Overview

The National Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging (NRCNA) announces the second Business Acumen Learning Collaborative for up to eight (8) community-based Senior Nutrition Programs. The first Business Acumen Learning Collaborative was announced on August 2015. The second Business Acumen Learning Collaborative will similarly strengthen the business capacity of the participating Senior Nutrition Programs and align their service capabilities to prepare to negotiate contracts with healthcare entities, either directly or as a part of a community-based network and to help improve the sustainability of their programs. This initiative will not only provide funding to the successful applicants, but will also provide one year of technical assistance, both in person and through a variety of other learning activities to assist programs in achieving their goals through the Learning Collaborative. NRCNA will award mini-grants of $10,000 to each selected applicant, funded in part by a cooperative agreement between the Administration for Community Living and Meals on Wheels America.
Number of Awards: 8
Amount of Each Award: $10,000
Application release: May 6, 2016

All applications must be submitted through the Meals on Wheels America Online Grant System (creation of an account and login required).

Meals on Wheels America Online Grant System

Background Applicant Informational Webinar: 3:30pm EDT, May 18, 2016
Application deadline: 5:00 pm EDT, June 3, 2016
Successful Applicants Notified of Award: on or around July 6, 2016
Anticipated Project Start Date: August 15, 2016
Grant Project Ends: August 31, 2017

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (also known as the Affordable Care Act, or the ACA) offers numerous opportunities to integrate and coordinate healthcare and community-based long-term services and supports (LTSS) to achieve better care, healthier people and smarter spending. Nutrition is a key component of these long-term services and supports and senior nutrition programs that have access to houses of seniors and are a known entity in the community are perfectly positioned to be a partner in this community-based service delivery system. In August 2015, eight Senior Nutrition Programs were selected through a competitive application process to participate in the first round of this NRCNA initiative. These pilot programs as a collaborative have begun to navigate the healthcare system and are on track to reach the goal of a contract or partnership with a healthcare entity. The second round of funding and technical assistance will provide an opportunity for a new group of nutrition programs to learn from the first Collaborative, build on the experience and knowledge acquired with the first Collaborative and expand the knowledge and shared learning of the network by adding eight additional Senior Nutrition Programs to this growing community of practice.

Purpose

The purpose of the Learning Collaborative is two-fold. First, it will provide a small amount of funding to each of the successful applicants to support the development or expansion of opportunities to market nutrition services to healthcare entities. Second, and perhaps more importantly, it will provide an opportunity for these successful applicants to participate in a national learning collaborative that can build upon the collective knowledge and experience of nutrition programs that do participate in the healthcare space. This collaborative will include peer-to-peer learning, learning from subject matter experts and technical assistance from the NRCNA team on how to improve business practices and apply successfully for contracts with healthcare entities to provide nutrition services as part of an integrated care package, either directly or as part of a package of services contracted through collaboration with a community-based network. Examples of service delivery models may include but are certainly not limited to:
• Home-delivered meals as part of an integrated care package offered to healthcare entities, such as managed care organizations (MCOs), accountable care organizations (ACOs), stand-alone hospitals, healthcare insurance companies, Veterans Administration Health Systems, etc., to improve the health of their members/patients.
• Meals or other nutrition supportive services such as nutrition counseling, medical nutrition therapy or targeted nutrition education that address chronic diseases that may be alleviated with dietary changes to enable seniors to continue to live independently in their communities.
• Nutrition/wellness assessments and ongoing in-home safety checks through meal delivery provided as a part of comprehensive care management to reduce readmissions or diminish medical or pharmaceutical interventions.
• Meals provided as a part of a transition care plan following a hospital or nursing home stay to help with star ratings or performance measurement requirements.

Goals

By applying, applicants agree to the following deliverables if selected:

• Developing a business plan which will include: (1) market research and analysis of the needs of the healthcare entities; (2) identification of any necessary community partnerships needed to offer a package of services to a healthcare entity as described above; (3) developing, pricing and marketing the value proposition of the nutrition services packages offered; (4) identification of at least one targeted healthcare entity to be offered the nutrition service package, and (5) nutrition services either through a direct contract or as part of a package of services contracted through a community-based network;
• Meeting with decision makers from targeted healthcare entities identified in the business plan.
• Contracting or developing a formal partnership with at least one healthcare entity by August 31, 2017.

Technical Assistance Available

This learning collaborative will deliver targeted technical assistance through a variety of different activities. The types of technical assistance delivered will vary depending on the needs and goals of the selected applicants but may include:

• Assistance with business plan development;
• Access to subject matter experts, including people who have led successful business development efforts for community-based networks, including nutrition providers from the Year One Business Acumen Learning Collaborative and others in the aging network;
• Peer-to-peer learning through regular calls, emails, online forums and two in-person meetings;
• Broad-based learning through webinars and online training and materials from subject matter experts and peer programs.

