordination?

Priority Question 5
- What new research and information are being generated, by both ACL and in the field, on aging and disability? How is ACL implementing it, and how can ACL better implement it?

Priority Question 6
- What are the knowledge gaps between ACL, research, and stakeholders? How can ACL close the knowledge gaps?

In 2020, ACL contracted with RTI International to summarize evaluation and analysis activities undertaken by ACL with the intent of forging partnerships across programs and inform future analytic efforts. This Biennial Evaluation, Performance, and Analysis Report showcases select activities underway between October 2020 and September 2022.

[1] Although the current priority question 2 mentions "states," the language of future iterations of this priority is expected to be broadened to "grantees."

Methods

Designated Center and Office staff were invited to submit essential data elements for their priority evaluation, performance management, and analytic projects in an online data capture form (see **ES Exhibit 2**). Evaluation activities are inclusive of performance management and analysis of program performance data. Key information about each activity is summarized in this report.

ES Exhibit 2. Data Items Captured

- Project details (i.e., Name, Dates, and Purpose)
- ACL priorities
- Stakeholder involvement
- Data sources
- Report of findings
- Datasets produced
- Dissemination plans
- ACL actions

Summary of Activities

Between October 2020 and September 2022, ACL cataloged 42 projects underway across five of its Centers (see **ES Exhibit 3**). Of those, one project ended in 2020, seven ended in 2021, 20 ended in 2022,[2] and 14 remained ongoing at the end of the reporting period.

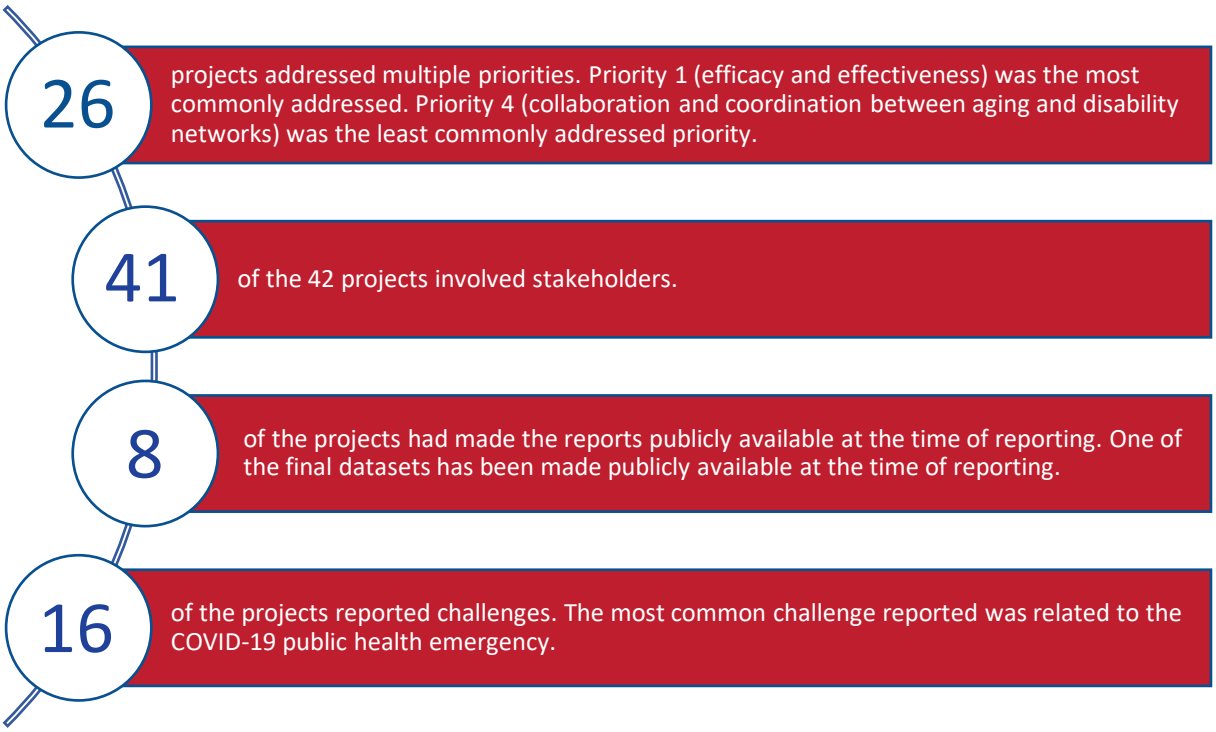
ES Exhibit 3. List of Evaluation, Performance, and Analysis Activities by ACL Center

[2] These projects ended during the data collection period, meaning project activities were completed before October 2022.

