



## INFORMATION MEMORANDUM #04-13

**DATE:** 6/13/2013

**TO:** AREA AGENCIES ON AGING

**FROM:** Jackie Edison, Senior Services Consultant – Nutrition and Healthy Aging

**SUBJECT:** Older Americans Act (OAA) Senior Nutrition Program - Statewide Guidelines for Adjustments in Service

### **Purpose**

This Information Memorandum (IM) provides statewide guidelines for Area Agencies on Aging to use when considering service adjustments in the OAA senior nutrition program. Although there are unique situations in every community across the state, guidelines are necessary to ensure some consistency in decision making. This IM does not contradict previous IMs (reference IM#) that outlines the differences between eligibility and targeting. Eligibility criteria have not changed. However, due to the sequestration and anticipated continued flat or decreasing OAA funding, it is increasingly important to target nutrition services to those most in need of access to healthful food.

### **Background**

The guidelines are based on the vision and goals established by the 2008 and 2009 Senior Nutrition Task Forces and discussions with Area Agency on Aging (AAA) directors and nutrition contract managers. The vision that, “Older Minnesotans will maintain their independence through access to healthful foods” and the goals of maximizing resources, building relationships, and improving sustainability from the 2009 Senior Nutrition Task Force still hold true today. With the implementation of a new NAPIS data collection system (PeerPlace), the MBA, AAAs and providers can obtain a better understanding of the older adults who are served by the senior nutrition program and begin to tie data to the goals.

In addition to OAA funding changes, there are other state and federal policy changes that may impact the senior nutrition program. For example, the change in Nursing Facility Level of Care (NF LOC) scheduled for January 1, 2014 and the implementation of Essential Community Supports (ECS) has the potential to increase demand for OAA Title III home-delivered meals.

## Statewide Guidelines for Adjustments in Service – Senior Nutrition Program

The guidelines are divided into three categories – utilization, targeting, and efficiency. Each category has a measure, assumptions, and indicators. The guidelines should be used during discussions with nutrition providers. The attached Pivot Table Templates can be used as tools for presenting data during these discussions. (See Attachments - Utilization Pivot Table (Cong) v.1, Utilization Pivot Table (HDM) v.1, Targeting Pivot Table (Cong) v.1, and Targeting Pivot Table (HDM) v.1)

### Utilization

Utilization should be the starting point for review of site level data. Providers are paid on the number of meals served, making the number of meals served a good unit of analysis for utilization. Data collection on meals served is likely consistent across the state.

**Measure:** To what extent is the site providing Title III meals to older adults in sufficient quantity to impact the older adult's nutritional health/intake?

#### Assumptions:

- Older adults who receive Title III meals only a few times a month are usually not those most in need. They probably have access to healthful foods through other means.
- Older adults who receive Title III meals more than 15 times per month are likely to be those most in need. They probably do not have access to healthful foods through other means.
- Older adults who are most in need may not receive Title III meals every day because they may receive meals through other means (i.e. EW or AC, family support, other services, etc).
- Older adults may need meals for a short period of time, such as after a discharge from a hospital.

#### Indicators:

- Number and Percentage of participants by site who receive 5 or fewer meals in a selected one month period.
- Number and Percent of participants by site who receive 15 or more meals in a selected one month period.

### Targeting

Once utilization patterns are reviewed, it is important to look at targeting. Targeting helps answer whether or not the site is serving those most in need.

**Measure:** To what extent is the site providing meals to those most in need of access to healthful foods?

#### Assumptions:

- Missing data should be considered when reviewing targeting data. As data collection improves over time, this measure will be more reliable.
- Up-to-date NAPIS registration/assessments also impact the reliability of targeting data.
- Assessments are not conducted consistently across the state (i.e. individuals with different skill sets collect the information, some phone assessments are conducted for home-delivered meals, staff receive different levels of training, etc.)

#### Indicators:

- Congregate

- The percentage of program participants who have a nutrition risk conclusion of Moderate to High.
- The percentage of program participants who have incomes less than 200% Federal Poverty Level.
- The percentage of program participants who are from a diverse population.
- HDM
  - The percentage of program participants who have a nutrition risk conclusion of High.
  - The percentage of program participants who have 2 or more limitations in Activities of Daily Living (ADLs).
  - The percentage of program participants who have incomes less than 200% FPL.
  - The percentage of program participants who are from a diverse population.

### **Efficiency**

Efficiency is important because it helps ensure the maximum impact of limited funds.

**Measure:** To what extent is the site providing meals in an efficient manner?

**Assumptions:**

- There may be changes that could be made at the site level without having to close a site.
- There needs to be a balance between efficiency and choice (meal type, delivery method, and number of meals).
- Serving individuals with higher need may mean that costs are higher per meal.

**Indicators:**

- Nutrition Cost and Revenue Proposal – Title III Service Data by Site (from MBA Nutrition RFP and Contract Templates)
  - Title III Serving/Delivery Day(s) and Time
  - Total # Unduplicated Title III Persons/Year (Actual Prior Yr)
  - Total # of Title III Meals (Actual Prior Yr)
  - Current Meal Type
  - Method of Meal Preparation
  - Names of Meal Provider e.g. caterer, central prep, other
  - Title III C2 Delivery Type
- Proximity to other nutrition sites

### **Additional Considerations**

Is it cost effective to continue a traditional dining site for five days a week for a small number of people? Do the individuals meet the targeting criteria? If yes, what are the Title III alternatives? If no, what are other alternatives?

Sites need to be reviewed within the broader context in which they operate. Some sites have access to resources that others don't. The context in which a meal site at a community center operates is different than that for a meal site in a residential facility.

The review process should acknowledge the need to balance meeting participants' nutritional needs with their socialization needs. When nutrition resources are limited, it is important to consider alternative ways in which the socialization needs of participants can be met.