



Tennessee ADRC Training Program: Cohort 1

**Evaluation Report from Boston University
November 2014**



**Center for Aging and Disability
Education and Research**
Boston University School of Social Work

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Center for Aging and Disability Education and Research (CADER) is dedicated to workforce development in both the aging and the disability fields through educational innovation, workforce change, and research. Located at Boston University School of Social Work, CADER builds upon the School's historical commitment to aging and disability research and practice.

The Tennessee ADRC Training Program was developed in partnership with the Tennessee Department on Aging. The ADRC provides information and assistance to older persons, adults with physical disabilities, caregivers and professionals looking for services or programs available in Tennessee.

The Tennessee ADRC Training Program consists of two training cohorts. The first cohort began training in May 2014 and the second cohort began in September 2014. This evaluation report is focused on the work of the first cohort.

The first cohort consisted of 55 learners across 10 organizations who had six months to complete the CADER/ Tennessee ADRC training program. Participants enrolled in one of three training programs. The majority of the learners were required to complete the first training program (Core Options Counseling Training) prior to enrolling in the other two programs. One learner enrolled in both the first and second training program. The curriculum for the three training programs is outlined below.

1. Tennessee ADRC Core Options Counseling Training Program
 - Core Issues in Aging and Disability
 - Assessment with Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities
 - Consumer Control, Choice, and Direction in Options Counseling
 - Mental Health Training in Options Counseling
2. Tennessee ADRC Options Counseling Skills Development Training
 - Working with Informal Caregivers
 - Team Approach: Working Across Disciplines
 - Care Management in Practice
 - Two elective choices included: Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias; Care Transitions; Elder Abuse, Neglect, & Exploitation; Geriatric Assessment and Care Planning
3. Tennessee ADRC Specialized Options Counseling Training
 - Mental Health and Aging Issues
 - End-of-Life Issues
 - Managing Medications in Care Transitions
 - Two elective choices included: Aging in Place; Substance Abuse among Older Adults; Legal Principles & Decision Making in Practice

Key Findings:

The impact of the training was evaluated using pre and post assessments of learning competencies in each course and course evaluations. Key competency increases included:

- Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias: *Discuss the impact of culture and diversity in relation to Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.* (182.6% increase)
- Assessment with Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities: *Explain the key diversity and multicultural considerations that practitioners need to consider during the assessment process.* (6.2% increase)
- Care Management in Practice: *Appropriately use evidence-based guidelines in the practice of care management.* (76.1% increase)
- Consumer Control, Choice, and Direction in Options Counseling: *Understand the history of Disability Rights Legislation and the Independent Living Movement.* (63.2% increase)
- Core Issues in Aging and Disability: *Describe the most common causes of disability through the life cycle.* (51.6% increase)
- Mental Health Training in Options Counseling: *Understand recovery and the recovery movement.* (106.8% increase)
- Team Approach: Working Across Disciplines: *Understand how professional education and perceptions can influence team performance.* (76.1% increase)
- Working with Informal Caregivers: *Identify major psychosocial issues facing informal caregivers.* (42.6% increase)

II. INTRODUCTION

CADER programs and courses apply a competency-based approach. Social service practice with older adults and people with disabilities is complex. It requires competence, professional judgment, and critical thinking to translate knowledge, skills, and values into effective practice behaviors.

CADER uses several measures to assess the impact of training. This includes a self assessment of competency. At the beginning and end of each course, participants are asked to rate their skill level using the following scale:

- 0 - Not skilled at all
- 1 - Beginning skill
- 2 - Moderate skill
- 3 - Advanced skill
- 4 - Expert skill

Participants were also asked to complete a course evaluation in order to gauge whether they felt that the training benefitted their practice. Participants rated their satisfaction level with each course using a scale of one to five (1, strongly disagree; 2, disagree; 3, neutral; 4, agree; 5, strongly agree). Participants are also asked for their opinions on course improvements and what other types of courses they would like to see offered through CADER.

The demographic profile, pre- and post-competency results, and course evaluation results are presented below for each of the three training programs.

III. PARTICIPANT PROFILE

The first cohort of the Tennessee ADRC Training Program had 55 enrolled participants. The majority of participants 95% identified as female, and 5% identified as male. The average age of enrolled participants was 33.4 years-old. The majority (74.5%) of enrolled participants self-identified as White/Non-Hispanic and 24.5% identified as African American/Black.