Findings

Data collection revealed important findings about the breadth, depth, collaborations, dissemination, and challenges of ACL's recent evaluation, performance, and analytic activities. **ES Exhibit 4** gives an overall summary of these findings.

ES Exhibit 4. Summary of Findings



Conclusion

The findings from this and future Biennial Reports provide a useful snapshot of where ACL is concentrating its evaluation and analytic efforts, which can be helpful in informing future activities and opportunities for growth.

BACKGROUND

ACL implements programs and initiatives authorized through the Older Americans Act of 1965 (OAA), Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehab Act), Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000, Elder Justice Act, and several other statutes. Programs and initiatives resulting from these statutes support older Americans and Americans with disabilities to live independently at home with dignity and fully participate in their communities. In keeping to the spirit of the Foundations for Evidence-based Policymaking Act (House Resolution 4174; Evidence Act), ACL undertakes evaluation and analysis to ensure that its programs are effective, staff are prepared, collaboration and coordination is occurring between the aging and disability networks, and emerging areas from the field and knowledge gaps are identified.

The Evidence Act, which took effect in 2019, promotes publicly accessible agency data and requires agencies to plan and develop statistical evidence to support policymaking. Agencies must annually develop a plan for identifying and addressing policy questions. The plan must include the following elements: questions for developing evidence to support policymaking; data the agency intends to collect or use as evidence; methods and approaches that may be used to develop evidence to support policymaking; and challenges to developing evidence-based policy.

To fulfill the requirement to submit an annual plan as outlined above, ACL developed evaluation plans that outline their priorities. A selection of ACL's priority questions were incorporated into the larger U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Fiscal Year 2022 Evaluation Plan. **Exhibit 1** lists ACL-wide dynamic priority questions included in ACL's Interim Learning Agenda and Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Evaluation Plan intended to guide ACL's evaluation activities along with a brief description of the aim of each priority question.[3]

In 2020, ACL contracted with RTI International to develop the Biennial Evaluation, Performance, and Analysis Report. The purpose of the report is to showcase ACL's select evaluation and analysis activities during a two-year period.

Exhibit 1. ACL Priority Questions

Priority Question 1
- What is the efficacy and effectiveness of ACL programs and initiatives?

Priority Question 2
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- What are the knowledge gaps between ACL, research, and stakeholders? How can ACL close the knowledge gaps?

[3] Although the current priority question 2 mentions "states," the language of future iterations of this priority is expected to be broadened to "grantees."

METHODS

Data for the Biennial Evaluation, Performance, and Analysis Report were collected from ACL staff members across its eight centers. The data collection steps are described in more detail below.

Identify and Invite ACL Staff to Participate

Participants in this data collection effort included ACL Office Directors and their supporting staff. In collaboration with ACL, RTI identified and reached out to the Office Directors within each of the eight ACL Centers, using the ACL Organizational Chart. Early outreach included inviting Office Directors to participate in the data collection effort and identify an Office contact to complete the data collection form. Once the proper Office staff were identified, RTI shared instructions for next steps.

Data Collection Effort

Information collected for this Biennial Report was limited to those projects underway at any point between October 2020 and September 2022. The projects outlined in this report are not exhaustive to all efforts ongoing at ACL.

Exhibit 2. Data Items Captured

- Project details (i.e., Name, Dates, and Purpose)
- ACL priorities
- Stakeholder involvement
- Data sources
- Report of findings
- Datasets produced
- Dissemination plans
- ACL actions

Data collection began in May 2022. RTI contacted ACL staff participating in the data collection effort with the link to the data capture form along with instructions on how to complete the form. Data collection lasted seven weeks. See **Exhibit 2** for details on information collected.

