



NCI-AD Survey: Training for AAA Liaisons

August 28, 2025

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

REVISED ON OCTOBER 21, 2025



DARS | VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT FOR AGING
AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES
DIVISION FOR AGING SERVICES



State Unit on Aging and State Plan for Aging Services

SUA Responsibilities



In Virginia, DARS serves as the OAA-required State Unit on Aging (SUA)

SUAs are directed to:

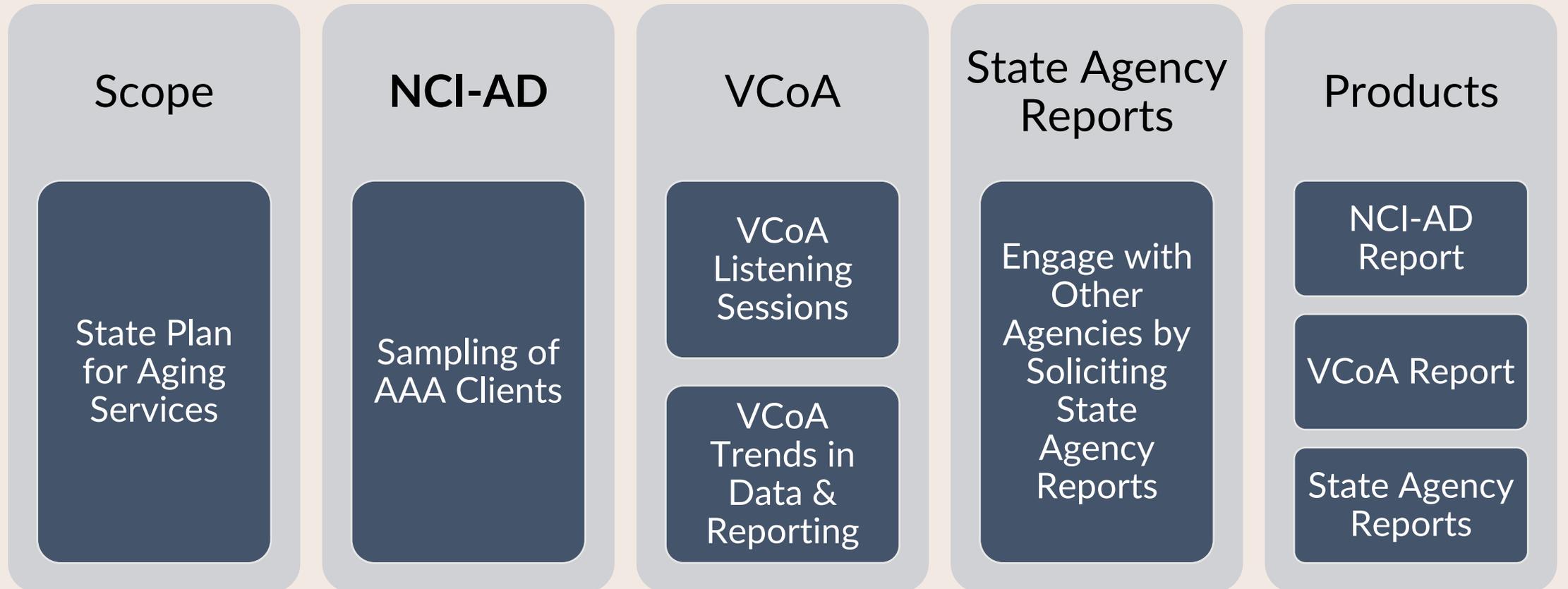
- Be responsible for planning, policy, administration, etc. of aging services
- Serve as an advocate for older individuals and provide technical assistance entities on the needs of older individuals
- Divide the state into distinct planning and service areas (PSAs) that are each served by an Area Agency on Aging (AAA)
- Develop State Plan for Aging Services every four years

