Transcript of ACL's 14th National Survey of Older Americans Act Participants (NSOAAP) Kickoff Webinar

April 16, 2019

Title Slide: **14th National Survey of Older Americans Act Participants (NSOAAP)**
No audio

Slide #2: **Welcome & Introductions** [Time 00:00 to 00:50]

Kristen Robinson: Thank you for joining us today to learn about the 14th National Survey of Older Americans Act Participants. Due to technical difficulty encountered on April 16th when we original held this webinar, we have decided to re-tape it so that a clear version can be accessed if and when you need it.

Lance Robertson, the ACL Administrator and Assistant Secretary for Aging, was with us on April 16th to welcome you and provide opening remarks. Today, Susan Jenkins, Director of ACL Office of Performance and Evaluation, has graciously agreed to read his remarks. I am Kristen Robinson with the ACL Office of Performance and Evaluation and from Westat, we have Robin Ritter and Beth Rabinovich. Now I hand it over to Susan to read Lance's opening remarks.

Slide #3: **NSOAAP: Introductory Remarks** [Time 00:51 to 03:11]

Susan Jenkins: Thank you very much, Kristen. As most of you know, the National Survey is an annual survey conducted by the Administration for Community Living that asks Older Americans Act service recipients if they are satisfied with our programs.

I am happy, and Lance is very happy, to say that our clients consistently tell us that not only are they satisfied with our programs, but that the Older Americans Act programs are also key to helping them remain safely in their homes and communities. The National Survey is important for two reasons: first, ACL is required by law to collect timely information to meet the accountability requirements of Congress and the Administration for annual performance measures. Second, the results of the survey give our program staff and network a better understanding of what is working well and what could be improved.

The Administrator Lance Robertson was personally involved with the survey and related to me that as the Director of Aging Services in Oklahoma, his office generated the AAA client list for the AAAs that were selected to be in the sample. As Administrator for the Administration for Community Living, he understands how busy we all are and that this is additional work on top of the work that you are already doing. However, now that he is the ACL Administrator, he sees how the data are used to justify the importance of our programs in critical budget reports, such as the Congressional Justifications, and how these data help decision makers better understand how important our programs are for older Americans. This Administration is about return of investment. As with the three dozen programs we are responsible for administering at ACL, we must fully commit to all activities that confirm the efficiency and effectiveness of the billion dollars we invest in this program. Responsible stewardship best demonstrated by data is a

collective responsibility for all of us. Lance and I encourage you all to do everything you can to support this survey. For those of you who have supported this survey in the past, thank you very much. For all of you who been selected to participate in this round, we both thank you in advance for your support.

Slide #4: **Thank You** [Time 03:12 to 4:02]

Speaking now as Susan Jenkins, the Director of Office of Performance and Evaluation, I want to reiterate and support everything that Lance communicated but also, I want to thank you personally for those of you who participated in past surveys and evaluations through our office and thank you to those of you who are participating this year as well as to thank those of you who will participate in the future. The Older Americans Act funding levels and Older Americans Act Reauthorization depend on our ability to provide data about the value of the programs to older Americans, their families and caregivers. We truly could not do this without you.

Slide #5: **Today's Agenda** [Time 04:03 to 04:24]

Kristen Robinson: Thank you, Susan. Today's agenda includes a brief background on the NSOAAP, which is the acronym for this survey. Some data examples, process and procedures of the survey, some highlights on the redesign of the survey instrument and finally, we will post the questions we received during the live webinar on April 16th.

Slide #6: **NSOAAP – Overview** [Time 04:25 to 05:04]

On the next three slides, I am going provide you with a brief background of the NSOAAP. The National Survey of Older American Act Participants or NSOAAP is an annual collection of surveys conducted by the Administration on Aging administered as a telephone survey to a random sample of Older Americans Act service recipients. The primary purpose is to provide the aging network with outcome information that demonstrates the effect of services and illustrates client-reported quality of service. Service recipient demographics, health and wellbeing indicators are also collected.