Topics that may be addressed by the learning collaborative include but are not limited to:

• Strategic business planning;
• Development and structure of community-based networks;
• Service packages (identifying, pricing and packaging services);
• Marketing and sales strategies;
• Communication and negotiation techniques;
• Addressing program capacity challenges (developing, increasing and managing the capacity of the program to deliver services);
• Change management and culture change (from mission-driven to entrepreneurial, staff qualifications, characteristics, inter-organizational operations);
• Continuous quality improvement (setting standards, defining and measuring outcomes, monitoring);
• Risk management (identifying, accepting and managing);
• Information technology (IT) and integration challenges.
• Compliance issues (HIPAA, Data Collection, CMS)
General Requirements

Eligible Applicants
Eligible applicants are Senior Nutrition Programs that currently receive funding from the Older Americans Act for Title III Part C - Nutrition Services or Title VI Grants for Native Americans to provide meals and other nutrition services to older adults in their community. The applicant organization can be either a public organization or private, non-profit organization.

Allowable Uses of Funding
Successful applicants may use the funds provided by the NRCNA for the following expenses:

- Travel for a minimum of one staff person to attend two (2) in-person grantee meetings (an orientation meeting on the evening of August 30 plus a half-day meeting on August 31 prior to the 2016 Meals on Wheels America Annual Conference, Nashville, TN, and a second meeting to be held in Washington, DC Spring 2017 at a date to be determined);
- Salaries of staff whose work is allocated to the project;
- Local travel related to the project;
- Expenses for community partnership meetings related to the project, such as supplies, printing, meeting room rental;
- Consultant fees or other supportive functions related to the project;
- Other relevant costs associated with implementing the project.

Funds may not be used to supplant funds for existing projects or existing contracts or to subsidize capital improvements or expenditures. Funds may not be used to provide meals or other nutrition services.

Community Partners
Applicants who have one or more existing community-based partnerships that support a healthcare service relationship must specify these partners in their application and include letters of commitment from them to describe their role, if any, in the project. Applicants who do not have existing partnerships, or whose existing partners will not play a role in this project, must identify other potential partners in their grant application. Potential partners could include other community-based service organizations, hospitals, healthcare systems, ACOs, insurers, MCOs, or similar entities.

Active Participation in the Learning Collaborative
Applicants selected for this project will be expected to participate in all learning collaborative activities throughout the one-year grant period which will include completing project deliverables, such as baseline readiness assessments, quarterly reporting, developing a business plan as well as participating in regular conference calls, webinars and the two in-person meetings. This will require sharing lessons learned, innovative ideas and practices, and progress toward achieving goals with other members of the learning collaborative during the course of the project and with the broader aging network after the project concludes.

Applicants selected for this NRCNA mini-grant must agree to send at least one staff member to attend the two (2) in-person meetings during the course of this initiative. As previously noted, expenses for meeting attendance are an acceptable use of grant funds.
**Reporting Requirements**
Quarterly progress and financial reports on expenditures related to the project are required. They must be submitted through the Meals on Wheels America Online Grant System and must include:

- A description of activities and accomplishments during the reporting period;
- Barriers encountered and solutions proposed to overcome these barriers;
- Major activities planned for the next quarter;
- Other pertinent information to describe progress, results and barriers;
- Financial expenditures to date.

A final report using the online grant system is also required, and must include:

- A summary of the project from start to finish;
- Major accomplishments, including any contracts or formal partnership(s) established;
- Major barriers encountered and solutions implemented;
- Information and data needed to replicate the project;
- A financial report of all grant expenditures during the grant period.

**Application Requirements**
Applications, proposed budget and budget justification as well as letters of support must be completed online and submitted through the Meals on Wheels America Online Grant System and must include each of the following sections:

1. **Project Narrative**
   A. **Executive Summary** (Brief summary of the proposed project, including purpose, need and project goals (maximum 1,000 characters with spacing))
   
   B. **Purpose and Need** (maximum 3,000 characters with spacing)
      i. Description of the project
      ii. Description of any recent changes or potential opportunities/threats in your community for the marketing and delivery of nutrition services (managed long-term services and supports (MLTSS), Medicaid waivers, dual eligibles, for-profit nutrition providers, other changes or potential opportunities/threats, etc.)
      iii. Description of current and proposed partners and their anticipated contribution toward the success of the project
      iv. Description of the characteristics of the applicant community
         a. Geographical service area: rural, urban, suburban and/or combination.
         b. Socio-demographics, service needs and health profile;
      v. Identification of potential barriers to implementation of the project
   
   C. **Project Goal(s) and Outcomes** (maximum 3,000 characters with spacing)
      i. Description of your program’s long-term vision and short-term goal(s) and anticipated measurable outcomes through your participation in this learning
collaborative. Goals and outcomes should be concrete, realistic and specific, recognizing the time-limited nature of the grant opportunity.

ii. Description of the roles of current and proposed community-based organizations to help you achieve your goals.

iii. Short-term and long-term business targets (identification of potential contracting organizations, i.e. managed care organizations (MCOs), accountable care organizations (ACOs), stand-alone hospitals/health systems, healthcare insurance companies).

iv. Short-term and long-term organizational outcomes for sustainability of the service model.