State Plan for Aging Services



- Each state must develop a state plan and get it approved by the federal government in order to receive OAA funding
- Virginia's State Plan:
 - Meets the OAA requirements/obligations
 - Serves as a Strategic Plan that encompasses all the required elements identified in § 51.5-136 of the Code of Virginia
 - Includes the receipt of reports from all state agencies on the impact of aging on their work/scope and staffing
 - **Must be grounded in a needs assessment (e.g., NCI-AD Survey)**
 - Includes significant stakeholder engagement and solicitation of public comment

Preliminary: Next State Plan





National Core Indicators for Aging and Disabilities (NCI-AD)

Background and Context

NCI-AD



- National Core Indicators for Aging and Disabilities (NCI-AD)
- Initiative from ADvancing States and the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI)
- You can learn more about NCI-AD here: <https://nci-ad.org/>



NCI-AD and Medicaid



- NCI-AD is used by the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) for the CCC Plus Waiver
 - DMAS and DBHDS also use the NCI-Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (NCI-IDD) for the DD Waivers
 - DMAS partners with Health Services Advisory Group, Inc. (HSAG), the External Quality Review Organization (EQRO), and the VCU Partnership for People with Disabilities (VCU-PPD) to implement NCI-AD and NCI-IDD
- The federal CMS Medicaid Access Final Rule requires State Medicaid Agencies to collect data on the experience of care and pre-established measures for Medicaid services
 - CMS has approved the NCI-AD, NCI-IDD (as well as other survey tools) for these purposes

DARS Partners with VCU



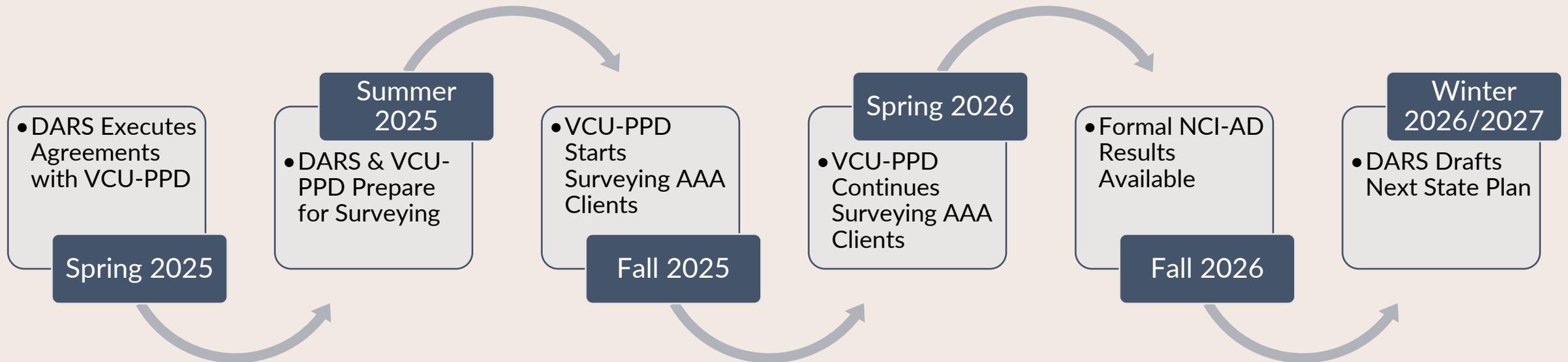
- DARS is partnering with the Virginia Commonwealth University Partnership for People with Disabilities (VCU or VCU-PPD)
- VCU-PPD will conduct 577 telephonic surveys of Older Americans Act (OAA) or AAA clients across Virginia during the fall of 2025 and the winter/spring of 2026.