Slide #7: **NSOAAP has 6 Service Specific Surveys** [Time 05:05 to 05:26]

The NSOAAP has six service specific surveys: Home-Delivered Meals, Congregate Meals, Transportation, Homemaker, Case Management, and Caregiver. The Caregiver survey comes from the National Family Caregiver Support Program.

Slide #8: **NSOAAP – Purpose** [Time 05:27 to 06:14]

The NSOAAP measures the extent to which goals of the Older Americans Act have been met. For example, targeting, access, and coordination. The results of the NSOAAP support ACL's yearly budget requests to Congress. The budget request is accompanied by a 257-page justification. Included in this section on Health and Independence of Older Adults are results that show the extent to which the services help clients remain independent in the community. The results of the survey also support program design by allowing the Administration on Aging to better understand program and service trends, and results have been used by ACL-funded resource centers to design and target technical assistance efforts to the aging services network.

Slide #9: **Using the NSOAAP Results for Budget Justification to Congress**
[Time 06:15 to 06:34]
For example, this slide uses NSOAAP data to show how 55 percent of older adults rely on Older Americans Act transportation services for the majority of their trips, and these trips include getting to doctor, pharmacy, or attending a meal site.

Slide #10: **Using the NSOAAP Results for Budget Justification to Congress (cont'd)** [Time 06:35 to 06:57]
In another example, the survey instrument has an item that asks participants if the caregiver program helps them to continue to care for their care recipients. In 2017, 59 percent of the survey respondents said yes and 41 percent said no.

Slide #11 **Using the NSOAAP Results for Budget Justification to Congress (cont'd)** [Time 06:58 to 07:24]
In this slide, we show that among the 41 percent who said no, the care recipients would not be able continue to live in the same residence. Sixty percent of them said the care recipients would be in the nursing home without the service. This means that among all care recipients, 22 percent would potentially live in the nursing home without the caregiver service.

Slide #12 **Access to Data and Information** [Time 07:25 to 07:45]
If you are interested in learning more about the survey or how the data are used, you can go to these websites. The website for the Administration on Aging program evaluations and other reports: https://www.acl.gov/programs/program-evaluations-and-reports, NSOAAP research briefs: https://agid.acl.gov/Resources/DataSources/, and AGID, which is the ACL data web portal: https://agid.acl.gov/.

Slide #13 **Screenshot of AGing Integrated Database (AGID)** [Time 07:46 to 08:08]
Now I am going to show you one example of how you can access NSOAAP data. First, go to https://agid.acl.gov/, select "Custom Tables". Scroll and select "National Survey of OAA Participants Custom Tables", and you will see this page:

Slide #14 **Screenshot of AGID showing filters** [Time 08:09 to 08:26]
https://agid.acl.gov/CustomTables/NPS/Year/. While the 2018 data have not yet been posted, we expect that to happen in a few weeks. Here we will select "2017" by clicking on the box in front of "2017" so a checkmark appears.

Slide #15 **Screenshot of AGID/National Survey – Data Elements** [Time 08:27 to 08:46]
We then go the "Data Elements" and use the right pointing arrow to open "Homemaker", and under that to open "Satisfaction with all services clients received." From here, we click in the box to add checkmarks to the items of interest. Then we click "Next".

Slide #16 **Screenshot of AGID/National Survey – Stratifiers** [Time 08:47 to 09:00]

Now we have some options. In this case, we will go to "Stratifiers" and select "No Stratifier". Then we click "Next" again.

Slide #17 **Screenshot of AGID/National Survey – Results** [Time 09:01 to 09:20]

And then we see results. We see that 93 percent of recipients say services help them live independently. Ninety percent say services help them feel more secure, and 91 percent help them to care for self.

Slide #18 **2017 NSOAAP Data Example: Homemaker Satisfaction** [Time 09:21 to 09:34]

Here are those same items from 2017 in a bar chart I created when I saved it to Excel (Bar chart of 2017 NSOAAP Data Example: Homemaker Satisfaction).

Now I am handing it over to Robin.