Most participants reported having multiple years in the fields of aging and/or disability. The average number of years that participants worked in the field of aging was 9.0 years, while the average number of years they worked in the disability field was 7.7 years. The majority of participants (89.1%) reported that at least 51% of their job involves working with older adults and their families. Additionally forty-three percent (43.2%) of participants reported that at least 51% of their job involves working with people with physical disabilities of all ages and their families. Far fewer participants (16.3%) reported that at least 51% of their job involves working with people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and their families.

The majority of participants reported having a higher education degree. 7.3% of participants have an Associate's Degree, 60% of participants have either a Bachelor's or a Bachelor of Social Work, 16.4% of participants have a Master's degree (3.6% Master of Social Work), and one participant (1.8%) has a DSW or PhD.

IV. INDIVIDUAL COURSE DATA BY TRAINING PROGRAM

1) Tennessee ADRC Core Options Counseling Training Program (4 course program)

Twenty-eight (28) learners from six agencies enrolled in the Core Options Counseling Training Program in the first cohort. Seventeen (17) learners (61%) completed all four courses in the training program.

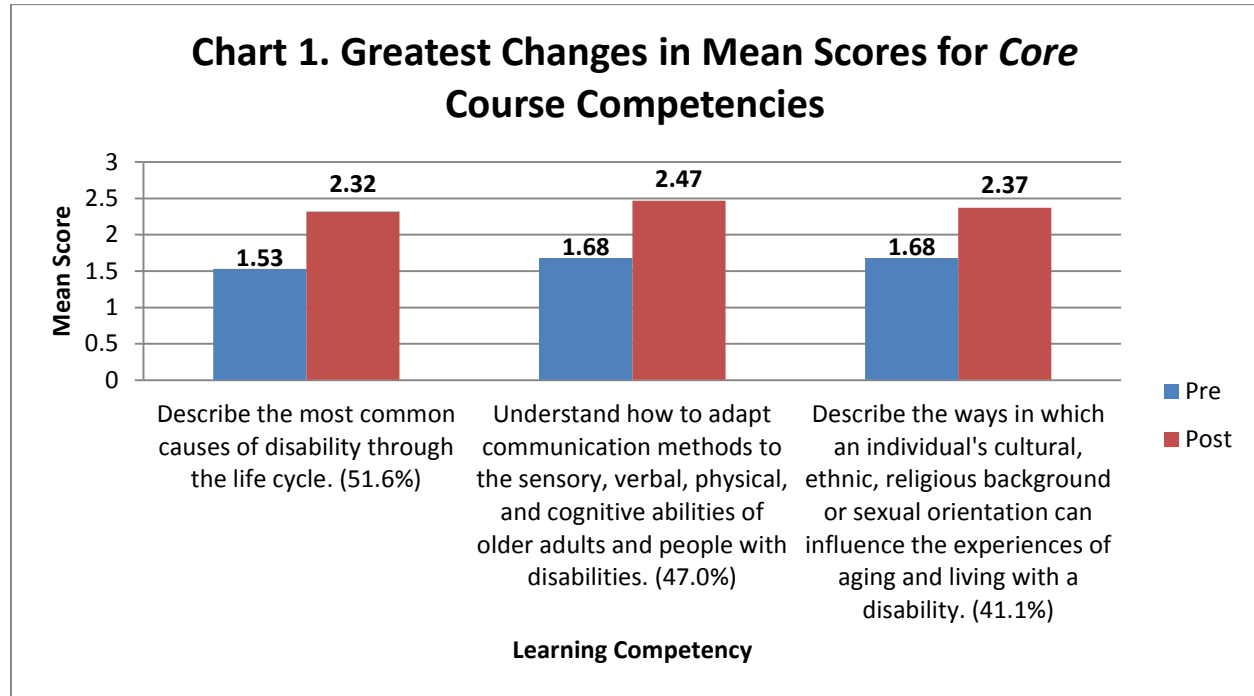
a. Core Issues in Aging and Disability

Course Competencies:

Participants were asked to rate their competency level from

- 0 - Not skilled at all
- 1 - Beginning skill
- 2 - Moderate skill
- 3 - Advanced skill
- 4 - Expert skill

Increases in scores from pre-test to post-test across the competencies ranged from 25.4% to 51.6% after participants had completed this course. The competencies with the greatest increases in mean scores from pre-test to post-test in this course are outlined in Chart 1 below.