VCU

NCI-AD Timeline

- NCI-AD has a 15-18 month start-to-finish implementation timeline



NCI-AD Sampling

- AAA clients are eligible to be included in the NCI-AD survey sample if they receive 1 or more of the following services, in any combination, at least 8 instances per month for 2 consecutive months:

AAA Required Services

Congregate Meals

Home Delivered Meals

Transportation

AAA Optional HCBS Services

Adult Day Care/Services

Personal Care Services

Chore Services

Homemaker Services

Sample Size

- A preliminary sample was pulled in February 2025, and it included 9,491 AAA clients who met the survey criteria
- The actual survey sample will be pulled in mid-September and reflect AAA services provided in July and August
- VCU will be randomly sampling AAA clients statewide
 - In other words, the surveys will not be a proportional sample by AAA or across each PSA
 - However, to give you a sense of what portion of your AAA was reflected in the February sample, DARS has included those percentages on the next slide
 - Remember, some AAA services are optional, so the sample proportion is not directly related to an AAA's OAA funding or overall community impact

Estimated Sample Proportion



PSA	Proportion of the February 2025 Sample (%)
1	5.4
2	3.6
3	6.9
4	3.1
5	4.3
6	5.2
7	3.9
8A	1.4
8B	2.5

PSA	Proportion of the February 2025 Sample (%)
8C	10.1
8D	5.4
8E	2.5
9	2.3
10	3.0
11	1.7
12	6.0
13	1.6
14	2.8

PSA	Proportion of the February 2025 Sample (%)
15	8.8
16	1.0
17/18	5.4
19	2.2
20	6.0
21	3.7
22	1.1

AAA NCI-AD AAA Liaisons



- DARS has identified a **Designated NCI-AD Liaison** from each AAA to help with the implementation of the survey
 - Provide input
 - Promote the survey
 - Provide survey credibility
 - Assist with troubleshooting survey hiccups
 - Address identified unmet client needs
- AAA NCI-AD Liaisons have access to PeerPlace and information about the AAA's clients (e.g., contact information, services used)

NCI-AD Preparation Work



Contracts, Agreement and Data Sharing

- DARS drafted a contract & data sharing agreement for VCU
- VCU is reviewing the contract & data sharing agreement
- Once signed, DARS will work with VCU to share the necessary data so that VCU can work on selecting their initial survey sample
- VCU is hoping to start contacting AAA clients in late September

Training, Promotion & Credibility

- DARS provided training materials on OAA/AAA services to VCU for their surveyors
- DARS shared the contact list of AAA NCI-AD Liaisons with VCU
- DARS is hosting this training for the AAA NCI-AD Liaisons on the survey process
- DARS will be asking AAA NCI-AD Liaisons to help promote and communicate the survey to AAA clients for credibility



National Core Indicators for Aging and Disabilities (NCI-AD)

Survey Implementation Process

Process: 1. Survey Sample



- Timing: **Early November**
- DARS will supply VCU with the universe data sample
 - Information about the AAA clients who meet the survey criteria
 - Includes information about the types of OAA services the clients receive and their contact information
 - Also includes information if the AAA client has a legal guardian identified in PeerPlace

Process: 2. Preparing Contact



- Timing: **Early November**
- VCU will select a random sample of AAA clients from the DARS data and craft Engagement Letters
- VCU will mail Engagement Letters to the first round of AAA clients to be surveyed via USPS
- The letters will include the name of the AAA providing OAA services to the AAA client



Dear **[INSERT NAME]**,

You have been chosen to participate in a survey of people who receive Older Americans Act services in Virginia!

Examples of Older Americans Act services you may be receiving from **[INSERT AAA NAME]** include meals delivered to your home or meals provided in a group setting, transportation to a senior center, help with chores and other tasks around the house, or adult day services.

Why should I complete this survey?

The Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) and Virginia's 25 Area Agencies on Aging want to learn more about your experiences receiving Older Americans Act services and your quality of life. The survey is part of the **National Core Indicators-Aging and Disabilities (NCI-AD) Adult Consumer Survey**. The information you give about your experiences is very important to Virginia, DARS, and to all people who use Older Americans Act services!

What will happen next?