Slide #19 **National Survey of OAA Participants… how does it work?** [Time 09:35 to 14:16]

Robin Ritter: Thank you, Kristen. This is Robin Ritter from Westat. Probably one of the first questions that you ask yourself when you receive the Federal Express package of information from Westat about the current year's survey is you want to know how are my AAAs selected? This year, 350 AAAs and single PSA States were selected from an overall list of 629 AAAs across the 50 States and the District of Columbia.

In past cycles of the survey, AAAs were selected by budget size using a tiered approach. AAAs with the largest budgets were always selected, and then we would randomly select additional AAAs representing mid-size and smaller budgets, and also balancing them by geographic region. This year, our statisticians re-tooled the sampling procedures using a method called Probability Proportional to Size (PPS). The probability is actually proportional to this total number of clients in an AAA. This year, many more AAAs that have a larger number of clients were selected than usual, although we still did select some smaller ones as well.

How does this work? What we ask you to do is to use your client tracking software system to create client lists by service, creating a client list for each of the six services that are being surveyed this year: Case Management; Congregate Meals; Home-Delivered Meals; Homemaker; Transportation; and Caregiver. In many States, the State Unit on Aging actually has the capability of generating these client lists for their AAAs. In a few minutes, I will show you a slide showing which States that we are aware of are doing this for their AAAs.

Once we receive the client service list from the SUA and/or their AAAs, we randomly sample the clients from that list. We ask you to provide the list to us in Excel and in an Excel spreadsheet, we number all the rows representing the clients. We have a computer program that just selects randomly row numbers until we are able to get a core group of people to be sampled for the interviews. Clients are randomly selected for the National Survey. If a AAA has all six

services, 105 clients will be randomly selected. If a AAA does not offer all six services, we will select a smaller group of clients for the interview, usually 14 clients per Congregate Meals, maybe 16 clients for Home-Delivered meals, etc. But overall, our statisticians have estimated that with full AAA participation and getting client lists from all the AAAs, this will yield over 27,000 Older Americans Act clients that we will send letters to informing them about the survey. We know that we will not be able to complete telephone interviews with all 27,000 of them due to clients that have moved, are deceased, are unable to participate due to health or language issues, or for those who choose to opt out. Based on outreach to over 27,000 clients, our target is to complete interviews with just over 6,000 clients.

Slide #20 **2019 Data Collection: What You Can Expect** [Time 14:17 to 15:34]

This is what you can expect. Whenever possible to minimize the burden of the AAAs, we reach out to the States to see if they can assist with generating the client list for the AAAs. If your State Unit on Aging is unable to help with generating a client list, we will work directly with your AAA and try to connect you with resources from the commonly available client tracking software systems. We have asked that initial client lists be provided by May 10th. If you cannot make the May 10th deadline, we have some flexibility because we will continue conducting telephone interviews with selected clients into September. Currently, we have received client lists from over 70 AAAs so we are in good shape initially to begin telephone interviews on June 4th with the clients, but we certainly need more AAAs to submit their lists so we can continue to interview and reach our 6,000 target.

Slide #21 **SUAs that Assist with Client Lists** [Time 15:35 to 17:39]

In 2018, we had 24 States that generated client lists for their AAAs: Alabama, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Washington, and West Virginia. Kudos to Colorado to be the first State this year for to submit client lists for all five AAAs that were selected this year. In addition, we received AAA client lists from several other SUAs this year which are highlighted in green and have an asterisk on this list (Colorado, Connecticut, Iowa (NEI3A), Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri (IDS), South Carolina, Texas, and West Virginia). You may notice for most of these states, just the name of the State is listed. In Missouri, IDS or Innovative Data Systems, which is the company that manages or owns the client tracking software systems used in Missouri. They have already generated client lists for all of the Missouri AAAs as well as a number of the AAAs in Illinois. In Iowa, we discovered that the Department of Aging no longer can generate lists at the state level, but Dick Harmon, who used to be with the Department of Aging and who is now with Northeast Iowa, has now taken over that responsibility and he has been able to generate client lists for all of the Iowa AAAs. If you do not see your State listed up here, you can contact your State directly and ask if they can do this for you. As a result of the webinar that we did in 2018, some AAAs in Indiana posed this question to their SUA and as a result of that conversation, Indiana now generates client lists for all of its AAAs.