Course Evaluations:

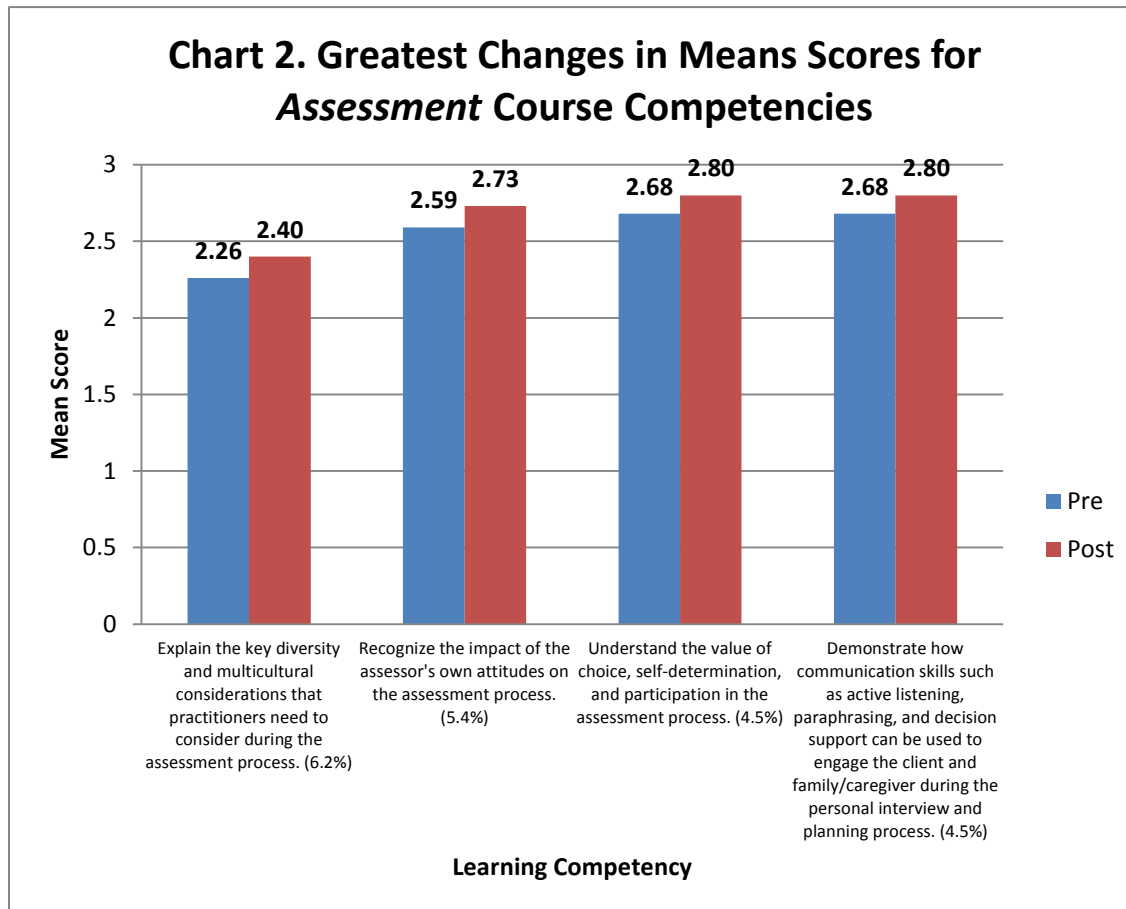
Participants rated the course very positively. One hundred percent (100%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the training expanded their knowledge and understanding of the topic area, and that the training will help them apply practice skills in the topic area. Comments about the course included:

- *“Very beneficial for anyone working with those that have disabilities or seniors.”*
- *“I think the course was very informative and user-friendly.”*

b. Assessment with Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities

Course Competencies:

Increases in scores from pre-test to post-test across the competencies ranged from 1.6% to 6.2% after participants had completed this course. The competencies with the greatest increases in mean scores from pre-test to post-test in this course are outlined in Chart 2 below.



Course Evaluations:

