MAKE YOUR MARK: NUTRITION AND SOCIALIZATION

MARCH 4, 2020
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SENIOR VIGNETTE #1

Felicia

https://youtu.be/EMgNPqH8Ee8
MAKE YOUR MARK – ENHANCE
SOCIALIZATION AND NUTRITION

“Living Connected”
Baltimore County Department of
Aging
Baltimore, MD
BCDA’s 2019 initiative was “Living Connected.”

Purpose was to raise awareness about social isolation and provide opportunities for older adults to connect to the community.

Research has demonstrated the negative health effects of isolation and loneliness.
• In Baltimore County, the Adult Wellbeing Assessment conducted in partnership with NCOA provides us with good data on social and behavioral determinants of health

• We are able to segment the center member data to compare participants in our Eating Together congregate meal program and non-participants

• Results show that congregate meal participants are significantly more likely to be “suffering” or “surviving” on all measures, as opposed to thriving like the non-meal participants (p=<0.05), with the exception of meaning and purpose, where there was no significant difference
LIVING LONGER * LIVING WELL * LIVING CONNECTED

Life Satisfaction*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Non-Eating Together</th>
<th>Eating Together</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thriving</td>
<td>88.8%</td>
<td>82.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surviving</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suffering</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Life Optimism (2 years in future)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Non-Eating Together</th>
<th>Eating Together</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thriving</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>80.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surviving</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suffering</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05
Financial Wellbeing*

- Thriving: 80.4%
- Surviving: 25.4%
- Suffering: 8.8%

In general, how often do you get the social and emotional support you need?*

- Thriving: 80.8%
- Surviving: 12.3%
- Suffering: 6.8%

* p<0.05

Non-Eating Together
Eating Together
I lead a purposeful and meaningful life.

- Thriving: 86.8%
- Surviving: 12.3%
- Suffering: 0.9%

Non-Eating Together: 81.4%
Eating Together: 16.9%
How often do you feel lonely or isolated from those around you?

- Never: 37.3%, 32.9%
- Rarely: 40.7%, 34.6%
- Sometimes: 18.7%, 26.7%
- Often: 2.5%
- Always: 0.8%, 1.0%

Senior Center | Percentage of Members Who Are Sometimes, Often or Always Lonely
---|---
Lansdowne | 40.0%
Pikesville | 29.7%
Ateaze | 29.4%
Victory Villa | 27.1%
Overlea | 26.5%
Parkville | 25.9%
Reisterstown | 25.2%
Arbutus | 25.0%
Catonsville | 24.8%
Rosedale | 24.1%
Essex | 23.9%
Edgemere | 23.0%
Seven Oaks | 22.6%
Hereford | 21.0%
Cockeysville | 19.8%
Bykota | 19.2%
Jacksonville | 18.9%
Liberty | 18.5%
Woodlawn | 18.2%
Fleming | 18.0%

Can segment data by senior center and deliver programs and screenings to address social isolation.
LIVING LONGER * LIVING WELL * LIVING CONNECTED

How often do you feel lonely or isolated from those around you?

- Never: 32.9% (Non-Eating Together), 37.3% (Eating Together)
- Rarely: 34.6% (Non-Eating Together), 40.7% (Eating Together)
- Sometimes: 18.7% (Non-Eating Together), 26.7% (Eating Together)
- Often: 2.5% (Non-Eating Together), 4.9% (Eating Together)
- Always: 0.8% (Non-Eating Together), 1.0% (Eating Together)

Can drill down further as BCDA social work staff can now follow up with specific individuals who may be at higher risk.
NO SENIOR EATS ALONE DAY©

- September 12, 2019
- Goal was to publicize the problem of social isolation and encourage all members of the community to share a meal with an older adult

- Idea started with just the congregate meal program, but then quickly expanded to engage community partners

"The meal allows people to eat together, improve their lives and health."
- Nusrat, 77, Islamic Society of Baltimore

"Coming to the center for activities and meals saved my life. I was very lonely after my wife passed."
- Fred, 84, Rosedale

The National Resource Center on Nutrition & Aging
NO SENIOR EATS ALONE DAY©

Used social media, print media, television outreach, websites, and fliers in senior centers to share messages about NSEAD© and social isolation
NO SENIOR EATS ALONE DAY©

The Baltimore County Department of Aging is inviting everyone to make older adults feel included and valued on No Senior Eats Alone Day. We are looking for partners to join us in drawing attention to the impact of social isolation.

No Senior Eats Alone Day is being promoted to help seniors feel connected, to establish better eating habits and to improve nutrition and health.

Why Is No Senior Eats Alone Day Important?