A total of 42 projects were submitted.

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION, PERFORMANCE, AND ANALYSIS ACTIVITIES

Of the 42 selected projects underway between October 2020 and September 2022,[4] most were led by the Administration on Aging (AoA) (13) and Center for Policy Evaluation (ten) followed by the Center for Innovation and Partnership (eight), Administration on Disabilities (eight), and National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (three). These projects are summarized in the following sections.

[4] It should be noted that many ACL Offices are doing other forms of evaluation, performance, and analysis activities, but the parameters established for this effort may have precluded those projects in this data call across the agency.

Administration on Aging

The AoA is the principal U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) component designated to carry out the provisions of the Older Americans Act (ACL, 2017, 2023a). Thirteen projects from four of the five AoA offices are summarized below.

Office of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiian Programs

Title VI Evaluation

2016–2021

Addresses Priorities 1 & 6

ACL Center Partners: CPE

- **Study Purpose:** To provide an opportunity to understand the value and impact that Title VI programs have on elder program participants, caregivers of elders, elders raising grandchildren or caring for adult children with disabilities, and program staff.
- **Methods:** Literature review; focus groups; analysis of administrative data; analysis of National Resource Center on Native American Aging and USAging survey data; site visits.
- **ACL Actions in Response to Project:** ACL has begun work on Title VI data workbooks, developing and delivering trainings on caregiver services, and establishing other data usage tools.

Title III and Title VI Grantee Collaboration Study

2019–2020

Addresses Priorities 1 & 2

ACL Center Partners: CRO & CPE

- **Study Purpose:** To identify examples and best practices of Title VI and Title III grantee collaboration at the tribal, state, and local level.
- **Methods:** Environmental scan; interviews.
- **ACL Actions in Response to Project:** ACL has presented findings to ACL grantees and at national conferences.

Office of Elder Justice and Adult Protective Services

LTCOP Outcome Evaluation

2017–2022

Addresses Priority 1

ACL Center Partners: CPE

- **Study Purpose:** To conduct a comprehensive outcome evaluation of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) that builds on two previous evaluation efforts: Evaluation Study Design of LTCOPs under the OAA and the Process Evaluation and Special Studies Related to the LTCOP.
- **Methods**: Focus groups; stakeholder interviews; and surveys.

Adult Protective Services Client Outcomes Study

2018–2022

Addresses Priorities 1, 2, 5, & 6

- **Study Purpose:** To examine if and how Adult Protective Services (APS) programs make a difference in the lives of clients with regard to their satisfaction, safety/risk, and well-being.
- **Methods:** Survey data collection and analysis; primary interview focus groups and analysis; and secondary data analysis of APS administrative data.

Office of Nutrition and Health Promotion Programs

Exploratory Study of OAA Nutrition Services During COVID-19

2021

Addresses Priorities 1, 2, 3, 4, & 6

ACL Center Partners: CPE

- **Study Purpose**: To examine the performance of OAA-funded state and local senior nutrition programs, including challenges encountered in program services, reporting, and innovative services implemented during the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE).
- **Methods:** Interviews with staff from State Units on Aging (SUAs), Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), and local service providers (LSPs).
- **ACL Actions in Response to Project:** ACL may take action based on project recommendations/implications for (a) future technical assistance to those in the aging and disability services network (e.g., SUAs, AAAs, LSPs); and (b) additional research.

Promoting Equity in Older Americans Act Service Outreach
2021–2022
Addresses Priorities 1 & 2
ACL Center Partners: CPE

- **Study Purpose:** To examine who is being served by the Home-Delivered Meals and Congregate Meals programs in a sample of states and then recommend best practices to reach populations that are not traditionally well served.
- **Methods:** Semistructured interviews conducted with Nutrition Leads or managers of the SUAs for eight states. Data from AGing, Independence, and Disability and the Census Bureau were used to select states of focus based on criteria defined in consultation with ACL.