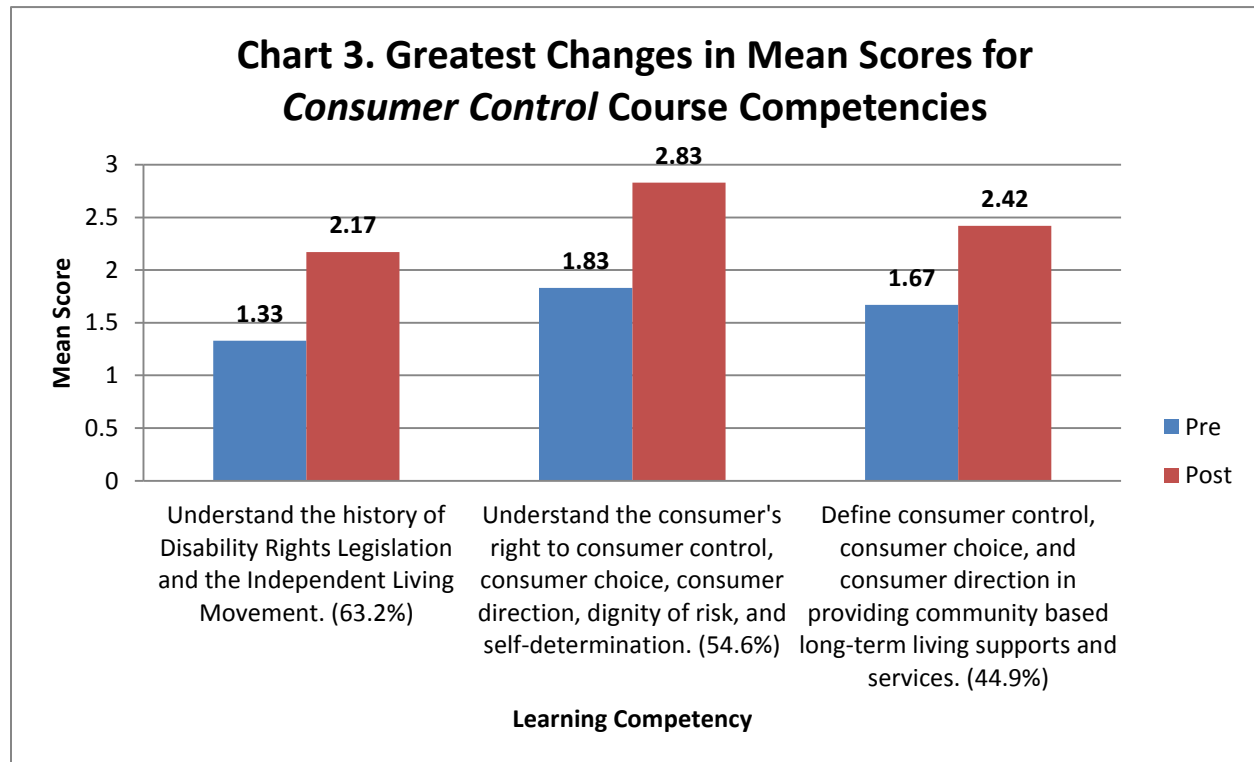
Participants rated the course very positively. One hundred percent (100%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed: that the training expanded their knowledge and understanding of the topic area; that the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or people with disabilities; and that the training will help them apply practice skills in the topic area. Comments about the course included:

- *“This was a very informative course. It helped increase my knowledge of legal aspects that are sometimes not thought of on a daily basis. I feel that it will help increase my effectiveness as an assessor.”*
- *“Great course! I would like for all staff members to be able to take it!”*
- *“I am very grateful for these courses and the fact that my company allows me to take this course in order for me to improve my work ethics. This is a great learning tool. I would like to have more courses to help me understand better the group of people that I am trying to help in my work.”*

c. Consumer Control, Choice and Direction in Options Counseling

Course Competencies:

Increases in scores from pre-test to post-test across the competencies ranged from 10.4% to 63.2% after participants had completed this course. The competencies with the greatest increases in mean scores from pre-test to post-test in this course are outlined in Chart 3 below.



Course Evaluations:

