Evaluation Components:

1. Description of program
2. Feedback from volunteers
3. Feedback from stakeholders
4. Recommendations
Methods: Interviews with Staff

» Program staff and leadership interviewed individually during site visit.

» Questions regarding practice, including: roles and responsibilities, processes, and staff perceptions of the strengths and challenges of the program.
Methods: Court Angel Interviews

» 19 Court Angel volunteer interviews
  » Randomly selected from the 77 total volunteers

» Number of visits of participants
  » Average number of visits: 21, Range=(1,79)
  » 65% of participants completed under 21 visits
  » 80% of our sample was over 60 years old

» Questions regarding motivations for involvement, value of the program, and recommendations for improvement.
Methods: Stakeholder Focus Group

» Purposive sample of 12 community stakeholders
  » Participants included individuals from the Board of Developmental Disabilities, professional guardians, volunteer guardians, and a Court Angel volunteer

» Open-ended questions regarding the value and how to ensure the sustainability of the program.
Findings
# Description of Program

## Table 1. Process Description for Court Angel Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case Review</td>
<td>Case summaries are prepared by the program staff that include pertinent information about the ward and guardian. High intensity cases are screened out and designated for a visit by professional staff. In the cases deemed appropriate for volunteers, the guardian is informed via phone and mail that a visit is upcoming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Selection</td>
<td>The volunteer reviews the available cases, selects one or more cases, and documents their selected cases in the log book. The volunteer then makes plans to visit the ward and/or guardian.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit, Documentation, Recommendations</td>
<td>The volunteer makes a visit and completes a reporting form based on their assessment of the ward and the guardianship arrangement. The volunteer documents recommendations for the court indicating if additional follow up is needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Staff Review</td>
<td>Program staff review all reporting forms and decide if additional follow up is needed based on the documentation and recommendations of the volunteers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court Follow-Up</td>
<td>When a case is determined to require additionally follow up, the case is sent to the judge. The Judge decides an appropriate course of action such as making a phone call to the guardian, providing a resource referral, or sending out professional staff to assess the case.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outcomes of Court Angel Visits

Figure 1. Percentage of Court Angel Visits Requiring Follow-Up

- 95% No follow-up
- 5% Follow-up

Follow-Up Activities
- 10% Additional visits from court
- 22% Intervention for potential mistreatment of ward
- 68% Guardians advised of resources via letter or phone call
Volunteer Motivations & Rewards

» Desire to help and make a difference
  » Personal experience with raising children with special needs
  » Being an advocate for others
  » Meaningful activity in retirement

» Personal interest in learning about guardianship

» Having rewarding experiences with guardians and wards
  » Witnessing the care and dedication of guardians
  » Connecting with others in similar situations

» Feeling appreciated by court staff

“If I can bring one little thing to the table by visiting, I feel like I have helped somebody.”

“My experiences have helped me become a strong advocate for a population that may not be well understood.”
Volunteer Perceptions of the Value of the Court Angel Program

» “Eyes and ears” of the court

» Support to wards and guardians

» Extra layer of support
Volunteer Suggestions

» Review paperwork and reporting forms

» Continue to educate the community about adult guardianship and the Court Angel Program

» Recruit volunteers with unique skills and experiences
Focus Group Comments

Best position is in the court

Diversify funding

Need for more community awareness

Requires paid staff

Sustainability Ideas
Advice for Other Counties

» **A volunteer-based monitoring program can be set up fairly easily.** Stark County is willing to share materials with other counties who may decide to replicate or modify the program.

» **Adequate funding is required to address needs in the community to better monitor wards.** Grant opportunities and county funding may be available for pilot programs.

» **Getting the word out and promoting the program is important.** Invest time in raising awareness in the community through speaking engagements, press releases, and radio interviews.
Q & A

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