When older adults are eating alone, they are...

- 2X As likely to be depressed
- 59% At higher risk of physical and mental health decline
- 79% More Likely to have greater feelings of isolation when eating alone
- 49% More likely if living alone to have poor nutritional habits increasing their risk of illness and hospitalization

When older adults share a meal, it can...

1. Increase life expectancy
2. Improve mental health and cognitive status
3. Encourage more nutritious meals with higher satisfaction
4. Increase feelings of motivation to care for self

1. Decrease in high blood pressure and cholesterol
2. Lower feelings of depression and loneliness
3. Reduce risk for physical/psychological health decline
4. Decrease risk of falls due to better nutrition

MEALS ARE A GREAT CONNECTION!

Help make a difference one person at a time for the 190,000 older adults over 60 years of age in Baltimore County.

Partners can be:

- Individuals
- Businesses
- Churches
- Community Groups
- Senior Housing
- Restaurants

Everyone is invited to share a meal with a senior by:

- Taking an older adult out to eat or preparing them a meal
- Providing a gathering space for older adults to eat together

Facts from the American College of Nutrition
Activities included:

- **Breakfast, lunch, dinner and happy hour events** hosted at 20 senior centers and 15 nutrition sites. New participants were also welcome to join other programs and activities at the sites that day.
- Senior Center members were encouraged to bring their neighbors, friends and family to the center for a meal, especially those that were isolated.
- All senior center and nutrition site meals were funded via the congregate meal program.
- Senior center social clubs hosted meals at local restaurants for members of the public who didn’t want to come to the senior centers.
- **BCDA staff brought and shared meals** with homebound clients.
- Community partners offered free meals, discounts or free menu items to anyone mentioning No Senior Eats Alone Day. Many of these sites also provided programs to encourage socialization and learning.
- **Intergenerational events** were encouraged.
NO SENIOR EATS ALONE DAY©

Impact:

- **1,902** meals were served in senior centers and nutrition sites (usual total was 700)
- **40** community partners participated including restaurants, places of worship, schools, colleges, community associations, libraries and fitness centers
- Some locations were open to the public, while others were offered just to the partners’ members
- A number of community “Champions” also joined to help promote the day and raise awareness of social isolation (including CHAI, Cigna, and a number of churches and schools)
Examples of community events:

- Baltimore County staff, including police officers, volunteered at many sites as conversation leaders and visited isolated seniors in their homes.

- Library offered a lunch and learn for 94 people.

- Baltimore County Community College provide an event-filled day for 55 people.

- Goucher College offered an intergenerational program for 20 people.
NO SENIOR EATS ALONE DAY©

![Reisterstown Senior Center](image1)

![Goucher College](image2)

![St. Ursula Church](image3)

![Fleming Senior Center](image4)

![Library](image5)

![Goucher College](image6)
Save the Date!
No Senior Eats Alone Day © September 17, 2020

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THE VALUE OF SOCIALIZATION IN THE OAA CONGREGATE NUTRITION PROGRAM

BOB BLANCATO

rblancato@matzblancato.com

March 4, 2020
The three purposes of the nutrition programs of OAA as stipulated in the law are to:

1. Reduce hunger and food insecurity,
2. Promote socialization of older individuals, and
3. Promote the health and well-being outcomes of older individuals by assisting them to access nutrition and other disease prevention and health promotion services to delay the onset of adverse health conditions resulting from poor nutritional health or sedentary behavior.
PRIOR RESEARCH

• Past research into the congregate nutrition program has focused on the meal that is provided as well as nutrition education

• Little evaluation has ever been done solely on the benefits of socialization to the health and well being of older adults.
NANASP SURVEY TOOL

• Provider Focused Questions (11 total)
• Participant Focused Questions (11 total)
• The tool was translated into Spanish by Meals on Wheels Orange County
PROGRAM PARTICIPANT SURVEY QUESTIONS

• What is your gender?
• What is your relationship status?
• What race/ethnicity best describes you?
• What do you like best about socializing during the congregate meal program?
• How do you arrive at the congregate meal site?
• How frequently do you receive meals at the congregate meal site?
• Since participating in the program, has your knowledge of good nutrition increased?
• Since participating in the program, are you exercising more?
• Has your health improved since you started visiting the congregate meal site?
• Do you have more friends now than before you started visiting the site?
• Do you believe enough time is allowed for socialization?