Slide #22 **Common Concerns from AAAs** [Time 17:40 to 18:29]

Over the years, we have heard various concerns from AAAs about why they do not want to participate in the National Survey. We hear that there is a shortage of staff because we realize that after all, you are in the business of service delivery. Other AAAs complain that they are picked every year, they have privacy concerns, they are worried about their clients thinking that when our interviewers call them that this is actually a telemarketing fraud. They are concerned that there is nothing in it for them because they do not get the survey results.

Slide #23 **Solutions** [Time 18:30 to 21:48]

These are the solutions that we have to some of the comments and concerns that we hear from the AAAs. To minimize the time available, we have worked with all of the common software tracking vendors to create step-by-step instructions for AAAs to use to generate their client lists. We understand that AAAs who have SAMS instructions can pull up a pre-configured SAMS service delivery consumer listing reports, and AAAs have assured me it takes them less than 20 minutes to generate all six service reports. To also save AAAs time, we want you to know that Westat sends out letters to the selected clients letting them know about the survey and we handle all calls from clients who want to opt out before they are contacted. In the past, we had asked AAAs to provide us with their AAA letterhead that we would use to actually generate the letters that went to the clients. This year, ACL has decided that we should use ACL letterhead and all envelopes that are returned by the U.S. Postal Service will be returned to Westat so we will handle that volume, it is another thing that the AAAs do not have to worry about. As far as concerns about telemarketing fraud and the clients being concerned about taking the calls from Westat, we can let the clients know what caller ID information to look for when Westat is calling to do the survey. We also have an option for the clients to take the survey at a time that is convenient for them. We can give them a specific toll-free number where they can call in to take the survey at their convenience. What we also suggest is that the AAAs can inform providers about the survey and which clients of theirs were selected so when the clients get the letters from ACL saying that they have been selected for the survey and if they ask the providers some questions, the providers would already know about this and assure them that this is a legitimate survey. We also want you to know that our interviewers spend extra time and training being prepared to work with the needs of older adults. We often find that when the interviewers get the client on the phone, the client actually is very open to talking, so much so that we have to train our interviewer to be polite but firm as well as empathetic and be able to move on to the next question so that we do not take too much time in completing the survey.

Slide #24 **Client Tracking Software Support** [Time 21:49 to 22:58]

This is a list of some of the commonly available software tracking vendors that we work with and that we have step-by-step instructions: Innovative Data Systems (Missouri and Illinois), WellSky/SAMS, PeerPlace, RTZ GetCare, CareAccess-Sourcewise (California), AIM/Sabre (Oklahoma, South Carolina SUAs have generated lists), and ServTracker (Beth Hornbaker in Salt Lake). If you are in California, CareAccess, which is also part of Sourcewise, not only has instructions but some years, they have been willing to generate the list for the AAAs in California. Also, I discovered through the chat feature from our April 16th webinar that ServTracker, which is maybe not as commonly used as some of the other software companies but it is used by AAAs in Salt Lake, in Utah, Beth Hornbaker there agreed to be a mentor for any

ServTracker AAA customer. She will help walk you through how to generate your report through ServTracker.

Slide #25 **ACL's View Regarding Client Privacy** [Time 22:59 to 24:13]
Kristen Robinson:
The Administration for Community Living takes data security very seriously. ACL is not requesting that you provide "individually identifiable health information" which would be protected under the HIPAA Privacy Rule. "Individually identifiable health information" is information that relates to the individual's past, present, or future physical or mental health or condition, provision of healthcare to the individual, or past, present or future payment for the provision of healthcare to the individual. Once respondents for whom your organization have supplied contact information have been contacted, name, address and telephone number will be deleted from the system, and zip code is the only information that will remain in the system. In addition, the contractual agreement between ACL and Westat includes specific clauses related to the protection of personal data. Now I turn it over to Beth.