Remote Evidence-based Programs Evaluation—Sound Generations
2021–2022
Addresses Priorities 1 & 5

- **Study Purpose:** To evaluate whether and how remote evidence-based programs (EBPs) guide future policymaking and practice at the national, state, and local levels.
- **Methods:** Effectiveness evaluation conducting pre- and post-test surveys of adults with disabilities and older adults participating in at least four EBPs. Implementation evaluation conducting surveys with EBP administrators, delivery organizations, leaders, and participants.

Congregate Meals and Socialization
2021–2022
Addresses Priorities 5 & 6
ACL Center Partners: CPE

- **Study Purpose:** To develop an understanding of who is attending congregate meals for socialization and why certain target populations are first coming to the congregate meal programs, and to provide insights that may help ACL reach more vulnerable populations through congregate meals in the future (Phase 1). To examine additional reasons people attend congregate meals besides socialization (Phase 2).
- **Methods:** Quantitative data analysis of 2019 National Survey of Older Americans Act Participants (NSOAAP) data.

Office of Supportive and Caregiver Services

Caregiver Questions
2020–2021
Addresses Priority 1
ACL Center Partners: CPE

- **Study Purpose:** To examine the National Family Caregiver Support Program participants' (i.e., caregivers') improvement recommendations as reported in the NSOAAP.
- **Methods:** Analysis of the 2019 NSOAAP data.

Alzheimer's Program Grants
2020–2022
Addresses Priority 1
ACL Center Partners: CPE

- **Study Purpose:** To pull together evidence from Alzheimer's Disease Initiative – Specialized Supportive Services grantee reports to tell a story using existing data about the impact of the grants.
- **Methods:** Review of documentation associated with the Alzheimer's Program Grants project.
- **ACL Actions in Response to Project:** ACL shared reports and guidance documents with grantees.

Caregiver Disparities
2021–2022
Addresses Priority 6
ACL Center Partners: CPE

- **Study Purpose:** To review 2019 NSOAAP responses to questions related to demographics, caregiving intensity, unmet needs, and service usage to better understand potential differences in caregivers' service needs and usage.
- **Methods:** Literature review of peer-reviewed publications and analytic file creation and data analysis of the 2019 NSOAAP Family Caregiver Survey data.

Lifespan Respite Performance Measures
2022–Present
Addresses Priority 1
ACL Center Partners: CPE

- **Study Purpose:** To develop a set of performance measures for Lifespan Respite Program grantees.
- **Methods:** Review of Lifespan Respite Program notice of funding opportunity, Lifespan Respite Program 2020 and 2021 grantee reporting, the 2019 Lifespan Respite Program report prepared by the Lewin Group, and grantee reporting tools and aggregate reports used by other AoA programs.

Review of Respite Models for Family Caregivers of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias
2022
Addresses Priority 6
ACL Center Partners: CPE

- **Study Purpose:** To learn more about respite specifically for family caregivers to people living with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRDs).
- **Methods:** Literature review on ADRD respite care models.

Administration on Disabilities

The Administration on Disabilities (AoD) collaborates with states, communities, and partners in the disability network to equip individuals with disabilities of all ages with opportunities, tools, and supports to lead lives of their choice in their community. Under the provisions established through various authorizing statutes, AoD seeks to improve opportunities for people with disabilities to access quality community services and supports, achieve economic self-sufficiency, and experience equality, equity, and inclusion in all facets of community life (ACL, 2023b). Eight projects from all three AoD offices are summarized below.

Office of Intellectual and Developmental Disability Programs

Building Utilization-Focused Developmental Disabilities Impact Evaluation Skills (BUDDIES) Project

2022–Present

Addresses Priorities 1 & 6

- **Study Purpose:** To build evaluation capacity and competencies so that staff from State/Territory Councils on Developmental Disabilities are able to engage in continuous quality improvements, data-driven decision making, and communicate the impact of their Council.
- **Methods:** Surveys of State/Territory Councils on Developmental Disabilities staff.