@NRCNA_engAging
SURVEY COLLECTION ACROSS 3 YEARS

- More than 3,000 surveys collected from Congregate Nutrition Program sites
- 90 program provider surveys completed
- 12 states participated
- 25+ programs participated
- 5 Infographics created
SURVEY PARTICIPANTS, YEARS 1 AND 2
STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT RESULTS

• Year 1
  • For those who said that “socialization is encouraged” at the congregate site, they were also 4 times more likely to say they had a better knowledge of good nutrition and improved health since visiting the site.

• Year 2
  • For those who said they had more friends now than when they started visiting the site, they were also 3.96 times more likely to say they now exercise more and 5.5 times more likely to say they have improved health.
SURVEY PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

• “I just enjoy getting out and making new friends”
• “If not for the senior center I would be very lonely. It’s a blessing for people like me”
• “I come for the people as much as the food”
• “It is unbelievable how much we benefit and learn. It is so motivational”
• “I love seeing and participating, singing and listening to music on Thursdays”
• “Wish it was opened Saturday and Sunday”
• Starting near the end of year 1, I began doing site visits to actual congregate sites, meeting staff and most importantly participants

• All told, spoke to more than 300 older adults mostly at the lunch table

• Started with same question—what is the main reason you come here when you do?

• Unofficially, more than 90 percent of respondents said “socialization” or words to that effect, and roughly the same percentage said they had made new friends

• The number of years they came to program ranged from 1 to as many as 35 with ages as old as 96

• Many, many great interactions and stories ranging from liver and onions being the favorite meal in Fort Wayne, Indiana, to a couple who got married at the site in Pahrump, Nevada, to seeing fathers and sons and mothers and daughters at the same site!
IN-PERSON SITE VISITS, YEAR 1

- WellMed Medical Management, Inc., TX
- Meals on Wheels and Senior Outreach Service, CA
- Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging and Wood County Committee on Aging, Inc, OH
- Aging & In-Home Services of Northeast Indiana
- Pahrump Senior Center, NV
BEYOND THE MEAL
The Value of Socialization in Older Americans Act Congregate Nutrition Programs

Generous funding from the Retirement Research Foundation

The National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP) received a grant in June 2006 for one year of studying the benefits of socialization in OAA-funded Congregate Nutrition programs to the health and well-being of older adults.

“I enjoy coming and socializing very much. Makes me feel better.”

9 STATES PARTICIPATED
California, Connecticut, Illinois, Manitoba, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas, Washington

15 CONGREGATE NUTRITION PROGRAMS PARTICIPATED

1,989 COMPLETED SURVEYS from Congregate Nutrition Program participants were collected.

57 COMPLETED SURVEYS from Congregate Nutrition Program providers were collected

“I come for the people as much as the food.”

FINDINGS
From the 1,989 surveys analyzed we found the following statistically significant information:

- Those who answered that “socialization is encouraged” at the Congregate site were also four times as likely to say they had a knowledge of good nutrition, had a knowledge of healthy eating habits and had experienced improved physical health since coming to the site.
- Those who answered that they have “more friends now” than before they started at the site were also two times as likely to say that their physical health has improved since starting to visit the site.

“Not for the senior center I would be very lonely. It’s a blessing for people like me.”

SITE VISITS
NANASP Executive Director Bob Biancato also made in-person visits to:
- Aging & In-Home Services of Northwest Indiana
- Meals on Wheels & Senior Outreach Services, California
- Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging and Wood County Committee on Aging, Ohio
- WellMed Medical Management, Inc., Texas
- Pahrump Senior Center, Nevada

For more information visit www.nanasp.org or contact us at 1-800-468-0330 or info@nanasp.org
IN-PERSON SITE VISITS, YEAR 2

• Beverly Council on Aging, MA
• Seniors Resources of Guilford County, NC
• McBride Center, Knoxville, TN
• Area Agency on Aging (NACOG), Flagstaff, AZ
• Serving Seniors, San Diego, CA
• Food Bank of Western NY, Buffalo, NY
• Centralina Area Agency on Aging, Charlotte, NC
  • First visit with a congressional staff member, Josh Ward (Chief Field Representative for Sen. Richard Burr, then the Subcommittee Chair on the Senate HELP Committee)
• American Association of Retired Asians, Hanover Park, IL
• Brattleboro Senior Meals, VT
  • Joined by Outreach Representative for Sen. Sanders
BEYOND THE MEAL
The Value of Socialization in Older Americans Act
Congregate Nutrition Programs

Generous funding from the Retirement Research Foundation

The National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASCP) received a renewal grant in July 2012 for one year of continued study of the benefits of socialization in OAA-funded Congregate Nutrition programs to the health and well-being of older adults.

"I enjoy music, happy faces and education."