Slide #26 **Redesign of the NSOAAP Survey Instrument** [Time 24:14 to 25:12]
Beth Rabinovich:
Now I am going to talk about two projects that we had to redesign the NSOAAP survey instrument. For the past couple of years, Westat has supported ACL on redesigning the NSOAAP. As you may have heard, ACL was considering turning the NSOAAP into a three-year longitudinal survey, starting this year. However, recent ACL data collection efforts have encountered larger than expected dropout rates among the participants, have demonstrated the need for further research into changing the survey design. It is very important that ACL have nationally representative estimates each year for the required Government Performance and Results Act reporting, also known as GPRA reporting. Therefore, ACL will maintain the NSOAAP cross-sectional design for at least 2019 to have time to properly address methods for reducing dropout rates for future surveys.

Slide #27 **Redesign of the NSOAAP – Phase I** [Time 25:13 to 27:16]
I am now going to talk about two contracts that Westat has with ACL to redesign the NSOAAP. In addition to designing different approaches to the survey, we also updated the survey instrument. The first phase of the redesign project, ACL convened an expert panel where they reviewed the existing survey instrument, recommended new modules mostly from the nationally represented surveys. For instance, they recommended questions on Falls from the National Health and Aging Trends (NHATS) study, which is a study of the general population of older adults; Life Changes, meaning the reasons for contacting AAAs in the first place; Social Integration; and USDA Food Security questions. In phase one of the redesign efforts, we held this expert panel, went over recommended questions, and then redesigned or as we say, updated survey instruments for home-delivered meal clients, congregate meal clients and caregiver clients, and did some cognitive testing in which we called clients and administered the survey but we also asked questions about the survey items whether or not they were clear, how did they interpret them to make sure that they were interpreted as we intended them to be. I want to make a special thank you to the AAAs that allow us to use additional clients who had not been sampled for the NSOAAP for the cognitive testing. We really appreciate these client participations.

Slide #28 **Redesign of the NSOAAP – Phase II** [Time 27:17 to 27:56]

In Phase II of the redesign project, we included the new modules and the case management, homemaker and transportation survey modules, and did cognitive testing with them, and again, thank you to the AAAs that let us recruit the additional clients. I would like to talk a little bit about the results of the cognitive testing whether or not the clients were able to interpret the questions the way they had been intended to be interpreted.

Slide #29 **Redesign** – **Results** [Time 27:57 to 28:48]

All of the new questions, the questions on Falls, Life Changes, USDA Food Security questions, and Social Integration questions show that during the cognitive testing, respondents had no problems interpreting the meaning of these questions. Some changes we did make in terms of the congregate and home- delivered meals questions, the questions about food intake. In other words, what portion of the food at the meal site did you eat? We removed those questions, so they were not tested and not in the updated 2019 survey instrument.

Slide #30 **New Addition - USDA Food Security Questions** [Time 28:49 to 29:33]

As I said before, we added the USDA Food Security questions. Just to give you an idea of what the questions are, the first question is: "The food I bought just didn't last, and I didn't have money to get more." And then the clients are asked: "Was that often, sometimes, or never true in the last 12 months?" The next food security question was: "I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals." And the third one: "In the last 12 months since (and we give them the date twelve months ago), did you ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?"

Slide #31 **New Addition – Reason for Seeking Services** [Time 29:34 to 30:13]

We also added a question, or I should say ACL, the expert panel decided to ask a question: "What was going on in your life that led you to seek services? Was it illness, illness of the person close to you, death of a spouse, problems with mobility, could no longer take care of myself, could no longer take care of my home. ACL thought it was important to know why clients sought services which would help them with program planning.

Now I am turning it over to Robin.

Slide #32 **Questions Received from Online Chat** [Time 30:14 to 37:58]

Robin Ritter:

During our first webinar attempt on April 16th, we had a huge audience of 150 people and a lot of questions came in through online chat. I have gone through and taken some of the most commonly asked questions. We had a lot of repeat questions, and these are some of the highlights of the questions we received.