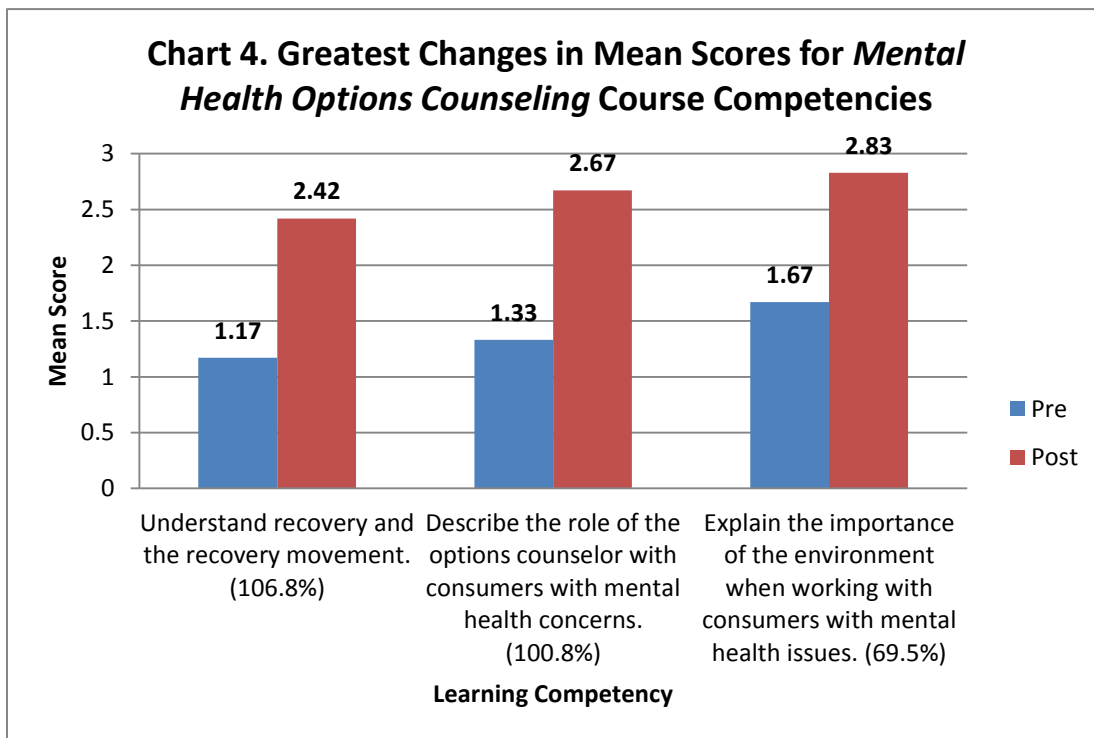
The evaluations showed that 92% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the training expanded their knowledge and understanding of the topic area, and would help them in their work with older adults and/or with people with disabilities. Comments about the course included:

- *“This course is very important to anyone working with those that need assistance with ADLs. I am glad I have the opportunity to take this course. Thanks!”*
- *“This was a wonderful learning experience.”*

d. Mental Health Training in Options Counseling

Course Competencies:

Increases in scores from pre-test to post-test across the competencies ranged from 22.2% to 106.8% after participants had completed this course. The competencies with the greatest increases in mean scores from pre-test to post-test in this course are outlined in Chart 4 below.



Course Evaluations:

Participants rated the course very positively. One hundred percent (100%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed: that the training expanded their knowledge and understanding of the topic area; that the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or people with disabilities; and that the training will help them apply practice skills in the topic area. Furthermore, one hundred percent (100%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that all five of the course learning objects were met. Comments about the course included:

- *“This course helps me to better understand what my role is as a counselor. It also helps me to understand better the consumers that I am trying to help. I am very excited to have this information available to me.”*
- *“Helpful information I will use and share with co-workers.”*

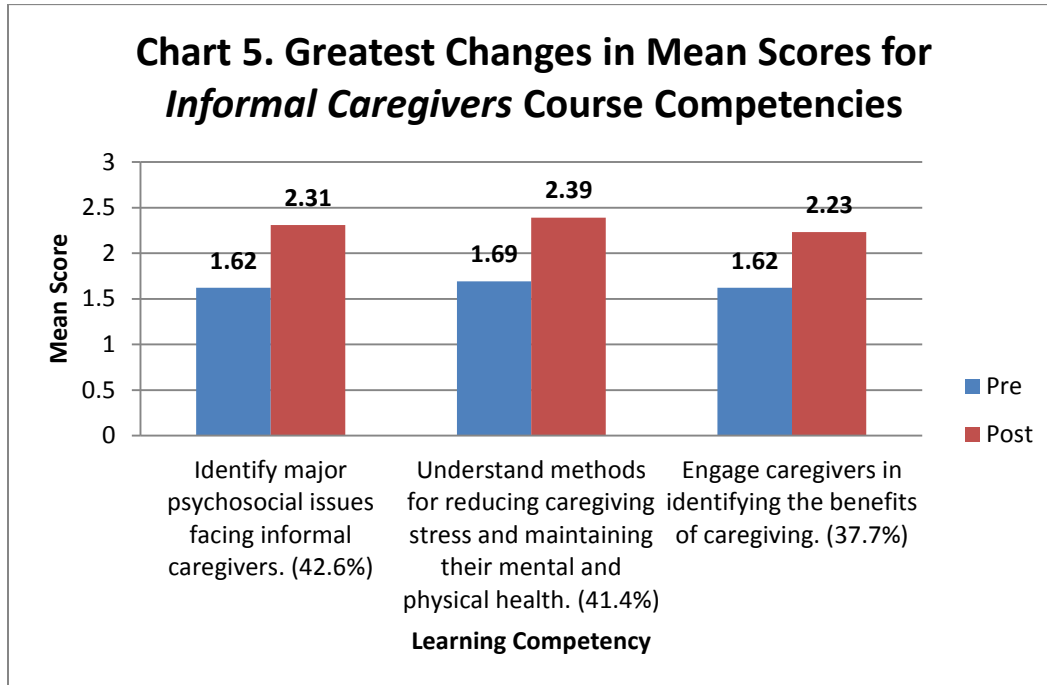
2) Tennessee ADRC Options Counseling Skills Development Training (5 Course Program)