D. Proposed Service Delivery Package and Plan to Market Services (maximum 3,000 characters with spacing)

i. Description of the proposed service package(s) that you will develop (home-delivered meals, nutrition counseling, evidence-based programs, targeted nutrition education, nutrition/wellness assessments, in-home safety checks, etc.) and why you chose that particular service package or packages.

ii. Definition of the characteristics of the consumer who will be served (chronic disease conditions, recent hospital discharge, special dietary needs, care coordination and support, etc.).

iii. Identification of the market for the proposed service package (healthcare entities, private payers, insurers, etc.).

iv. Description of the plan to market the service package.

v. Identification of the current capacity of your organization to provide services, including staffing, data collection and management (tracking, reporting, billing) and geographical region covered.

E. Project Management (maximum 3,000 characters with spacing)

i. Description of the applying organization
   a. Mission and experience of the organization
   b. Current nutrition and other services provided by the applying organization
      • Program statistics (meals, participants served, waiting lists if applicable, etc.).
      • Types of meals served (home-delivered, congregate, special diets, hot, frozen, cold meals, catered, self-operated kitchen, etc.).
      • Other nutrition services offered (nutrition screening, education, counseling, medical nutrition supplements, etc.).
      • Other services provided (home repair, care coordination, care management, assessments, evidence-based self-management programs, etc.).
   c. Current funding sources (OAA, other federal, state, local, Medicaid waiver, MLTSS, fundraising, foundations, voluntary contributions, private contracts, etc.).

ii. Description of responsibilities of key staff assigned to management of the project
a. Major responsibilities/roles of key staff (program staff, registered or licensed dietitians, etc.).
b. Experience and skills of key staff

F. Personnel (identify key staff who will work on the project, and include their bios and credentials)

2. Proposed Budget and Justification – to be entered directly into the Meals on Wheels America Online Grant System.
   A. Personnel (key staff’s percentage of time for grant management, implementation, data collection, fiscal management and reporting)
   B. Fringe (fringe for the above key staff to be paid with grant funds)
   C. Travel (travel cost for minimum of one staff person to attend two required in-person meetings, and any local travel related to the project to be paid with grant funds)
   D. Supplies (supplies necessary to implement the project, including costs associated with any community partnership meetings to be paid with grant funds)
   E. Other (contract staff not covered in above, and any other costs not captured above to be paid with grant funds)

3. Letters of Support – to be submitted as attachments through the Meals on Wheels America Online Grant System.
   A. A letter of support from the local Area Agency on Aging (AAA) or State Unit on Aging (SUA) if a single service planning area state to help assure that the project is linked within the established aging network is required for all applicants. Federally recognized tribes are not required to obtain a letter of support from the State Unit on Aging or Area Agencies on Aging.
   B. Key Partners (include specific roles and level of commitment).

Submission and Deadline Requirements

Applications and attachments must be submitted electronically using the Meals on Wheels America online grant system by 5:00 pm Eastern Daylight Time on June 3, 2016.

Meals on Wheels America Online Grant System

Hard copy or fax copies will not be accepted. Any late applications will not be considered eligible for consideration. Remember to apply in advance of the due date to allow sufficient time in case you experience any computer or Internet issues.

Review and Award Process

A panel will review all eligible applications submitted by the deadline.

We anticipate making final award decisions and notifying the selected applicants on or around July 6, 2016. Agreements with the successful applicants will be finalized before the anticipated project start date of August 15, 2016.
Technical Support and Contact

An applicant informational webinar will be presented on May 18, 3:30 pm EDT. You may register for the webinar at: click here.

Grant Application Frequently Asked Questions:
A “Frequently Asked Questions” section will be posted on the National Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging Website at http://nutritionandaging.org/ to address ongoing questions posed by potential applicants.

Any questions concerning application requirements must be directed by email to:

Linda Netterville
Project Director
National Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging
1550 Crystal Drive, Suite 1004
Arlington, VA 22202
Email: Resourcecenter@Mealsonwheelsamerica.org

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References:

National Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging Business Acumen Online Resources