One question we received was: "How do we provide with the AAA client list if the email is not secure?" We do not use email at all to transmit client lists. We established a secure website: https://aoasurvey.org/default.asp for SUAs and AAAs to upload their client list to that website. Once we received the client list, we do the sampling. When we selected the 80 to 105 clients from your particular AAA who are randomly sampled to be in the survey, we upload that list of selected clients back to each AAA's individual portal on the website and we send you an email

notice when it is available for you to retrieve that list from the website. In fact, we may take the website down very briefly just to add an additional layer of security. We are very concerned and do the utmost to protect client security. This website is only seen by just a handful of people at Westat that work on this survey and when the results are delivered to ACL, all of the client information is totally stripped out.

Someone else asked about the date range for submitting client service lists. We ask that you try to generate your reports based on the most recent 12-month period, which would be April 1st, 2018 to March 31, 2019, or May 1st through April 30th. If you are not able to use that time frame, you can go by a fiscal year or a calendar year, whatever system you use.

Someone else asked a related question saying that they had just converted to a new software system and could only go back to January 1st to generate the client list. That is fine if you have only three or four months' worth of data. The reason why we encourage the most recent list is to make sure that we have active clients who have not moved away or may be deceased.

Someone else asked about the use of "provider" on the client lists. By "provider", we actually mean the service provider if it is someone other than the AAA. During the actual telephone interview, we ask the client about services they received from a specific AAA whose list we are using but we also reference the service provider for the client to be able to put that in context because we know that some clients are actually even more familiar with the service provider than they are with the AAA. An example of a service provider could be the specific senior service center where someone goes to receive their congregate meal, the name of the home-delivered meals or Meals on Wheels provider, but in the case of case management or for family caregiver clients received counseling under the Family Caregiver Support Program, in those instances, the service provider could actually be the name of the case manager or a counselor.

We also had a number of questions about when will the client letters be mailed. For those AAAs who have already submitted their client lists to us and we selected a sample of their clients, we will send the letters to the clients the week of May 20th. That will allow about ten days to two weeks before telephone interviews start and it will give the clients time to contact us to opt out or to contact us with questions.

We had a number of chat comments also about procedures for how the AAAs should handle client concerns. We do not have anything formal for you in writing but we want you to be able to reassure your clients that this is a legitimate survey, explain to them maybe some of the reasons why this survey is done, the importance of justifying continued funding for Older Americans Act programs. A good technique that a number of other AAAs use is to let their service providers know about the survey and even which specific clients were selected for the survey in case the clients have questions for the service providers.

We had a number of questions come in during the chat about instructions for specific software vendors and if you refer back to the earlier slide, again we have instructions for most of all client tracking software systems that we are aware of. You can always contact us for additional help in working with whatever software tracking system that you are using. Before that client tracking system, we had AAAs that would actually Federal Express to us hard copy lists that we even use

to select the random sample of clients. We try to be as flexible as possible and will work with you to do whatever it takes to come up with the easiest way for you to provide client lists.

We had numerous questions during the online chat about whether specific States would be involved with generating the list of randomly selected consumers. Once again, we refer you to an earlier slide where we listed the 24 States that provided the assistance last year and you can also inquire with your individual State and see if they have that capability.

Slide #33 **Please Participate in 2019** [Time 37:59 to 38:34]
Kristen Robinson:
Thank you, Robin. Please participate in the 2019 National Survey. ACL relies on National Survey data each year for its annual budget requests and performance measurements. ACL, and AoA specifically, utilize the data to improve programs.

Robin Ritter:
Westat will work with you to accommodate your schedule and any issues you have with the client lists.

Slide #34 **Please Participate in 2019** [Time 38:35 to 39:06]
Kristen Robinson:
Thank you. This brings us to the end of the webinar. If you would like more information, you can contact me, Kristen Robinson, at: Kristen.Robisnson@acl.hhs.gov (phone: 1-888-204-0271), or Westat at AoASurvey@westat.com (phone: 1-888-204-0046). Thank you again. Have a great day.

End of webinar.