Twenty-four (24) learners from seven agencies enrolled in the Options Counseling Skills Development Training Program in the first cohort. Twelve (17) learners (50%) completed all five courses in the training program.

a. Working with Informal Caregivers (core course)

Course Competencies:

Increases in scores from pre-test to post-test across the competencies ranged from 18.1% to 42.6% after participants had completed this course. The competencies with the greatest increases in mean scores from pre-test to post-test in this course are outlined in Chart 5 below.



Course Evaluations:

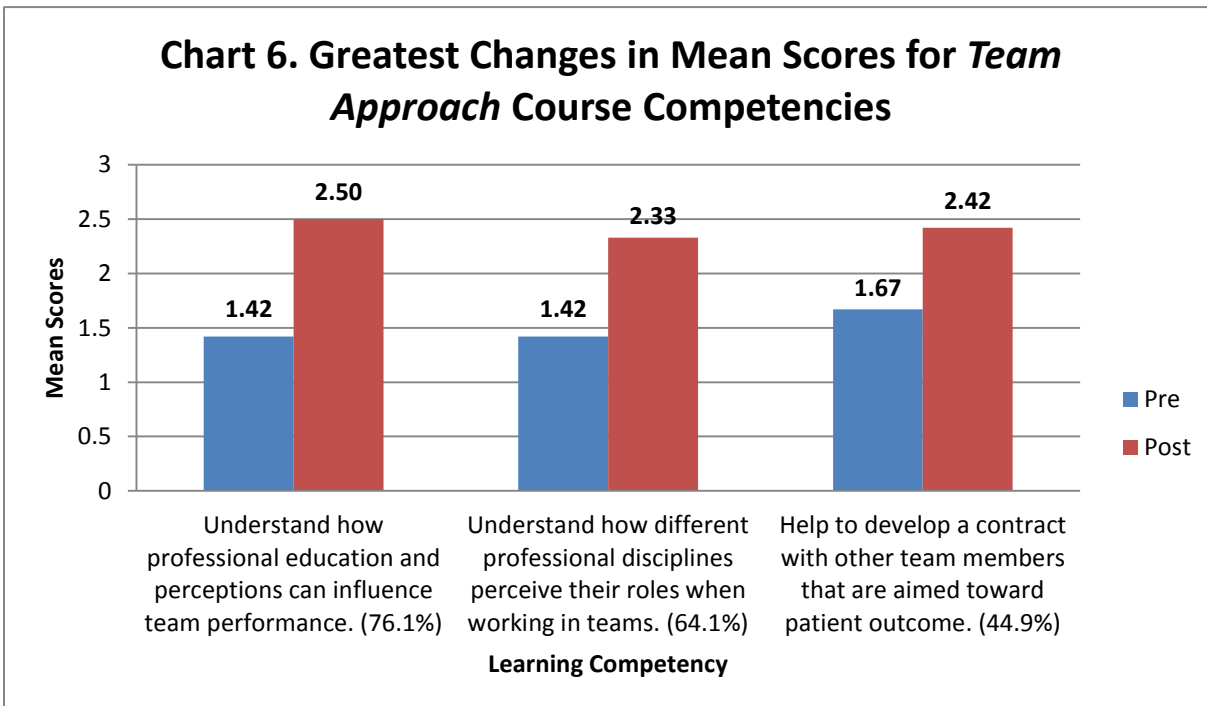
Participants rated the course very positively. One hundred percent (100%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed: that the training expanded their knowledge and understanding of the topic area; that the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or people with disabilities; and that the training will help them apply practice skills in the topic area. Comments about the course included:

- *“I enjoyed the course tremendously. It was an excellent and rewarding learning experience.”*
- *“Valuable information, very helpful.”*
- *“I really appreciate how easy this course was to do online. Instructions are well written and very understandable. Thanks!”*

b. Team Approach: Working Across Disciplines (core course)

Course Competencies:

Increases in scores from pre-test to post-test across the competencies ranged from 3.0% to 76.1% after participants had completed this course. The competencies with the greatest increases in mean scores from pre-test to post-test in this course are outlined in Chart 6 below.