Office of Independent Living Programs

Native American Indian Independent Living Demonstration (NAILD) program

2016–2022

Addresses Priority 5

- **Study Purpose:** To (1) gain an increased understanding of service needs of Americans with disabilities, (2) improve cultural competence in regard to the needs of specific tribal organizations targeted by Centers for Independent Living (CILs), and (3) capture lessons learned and best practices for outreach and service delivery to American Indians and Alaska Natives with disabilities, a traditionally underserved population.
- **Methods:** Mixed methods.

Office of Disability Services Innovations

The State of the States in Developmental Disabilities **1982–Present** **Addresses Priorities 3, 5, & 6**	• **Study Purpose:** To investigate the determinants of public spending for intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) services in the United States. • **Methods:** Quantitative analysis of data on the state of supports and services in the United States, including data on community services and supports, public and private institutions, fiscal efforts in states, and demand for services and supports.
Access to Integrated Employment: National Data Collection on Day and Employment Services for Citizens with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities **1988–Present** **Addresses Priority 6**	• **Study Purpose:** To describe day and employment services for individuals with developmental disabilities and contribute to an understanding of the factors that influence employment at the individual, service provider, and state levels. • **Methods:** Longitudinal data collection from state I/DD agencies, the vocational rehabilitation system, and community organizations providing employment support to people with I/DD.
Residential Information Systems Project (RISP) **1977–Present** **Addresses Priorities 5 & 6**	• **Study Purpose:** To gather, maintain, and analyze longitudinal data on Medicaid-funded residential and in-home supports for people with I/DD. • **Methods:** Annual surveys of state I/DD agencies and state-operated I/DD facilities serving 16 or more people.
Community Collaboration for Employment Program Evaluability Study **2022-Present** **Addresses Priority 2**	• **Study Purpose:** To conduct an evaluability assessment of the Community Collaboration for Employment (CCE) grants through the Projects of National Significance Program. • **Methods:** Interviews with ACL staff, Disability Employment Technical Assistance Center team, CCE grantees (only eight); review of grantee logic models and summary reports and applications to ACL.

Living Well Evaluation

2018–2022

Addresses Priorities 2 & 5

ACL Center Partners: CPE

- **Study Purpose:** To conduct a cross-site evaluation of eight grantees from two cohorts where each grantee designed one or more models integrating community monitoring and capacity building with the goal of enhancing health, safety, integration, and independence of individuals with I/DD living in the community.
- **Methods:** Site visits; biannual reports; interviews.

Evaluation of the National Paralysis Resource Center (NPRC) and Performance Management Support

2022–Present

Addresses Priority 1

ACL Center Partners: CPE

- **Study Purpose:** To conduct a process evaluation of the NPRC and an outcome evaluation to assess whether the NPRC has (1) improved health and quality of life for individuals with paralysis of all ages, their families, and their support systems; and (2) increased awareness of services, access to services, empowerment, confidence, independence, support system strength, and community living opportunities for individuals living with paralysis.
- **Methods:** Development of a performance monitoring tool to track outputs; interviews with NPRC staff; focus groups; web surveys of program participants.

Center for Innovation and Partnership

The Center for Innovation and Partnership (CIP) oversees the administration of programs and initiatives that serve both older adults and people with disabilities, including consumer access and protection programs. This includes the State Health Insurance Assistance Program, grants to improve Medicare beneficiaries' access to low-income subsidies, and the State No Wrong Door System program for access to long-term services and supports (ACL, 2023c). Eight projects from two of the three CIP offices are summarized below.

Office of Healthcare Information and Counseling

SMP Outreach

2020–2021

Addresses Priorities 1 & 2

ACL Center Partners: CPE

- **Study Purpose:** To gain better understanding of the most efficient and effective methods to reach the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) program's target audience via outreach and media activities to prevent Medicare fraud.
- **Methods:** Analysis of SMP Information and Reporting System data, review of Office of Inspector General SMP reports and literature, and subject matter expert interviews.
- **ACL Actions in Response to Project:** ACL shared American Community Survey (ACS) How-To Guide with SMP grantees.