- An interviewer from the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Partnership for People with Disabilities will call you to schedule and complete the survey by phone.
- You can pick the date and time that works best with your schedule. Someone you know can be with you during the survey.
- The survey is optional and will take about 45 minutes to complete. Your survey answers will be kept private and will be combined with other people's answers to create reports.
- You do not have to answer questions if you do not want to. Your survey answers will not change the services you are getting now or in the future.

What if I have questions?

If you have questions, you may contact VCU by leaving a message by phone at 833-462-2983 or send an email to ncivirginia@vcu.edu. You may also contact Charlotte Arbogast, the DARS project coordinator, by phone at 804-662-7093 or email charlotte.arbogast@dars.virginia.gov.

Information about the National Core Indicators-Aging and Disabilities (NCI-AD) Adult Consumer Survey can also be found at this website: <http://www.nci.partnership.vcu.edu>.

Process 2. Preparing Contact

How AAA NCI-AD Liaisons can help at this stage:

- 1. Send an email to your AAA staff colleagues to let them know about the NCI-AD survey
 - 2. Post the NCI-AD survey flyer in your AAA offices, congregate meal sites, senior centers, and adult day centers
 - 3. Print and include the ½ page flyer in home delivered meals
 - Other ideas?
- Sample emails and flyers are available for you to customize and use in the DARS AAA Providers' Portal here:



Process: 3. Making Contact

- Timing: **November**
- VCU will then start making phone calls to the selected AAA clients

If VCU Makes Contact

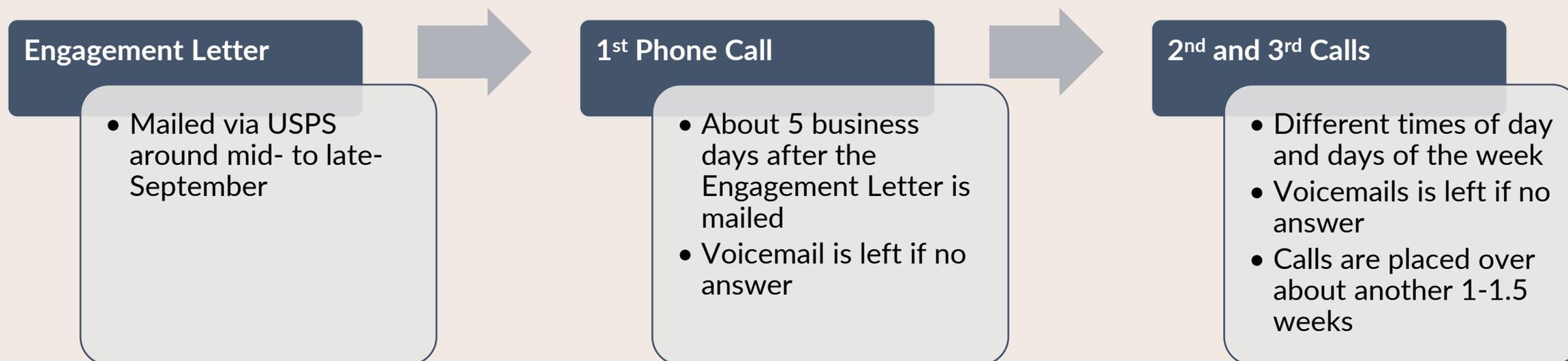
- Upon contact, VCU will try to schedule and complete the survey by phone with the AAA clients
- AAA clients can pick the date and time that works best with their schedules
- AAA clients can have someone they know with them during the survey if they want

If VCU Cannot Make Contact

- VCU will leave a voicemail
- VCU calls 3 times before marking the AAA client as non-responsive and moving on to another AAA client in the sample

Contact Timeframes

- Calls will come from either a VCU phone number with an 804-area code or another phone number
- Sometimes calls may come through as Potential Spam, but the surveyor will leave a voicemail if the AAA client does not answer and the AAA client can call back