6 STATES PARTICIPATED
North Carolina, Maryland, Illinois, Arizona, Texas, Kentucky

10 CONGREGATE NUTRITION PROGRAMS PARTICIPATED

1,017 COMPLETED SURVEYS from Congregate Nutrition Program participants were collected

23 COMPLETED SURVEYS from Congregate Nutrition Program providers were collected.

"I come to the program to know what's going on in life."

FINDINGS
From the 1,017 surveys analyzed we found the following statistically significant information:

• For those who said they had more friends now than before they started visiting the site, they were also 3.96 times more likely to say they now exercise more.

• For those who said they had more friends now than before they started visiting the site, they were also 5.5 times more likely to say they have improved health.

SITE VISITS
NANASCP Executive Director Bob Blascato also made in-person visits to:

• Beverly Council on Aging, Massachusetts
• Senior Resources of Guilford County, North Carolina
• McBride Center, Knoxville, Tennessee
• Area Agency on Aging INACOGI, Flagstaff, Arizona
• Serving Seniors, San Diego, California
• Food Bank WNY, Buffalo, New York
• Centralina Area Agency on Aging, Charlotte, North Carolina
• American Association at Retired Adults, Hanover Park, Illinois
• Arattleboro Senior Meals, Vermont

"It's easier for me instead of cooking for myself."

For more information visit www.nanasp.org or contact us at (301) 624-6909 or info@nanasp.org
IN-PERSON SITE VISITS, YEAR 3

• Volunteers of America Colorado Branch
• Wild Rose Community Center, WI
• Duplin County Services for the Aged, NC
• Elsie Stuhr Center, Beaverton, OR
• Twin Cities Senior Center and Olympia Senior Center, WA
• St. Martin de Porres Senior Center, VA
• Whatcom Council on Aging, Bellingham, WA
• Goshen County Senior Friendship Center, Torrington, WY
• Henry County Heritage Senior Center, McDonough, GA
• North Fulton County, Roswell Senior Center, Roswell, GA
OREGON VISIT

Joined by Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR), who told participants about her new role as Chair of the Subcommittee reauthorizing the Older Americans Act
YEAR 3 INFOGRAPHICS

YEAR 3: BEYOND THE MEAL
CASE STUDY: The Value of Socialization in Older Americans Act Congregate Nutrition Programs in Wisconsin
The National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP) received a renewal grant from the Retirement Research Foundation in May 2018 to continue its study of the benefits of socialization in programs to the health and well-being of older adults. The information below was collected in the Winter of 2019.

“Always looking for a date!”

SURVEY FINDINGS:
• 55% of respondents were female
• 50% of participants say they visit the congregate site a few times each week
• 45% say they have more friends now than before they started visiting the site
• 27% of respondents said they like best about socializing is talking to friends they already know, meeting new friends and getting out of their homes each day
• 25% of respondents said they believe the site allows enough time for socialization
• 93% of respondents said their health has improved since starting to visit the site
• 34% of respondents were widowed
• 35% of respondents were white
• 11% of respondents arrive to the congregate site by car

“Enjoy helping others and talking with attendees.”

“I like talking to others.”

SURVEY FINDINGS:
• 84% of respondents said they believe the site
• 76% say they have more friends now than before they started visiting the site
• 40% of respondents said what they like best about socializing is talking to friends they already know, meeting new friends and getting out of their homes each day
• 30% of respondents said they believe the site allows enough time for socialization
• 93% of respondents said their health has improved since starting to visit the site
• 34% of respondents were widowed
• 35% of respondents were white
• 11% of respondents arrive to the congregate site by car

The National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP) received a renewal grant from the Retirement Research Foundation in May 2018 to continue its study of the benefits of socialization in OAA funded Congregate Nutrition programs to the health and well-being of older adults. The information below was collected in the Winter of 2019.

“I love the nutritious meals, activities, speakers and s

“I prefer the nutritious meals, activities, speakers and s

“Coming to MOW gives me sensi

“My hot i

SURVEY FINDINGS:
• 49% of respondents said they believe the site
• 76% say they have more friends now than before they started visiting the site
• 40% of respondents said what they like best about socializing is talking to friends they already know, meeting new friends and getting out of their homes each day
• 30% of respondents said they believe the site allows enough time for socialization
• 93% of respondents said their health has improved since starting to visit the site
• 34% of respondents were widowed
• 35% of respondents were white
• 11% of respondents arrive to the congregate site by car
NANASP RESEARCH WEBSITE
WEBSITE: RESEARCH DATABASE

• Webinar recordings
• Infographics
• Articles
• Survey tools
• Site visit photos
POLL QUESTION

Does your organization offer a specific event or program designed to improve social isolation among your clients?