MIPPA Evaluation

2020–Present

Addresses Priorities 1 & 3

ACL Center Partners: CPE

- **Study Purpose:** To evaluate the MIPPA program by examining the program's current state, determining equity within the benefit enrollment centers (which account for 15%–20% of total program funding), assessing equity within the entire program, and defining the program's future state.
- **Methods:** Stakeholder interviews; analysis of National Council on Aging data, ACS census data, and 2019 Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services enrollment data.

SHIP and MIPPA Low-Income Population Estimation Model

2021–2022

Addresses Priority 6

ACL Center Partners: CPE

- **Study Purpose:** To estimate the gap between likely eligibility and enrollment in the Low Income Subsidy program so that SHIP and MIPPA funding for the states is distributed in proportion to state needs.
- **Methods:** An environmental scan of studies and other resources on estimating eligibility for a variety of entitlement programs and analysis of data from multiple sources including ACL data on SHIP outreach; survey and administrative data; state-, territory-, and county-level Medicare enrollment data; and ACS data.
- **ACL Actions in Response to Project:** ACL is using results for a more accurate computation of its program funding formulas.

Office of Network Advancement

Developing a Business Case for the No Wrong Door System

2019–Present

Addresses Priority 1

- **Study Purpose:** To conduct a set of analyses to research the association of state-level No Wrong Door (NWD) Systems, nursing facility admission rates, and overall health care costs to Medicaid and Medicare programs.
- **Methods:** Data collection and analysis of core outcome measures. Data and measures are identified and collected by participating grantee states.

An Analysis of Transition Activities among Centers for Independent Living (CILs)

2020–2021

Addresses Priorities 2, 4, & 5

ACL Center Partners: AoD

- **Study Purpose:** To summarize three surveys regarding transition activities at CILs that included CILs as key respondents.
- **Methods:** Analysis of the Collaborative on Health Reform and Independent Living Survey (2020), ACL Care Transitions Technical Assistance Team Survey (March 2021), and ACL Housing Team Survey (August 2021).

Social Care Referrals Challenge Survey

2021

Addresses Priorities 5 & 6

- **Study Purpose:** To administer a survey to help expand the broader goals of the Social Care Referrals Challenge, achieving holistic health and social supports through inventive technology approaches. The answers to this survey also informed criteria and the remaining phases of the Challenge.
- **Methods:** Teams completed a survey and were scored individually by multiple judges and evaluated by an expert panel.
- **ACL Actions in Response to Project:** Considerations were derived from the survey for common workflows and data integration to bridge the gap between referral vendors, health care partners, and community-based organizations. These considerations were incorporated into the Challenge criteria.

Money Follows the Person Demonstration Legislation from 2005-2021

2021

Addresses Priority 6

- **Study Purpose:** To create a document that summarizes and includes language from legislation pertaining to the Money Follows the Person (MFP) Demonstration.
- **Methods:** A review of relevant legislation and documents.
- **ACL Actions in Response to Project:** ACL identified and described the benefits that can be achieved through partnerships between the NWD System and the MFP Demonstration and strategies for developing partnerships.

No Wrong Door Strategic Planning Key Informant Interviews

2022–Present

Addresses Priorities 3 & 4

- **Study Purpose:** To understand the perception and penetration of the NWD System and its guiding principles across ACL programs.
- **Methods:** Key informant interviews conducted with five ACL program staff members.

Center for Policy and Evaluation

The Center for Policy and Evaluation (CPE) collects and analyzes data on populations and services, develops strategic goals and objectives, evaluates the effectiveness of programs, and plans and coordinates the development of policies designed to ensure that older Americans and persons with disabilities are able to fully participate in and contribute to an inclusive community life. CPE works with colleagues across the agency and HHS on big-picture policy issues that affect multiple centers and programs within ACL (ACL, 2020). Ten projects from one of the two CPE offices are summarized below.

Office of Performance and Evaluation

National Survey of Older Americans Act Participants

2003–Present

Addresses Priorities 1, 2, 5, & 6

ACL Center Partners: AoA & CRO

- **Study Purpose:** To assess the effectiveness of the Title III programs, maintain accountability, and demonstrate the program's success in achieving legislative goals. NSOAAP is composed of six annual surveys of select Title III service areas. The survey instruments focus on the consumers' assessment of service quality and outcomes and measure client characteristics.
- **Methods:** Telephone-based survey conducted each year from May to September.