Survey Timing



- The standard NCI-AD survey takes about 45 minutes to complete
- DARS has added several additional questions that VCU will be asking so that will add a little bit of time to the survey

Allowable Respondents



- The survey is inherently designed to ask questions of the individual receiving services (i.e., the AAA client)
- However, for some questions, a “proxy” may answer questions on behalf of the AAA client
- NCI-AD survey proxies can include the AAA client’s adult child, spouse/partner, other family member, personal care aide (PCA), or a friend
- For NCI-AD surveys for AAA clients:
 - Proxies would most likely be the AAA client’s adult child or spouse/partner
 - Proxies would be most typically used when the AAA client has a cognitive impairment (i.e., Alzheimer’s disease or dementia) that hinders their ability to participate in the survey process

Types of Questions

- The NCI-AD survey asks multiple-choice style questions
- Some questions are styled as ‘Yes/No/Don’t Know’ and others have more specific answer choices
- For some questions, the surveyor will read a list of answer options, but for other questions, the surveyor may leave the answer options open-ended (i.e., not read aloud) and the surveyor will code the appropriate response based on a list of answer options in the system

Survey Topics



- Home
- Relationships
- Service Satisfaction
- Direct Care Workers/Daily Activities
- Physical Environment
- Safety/Security/Privacy
- Community
- Assistive Equipment
- Everyday Living
- Health and Wellness
- Healthcare
- Additional Services
- Independence
- Virginia-Specific Questions

You can review the 2023-2024 Adult Consumer Survey At-A-Glance Results document for more details about the types of data collected

Additional Questions



- DARS has opted to add a few questions to the end of the NCI-AD survey
- These additional questions ask about:
 - The impact of OAA services on their ability to live independently and on their health and quality of life
 - What types of other services the AAA clients may receive (e.g., Medicaid LTSS, SNAP, Farm Market Fresh)
 - Actions they may have taken regarding their brain health or cognition
 - If they also serve as a caregiver for someone else
 - Their annual income

Process: 3. Making Contact

How AAA NCI-AD Liaisons can help at this stage:

- 1. Continue promotional efforts from earlier (e.g., emails and flyers)
- 2. Respond to questions about the NCI-AD survey from AAA clients and staff
- 3. Provide credibility for the NCI-AD survey with AAA clients
- 4. Share your feedback on the process with DARS & VCU staff
- 5. As needed, refer questions or concerns to DARS & VCU staff

- Sample emails and flyers are available for you to customize and use in the DARS AAA Providers' Portal here:

