SUMMARY BRIEF

ABOUT US

- The Iowa Department on Aging strives to improve the quality of life and care of older Iowans through advocacy, planning, policy development and the administration and support of statewide programs and services that promote health, safety and long-term independence.

- The Heritage Agency has been a department of Kirkwood Community College since 1973 and was designated by the Iowa Department on Aging to serve Benton, Cedar, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn and Washington counties. Heritage serves people age 60 and above as well as their families, communities, and governments. In addition, The Heritage Agency serves as an Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) serving adults 18 years of age and older with a disability through advocacy and options counseling.

PROJECT PURPOSE

- To develop an innovative, replicable service delivery model for congregate meals titled “Encore Café.” This café concept was designed to encourage older adults to participate in congregate meal programs. In particular, the project aimed to attract the younger sub-population of older adults called “Baby Boomers” who had a smaller percentage of participation in recent years.

PROJECT LENGTH

- Two years

KEY CHALLENGES OVERCOME

- High turnover in key senior center coordinator position;
- Upskilling local providers to adhere to required nutritional guidance;
- Managing unintended consequences of intervention – larger than anticipated client turnout, heightened/unrealistic participant expectations;
- Meal site purpose confusion for participants and others;
- Aligning new initiatives (i.e., chef-led demonstrations) with interests of participants.