ACL Volunteerism Study

2020–2022

Addresses Priorities 2, 5, & 6

ACL Center Partners: AoA, CIP, & CRO

- **Study Purpose:** To (a) learn more about how ACL programs focused on older adults use volunteers; (b) identify promising practices/recommendations for effective use of volunteers; (c) estimate the economic value of volunteerism to several programs identified by ACL; and (d) develop a plan for future data collection activities and modeling/analysis strategies to refine the estimate of economic value and cost of volunteer labor for ACL programs.
- **Methods:** Analysis of OAA Title III and Title VII State Performance Report data, OAA Title VII National Ombudsman Reporting System data, and SHIP data; interviews with ACL staff, grantee programs, and volunteers.

Older Americans Act Fidelity Evaluation **2020–2022** **Addresses Priorities 1, 3, & 6** **ACL Center Partners: AoA**	• **Study Purpose:** To evaluate the fidelity with which ACL and its grantees under the OAA implement the required evidence-based programs. • **Methods**: Primary data collection through surveys.
Process Evaluation of the Aging Network Structure Including Business Acumen **2020–Present** **Addresses Priorities 1, 2, & 4**	• **Study Purpose:** To better understand how the aging network programs are structured at the state and local levels and their progress toward their goals and mission. • **Methods:** Literature review; survey of SUAs, AAAs, and Title VI grantees; nine interviews following the survey.
CLAS Standards at ACL **2021–Present** **Addresses Priorities 1 & 3**	• **Study Purpose:** To explore the extent to which ACL grantees employ National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in their service delivery processes, particularly their responsiveness to diversity, equity, and inclusion priorities, cultural practices, language and communication needs, and health literacy. • **Methods:** Environmental scan; ACL staff interviews; interviews with external stakeholders and federal partners; survey of grantees; secondary analysis of administrative data.
Disabilities and HCBS **2021–2022** **Addresses Priorities 1 & 6**	• **Study Purpose:** To provide ACL with additional insight into home and community-based services and OAA services utilization and needs among those aging into disability and those aging with a disability. • **Methods:** Analysis of Health and Retirement data; literature review; key informant interviews.

Design Project for Research, Demonstration, and Evaluation Center

2021–2022

Addresses Priorities 2, 3, & 6

- **Study Purpose:** To develop a Center design plan that outlines the possible structure, functions, and expectations of the Research, Demonstration, and Evaluation Center for the Aging Network established under the 2020 reauthorization of the OAA.
- **Methods:** Environmental scan.

Title VI 2020 Data Review

2022

Addresses Priority 2

- **Study Purpose:** To review Title VI 2020 COVID supplemental reports to summarize and report on COVID spending.
- **Methods:** Analysis of 2020 Title VI Grantee COVID Spending, Thematic Analysis of 2020 Qualitative PPR Data.

Health Services Utilization and Stress Among Older Adults During the COVID-19 Pandemic

2022

Addresses Priority 1

- **Study Purpose:** To examine the health services utilization and stress among older adults during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Methods:** Secondary data analyses of 2019 MCBS and 2021 NSOAAP.

NSOAAP Covid Analysis

2022–Present

Addresses Priority 1

ACL Center Partners: AoA & CRO

- **Study Purpose:** To better understand how the pandemic has disrupted and changed the service delivery of six OAA programs and the lives of program clients.
- **Methods:** Analysis of NSOAAP COVID-19 module data.

National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research

The National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) is the federal government's primary disability research organization (ACL, 2023d). Three NIDILRR projects are detailed below. This report does not include NIDILRR-funded work.

Office of Research Sciences

Meta-Analysis of NIDILRR's Evaluation Work

2022

Addresses Priorities 5 & 6

- **Study Purpose:** To compile all the findings and recommendations from evaluation reports that have been done in the past to promote improved data-driven decision-making and policy-making and agency and grantee performance.
- **Methods:** A mixed-methods meta-evaluation structured around two stages: a review of previously funded NIDILRR reports and qualitative interviews with NIDILRR staff.