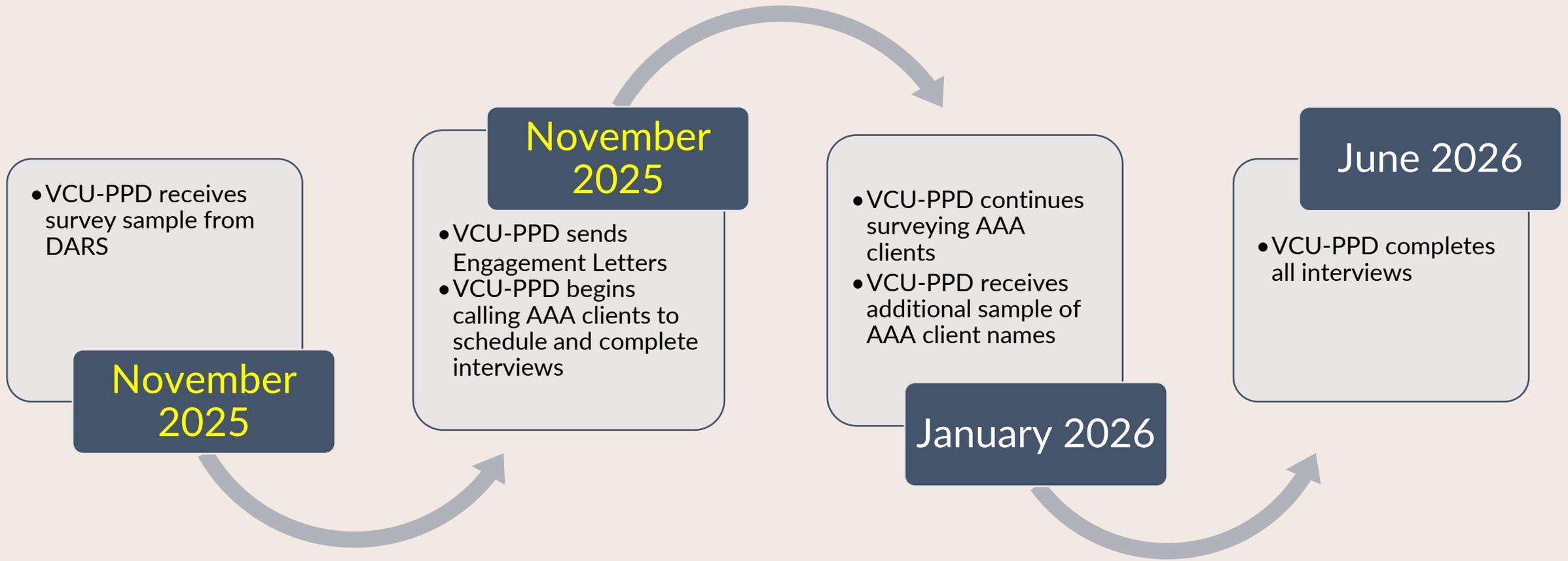


Process: 4. Additional Sampling



- **Timing: Early 2026**
- VCU is aiming for 577 completed surveys
- Depending on the response and participation rate from the first round of sampling in the fall:
 - VCU will pause surveys during the holidays and continue surveying again after the 2025 holiday season
 - DARS will pull an additional and more current sample of AAA clients for VCU to contact and continue surveying

Timeline Flowchart



Unmet Needs Process



- Occasionally during the NCI-AD survey, the VCU surveyor may learn of or identify a potential unmet need that an AAA client is experiencing
- In these cases:

Urgent Unmet Need

- VCU will refer the urgent need to APS and Charlotte Arbogast at DARS for follow-up
- Examples: abuse, neglect or exploitation, serious health need, pending eviction, homelessness

General Unmet Need

- **VCU will refer the general need to the AAA Liaison for follow-up**
- Examples: food insecurity, uncoordinated services, environmental adaptations
- Essentially, needs that do not rise to the level of a mandated reporting situation

Promotional Materials



- Sample Engagement Letter
 - VCU sends this directly to AAA clients selected for the survey
- Email to AAA Colleagues
- Full-Page Flyer
- Half-Page Flyer
- 2023-2024 Adult Consumer Survey At-A-Glance Results (upcoming slide)

The collage features three documents:

- Email:** An email from NCI-AD AAA Liaison to AAA Staff. The subject is "Survey of Individuals Receiving AAA Services". The message explains the survey's purpose, mentions that it is part of a national effort, and provides contact information for questions.
- Survey of Individuals Receiving Older Americans Act Services:** A flyer from DARS and VCU. It describes the survey's goal to learn about the experiences of older adults receiving OAA services. It lists examples of OAA services and states that some individuals will be randomly selected to participate.
- Survey of Individuals Receiving Aging Services:** A flyer from DARS and VCU. It describes the survey's goal to gather information about the services that AAA clients receive, their needs and preferences, and their quality of life. It states that a random sample of AAA clients will be selected for the survey and that participation is voluntary and completely anonymous.