Course Evaluations:

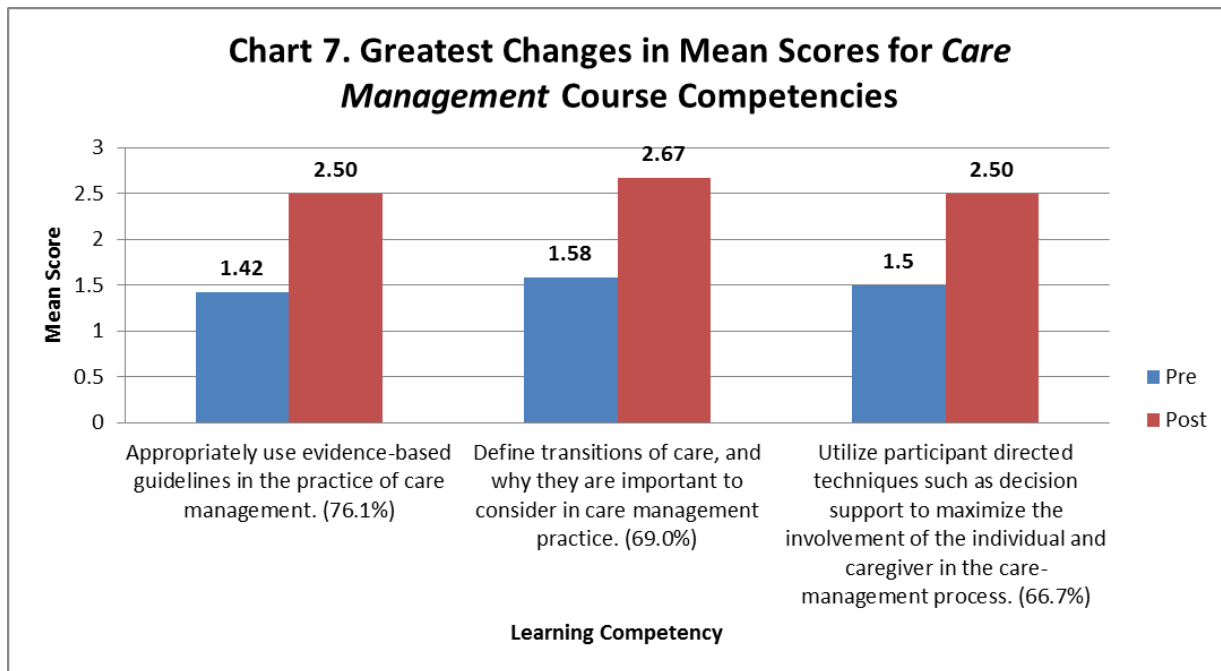
Participants rated the course quite positively. Ninety-two percent (92%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the training expanded their knowledge and understanding of the topic area, and that the training will help them apply practice skills in the topic area. Comments about the course included:

- *“Very rewarding learning experience.”*
- *“I thought this was well put together in a logical order. I came away with a much better understanding of the Social Services role in team settings. I really appreciated insight in working with the physicians on the team.”*

c. Care Management (core course)

Course Competencies:

Increases in scores from pre-test to post-test across the competencies ranged from 34.4% to 76.1% after participants had completed this course. The competencies with the greatest increases in mean scores from pre-test to post-test in this course are outlined in Chart 7 below.



Course Evaluations:

Participants rated the course very positively. One hundred percent (100%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed: that the training expanded their knowledge and understanding of the topic area; that the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or people with disabilities; and that the training will help them apply practice skills in the topic area. Comments about the course included:

- *“I enjoyed this course. It was very instrumental in my line of work.”*
- *“Very helpful and I will recommend this to others!”*

d. Program Electives

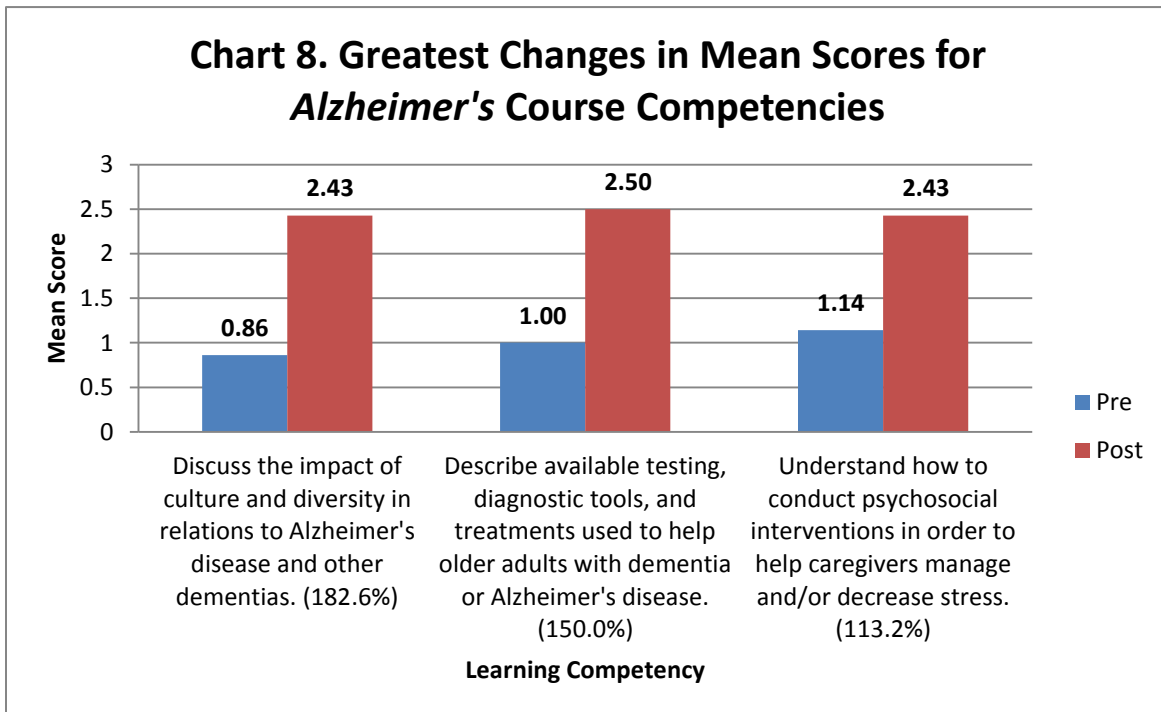
This program consisted of the three aforementioned core courses, as well as two elective courses. Learners in this program were able to choose two electives from the following list: Alzheimer’s Disease and Other Dementias; Care Transitions; Elder Abuse, Neglect, & Exploitation; Geriatric Assessment and Care Planning. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of the learners in this program completed the first elective, and fifty percent (50%) completed the second elective.

The most commonly chosen elective course was Alzheimer’s Disease and Other Dementias (nine participants), followed by Elder Abuse, Neglect, & Exploitation (seven participants), Care Transitions (six participants), Geriatric Assessment and Care Planning (four participants). The course competency and course evaluation data for the Alzheimer’s Disease and Other Dementias course is presented below. Participation in the other elective courses was not high enough to warrant reporting.

e. Alzheimer’s Disease and Other Dementias

Course Competencies:

Increases in scores from pre-test to post-test across the competencies ranged from 58.5% to 182.6% after participants had completed this course. The competencies with the greatest increases in mean scores from pre-test to post-test in this course are outlined in Chart 8 below.



Course Evaluations:

Participants rated the course very positively. One hundred percent (100%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed: that the training expanded their knowledge and understanding of the topic area; that the training will help them in their work with older adults and/or people with disabilities; and that the training will help them apply practice skills in the topic area. Comments about the course included:

- *“I think this course was very helpful. The knowledge is very good to have because it does help how other providers of care may do their work and it helps me when working with families.”*

3) Tennessee ADRC Specialized Options Counseling Training (5 Course Program)

Four (4) learners from three agencies enrolled in the Specialized Options Counseling Training Program in the first cohort. Three (3) learners (75%) completed all five courses in the training program. Due to the low enrollment in this training program, the data were insufficient to

conduct an analysis. If a sufficient number of learners in the second cohort complete the training program, a combined analysis of cohorts one and two will be conducted.

V. SUMMARY

Overall, participants in the Tennessee ADRC Training Program appreciated the program and reported that they learned a great deal of relevant information that they will use in their work with aging and disability populations. The Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias course and the Mental Health Training in Options Counseling course had the highest percent increases from pre to post-competency assessment. Learners in the second cohort of the Tennessee ADRC Training Programs are currently working on completing their coursework.

Recommendations for Tennessee Training:

- Pre and post self assessments of competency were not mandatory. Consider making them mandatory to increase the data we get to evaluate program effectiveness.
- The Alzheimer's course saw large competency gains. Maybe this should be a core course.
- The Mental Health for Options Counselors saw great gains. Consider having this course as part of all training programs.