Multi-Year Citation Analysis

2022

Addresses Priorities 5 & 6

- **Study Purpose:** To track the impact, influence, and quality of NIDLRR's citation data over multiple years.
- **Methods:** Analysis of NIDILRR Annual Performance Reporting database and analysis of additional citation data from EndNote Google Scholar data using a search engines results page (SERP API).

NIDILRR's Social Media Presence: A Pilot Study
2022
Addresses Priorities 5 & 6

- **Study Purpose:** To examine NIDILRR's social media presence to better reach persons with disabilities and their family members.
- **Methods:** Analysis of administrative data on NIDILRR grantees and Twitter that use #NIDILRR in their message.

FINDINGS

Projects

The data collection revealed important findings about the breadth, depth, collaborations, dissemination, and challenges of ACL's recent selected evaluation, performance management, and analysis activities. Between October 2020 and September 2022, ACL had 42 priority projects underway across five of its Centers. Of those, one project ended in 2020, seven ended in 2021, 20 ended in 2022,[5] and 14 remained ongoing at the end of the reporting period.

Priorities

Findings also reveal how ACL's current activities are supporting its progress in meeting its priorities. Most projects (26) addressed multiple priorities. Priority 1 (efficacy and effectiveness) was the most commonly addressed priority for projects (22), followed by priority 6 (knowledge gaps), which had 21 projects. Fourteen projects addressed priority 5 (emerging areas from the field) and 13 addressed priority 2 (promotion of aging and disability programming). Seven projects addressed priority 3, staff preparation. Priority 4, collaboration and coordination between aging and disability networks, was the least likely to be addressed during the reporting period, with just four activities addressing this priority.

Collaboration

Most projects were done collaboratively. Specifically, 41 of the 42 projects involved stakeholders in their development and implementation. These stakeholders ranged from other ACL Center and Office staff, advisory committees, Tribal governments and organizations, grantees, and community program staff, to contractors. The most common ACL Center partner was the Center for Policy and Evaluation.

Eight projects had final reports publicly posted at the time of reporting. One of the final datasets has been made publicly available at the time of reporting.

Challenges

Although not all projects were met with challenges, ACL staff reported that 16 of their projects did face challenges. Examples of challenges encountered include delays in getting OMB Paperwork Reduction Act approval to collect data. Other project teams faced challenges because of delays in processing data use agreements with federal partners. The number one challenge reported, however, was the COVID-19 PHE. ACL staff reported the PHE required changes to data collection approaches and led to inconsistencies in data reported and changes in operations among partners.

[5] These projects ended during the data collection period, meaning project activities were completed before October 2022.

CONCLUSION

Findings from this report provide insight into how ACL's evaluation, performance, and analysis activities support finding answers to the agency's priority questions. The findings also provide a roadmap for efforts focusing on areas where gaps may exist. For example, the finding that the priorities on efficacy and effectiveness and knowledge gaps were addressed by many more activities than the priority on collaboration and coordination between aging and disability networks suggests that future activities may want to include a focus on this priority to balance the evidence supporting all the priority areas.

Another opportunity for growth and collaboration for ACL may be the wider dissemination of results. Although many activities were ongoing and had not yet produced a final report, interim findings, reports, and datasets were not yet published. ACL may want to consider including disseminating interim results as a task on future evaluation activities where feasible and appropriate.

Most of the activities undertaken involved stakeholders and engaged aging or disability networks, such as grantees (often staffed by people ACL aims to serve) and program participants. One example includes AoD's NAILD program, which was jointly developed by CILs that are operated by people with disabilities. ACL may wish to consider continuing to include older adults, people with disabilities, and their caregivers as stakeholders in the design or implementation of its evaluation activities.

This report details 42 projects underway across five of ACL's eight centers between October 2020 and September 2022. Along with any new evaluation projects undertaken, the 14 that remained ongoing at the end of the reporting period may be included in the 2023 Biennial Report. The findings from this and future Biennial Reports may be used to inform evaluation activities, including internal and external collaborations and dissemination.

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