Promotional Materials



- <https://sharepoint.wwrc.net/VDAProviders/SitePages/Home.aspx>

A screenshot of a SharePoint portal page titled "VDA Providers". The page has a search bar in the top right corner. The main heading is "Welcome to the Office for Aging Services SharePoint Portal!". Below this, it says "Please choose from one of the links below". There is a paragraph of text explaining how to navigate the site, including instructions on sorting documents and contacting Tanya.brinkley@dars.virginia.gov for assistance. At the bottom, there are two columns of links: "Area Plan", "Forms/Reports", "Governance & Management Guidance/Training", and "NCI-AD Survey Materials" on the left; and "OAA New Regulations", "Programs", and "Remittance" on the right. A brown arrow points to the left side of the page.



Click the link or scan the QR code

Final Thoughts

- This important effort will inform Virginia’s State Plan for Aging Services
- It also contributes our collective understanding of the impact and value of Older Americans Act services and other Home and Community-Based Services in supporting older adults and individuals with disabilities



2023-2024 DATA AT A GLANCE

OUTCOMES: SPOTLIGHT ON OLDER AMERICANS ACT RECIPIENTS



2023-2024 DATA AT A GLANCE

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND RELATIONSHIPS

- 66% can do the things they want outside their home as much as they want
- 21% say they often feel lonely
- 91% always have transportation to get to medical appointments
- 72% always have transportation to do the things they want outside of the home
- 12% want a paid job in the community
- 33% of those who want to work say that someone talked to them about job options

PERSON-CENTERED PLANNING

- 84% Very involved in making decisions about what is in the service plan
- 77% People at service planning meeting completely listened to needs and preferences
- 73% People who are paid to help them always do things the way they want

OLDER AMERICANS ACT

The Older Americans Act (OAA) was first passed in 1965. The OAA authorizes the provision of services across numerous agencies on aging, including information and referral, congregate and home-delivered meals, health and wellness programs, in-home care, transportation, elder abuse prevention, caregiver support, and adult day care.

ACCESS TO SERVICES

More than 3 out of every 5 OAA recipients report that an unpaid family member, friend, or volunteer is the person who helps them most.

These family members and friends need training and education about how to best support older adults. According to a recent study, 26 states provide family caregiver education and training resources through home and community-based services waivers.

The type of caregiver (paid staff, paid family, and unpaid) is connected to outcomes. This may be part of the reason we see OAA recipients have different rates of several outcomes around workforce, as seen below.



This graph shows responses to four NCI-AD questions related to the quality of services and supports. The vertical bars display the average percent of each outcome in 2023-24 among Older Americans Act recipients, while the green line shows the weighted NCI-AD national averages.

These data show that, relative to the weighted NCI-AD average, OAA recipients report higher rates of services meeting all needs and current goals. At the same time, they report lower rates of always getting enough support for both activities of daily living and self-care, and lower rates of saying a case manager has talked with them about services to help with unmet needs.

Although OAA recipients are much more likely to be supported primarily by unpaid family and friends, the table to the left shows several outcomes related to paid staff for which OAA respondents have lower values.

These data can be used by states to meet new OAA Final Rule guidance that states use data to assess service effectiveness. NCI-AD data support setting benchmarks and marking progress toward goals described in State Plans on Aging, and can also be used in support of state Multi-sector Plans on Aging.

Measure	Weighted NCI-AD Average	OAA Average
People who are paid to help come and leave when they are supposed to	88%	83%
People who are paid to help them always do things the way they want	86%	76%
Has a backup plan if the people who are paid to help them do not show up	73%	63%

Note: "weighted" averages account for any nonproportional sampling of programs across states, and rebalance state sample sizes according to their populations of survey-eligible service recipients.





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Questions? Feedback?

Points of Contact



DARS

- Charlotte Arbogast, MS
- charlotte.arbogast@dars.virginia.gov
- 804-662-7093
- <https://sharepoint.wwrc.net/VDProviders/SitePages/Home.aspx>

VCU-PPD

- Kayla Diggs-Brody, PhD
- diggskg@vcu.edu
- 833-462-2983 – *leave a message*
- <https://nci.partnership.vcu.edu/>
- <https://nci.partnership.vcu.edu/nci---ad-oaa-project/>