• Yes

• No

If you answered yes, please enter a brief description of your event into the Chat box on your screen. Let us know!
FUTURE-PROOFING THE CONGREGATE NUTRITION PROGRAM

UCHE AKOBUNDU AND MEREDITH WHITMIRE

March 4, 2020
A JOINT PROJECT

• In October 2018, the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP) received a year-long subgrant from the National Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging (NRCNA) to focus on congregate meals programs

• The NRCNA and NANASP have worked together on products such as a literature review, a convening and proceedings, conference presentations, virtual summits, issue briefs, and a Leaders Lab group
WHY THIS WAS NEEDED

• Some local congregate meals programs are facing declines in participation, even as the older adult population continues to grow

• Programs also face different challenges, including funding and program planning issues, demographic shifts, and program perception issues

• However, opportunities are also on the rise, and this partnership sought to identify those and share them with the provider network
HIGHLIGHTS

• Congregate meals programs must rapidly evolve as the older adult population increases and becomes more diverse, as must all aging services programs.

• There is much opportunity to address ever-increasing needs in the areas of:
  • Demographic shifts
  • Local infrastructure
  • Hunger and food insecurity
  • Funding and planning issues
  • Cultural competency
  • Program perception
• Offering a suite of services that leverage emerging technologies, confer tangible health and wellness benefits to the satisfaction of the local community, and address evolving needs, is an important opportunity for innovation and engagement, particularly for smaller programs.
THE CONVENING

Proceedings available at www.nutritionandaging.org/futureofcongregate
VIRTUAL SUMMITS – DISCUSSION TOPICS

• Summit 1:
  • Staff training
  • Rebranding the congregate nutrition program
  • Improving dining experience
  • Business acumen
  • Addressing policy myths

• Summit 2:
  • Creating consumer focus groups
  • Engaging more staff to determine best practices and strategies
  • Technological improvements
  • Sharing the current innovative work that is already happening
Available at www.nutritionandaging.org/futureofcongregate
WHAT DO THE ISSUE BRIEFS DO?

• Discuss easy ways to support improved dining environments
• Outline ways to engage staff, clients and volunteers to have more fun
• Outline ways to engage and grow stakeholder community
• Support meals myth-busting
MAKE YOUR MARK: ENGAGE EXTERNAL AUDIENCES

• Engage funders and new partners
• Engage civic leaders and legislators
• Share with donors and potential donors
• Identify concrete ways for all to support the congregate program
MAKE YOUR MARK: SHARE INTERNALLY WITH ALL

• Share materials with your board
• Share materials with staff and volunteers
• Use issue briefs in staff onboarding
• Leverage issue briefs as pre-reads for staff meetings
• Use topics discussed in the literature review or proceedings report to inform strategic planning sessions among your leadership team
LARGER-SCALE USES

• Brainstorming sessions
  • Can be a component of a session at a community meeting or a national conference

• Focus group sessions
  • Could include older adults in your program and/or not attending your program

• Hold your own convening
  • Use the proceedings as a template or create your own!
• Urgency for Change: A call to action for the aging network

• To add value and to survive thrive, senior nutrition programs need to modify and modernize. A variety of environmental changes are confronting nutrition programs.

• [https://nutritionandaging.org/white-paper-resource-collection/](https://nutritionandaging.org/white-paper-resource-collection/)
WHAT’S NEXT?

• Upcoming presentation at 2020 ASA Aging in America Conference
• Stay tuned!
WHERE TO GO

• All materials from the project are available at www.nutritionandaging.org/futureofcongregate
Q & A
CELEBRATE THE SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAM

• Help ACL celebrate the Older Americans Act National Senior Nutrition Program congregate services.

• By the end of March, please send photos, videos, audio clips, or testimonials from seniors about your meal site, program activities, or nutrition education to healthpromotion@acl.hhs.gov.

• Please include your contact information and permission to use the material.
KEEP ON CELEBRATING: JOIN US NEXT WEEK

For the rest of the month, the Administration for Community Living has prepared a series of weekly webinars.

Webinar #2

Title: Make Your Mark: Hospitality

Date: Wednesday March 10

Time: 3:30pm – 5pm ET

Register: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4777418010241977613
CONNECT WITH YOUR PEERS VIA NRCNAengage

NRCNAengage is an online venue for senior nutrition program staff, nutrition and aging professionals across the country to connect, share best practices, resources, recopies and ideas for action!

Signing up is easy! Visit [www.nrcna.mn.co](http://www.nrcna.mn.co) and click ‘Invite’!
SENIOR VIGNETTE #2

Jenny

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHOfolkcUXE