



STRATEGY AND IMPACT AT MEALS ON WHEELS AMERICA

CHANGING THE WAY THIS COUNTRY THINKS ABOUT OUR SENIORS

www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/research

Meals on Wheels America supports the internal and external thought leadership, research and evaluation functions of the organization, its Member programs and the wider Aging Network, demonstrating the impact and value of Meals on Wheels programs that are addressing hunger and isolation among millions of seniors each year. Research focus areas include:

NUTRITION

Nutrition is a vital component of assuring the health and well-being of older adults. As the environment surrounding senior nutrition programs continues to evolve, it is critical that such programs leverage the nutrition services they offer to maximize service delivery, maintain client satisfaction and demonstrate program effectiveness and high quality standards (i.e., diet quality and health outcomes).

Our goal in this area of research is to demonstrate the value and impact of nutrition services offered by Meals on Wheels programs.

SOCIAL ISOLATION

Research suggests that chronic social isolation is associated with serious health challenges. We are seeking to identify and evaluate different interventions explicitly focused on reducing social isolation and loneliness and increasing positive health outcomes.

Through our research in this area, we aim to identify solutions and inform the Meals on Wheels network of approaches that are most effective, have the greatest impact on seniors' overall health and well-being, are scalable and are cost-effective.

FALLS PREVENTION / IN-HOME SAFETY

Daily, home-delivered meals and social contact for homebound seniors have been shown to lessen feelings of isolation and loneliness, and reduce the rate of falls among this at-risk population.

We seek to better understand the nature and extent of need among vulnerable seniors. Based on what we learn, we will continue to identify and share in-home safety and falls prevention interventions that would expand the availability of in-home safety services, reduce the rate of falls among Meals on Wheels clients, improve overall health and well-being and ultimately reduce the need for high-cost healthcare services.

CARE COORDINATION

The role of nutrition programs is critical in coordinating client care across multiple parties, providing the ability to monitor and report changes in condition or environment on a regular basis.

Care coordination is the cornerstone of integrating home- and community-based services and healthcare systems. Through our research, we seek to thoroughly explore care coordination among Meals on Wheels programs, existing and potential partnerships (in the community and healthcare), needs of the healthcare market for care coordination and resources needed to implement in nutrition programs across the country.

OLDER ADULTS AND IN-HOME SAFETY

GUIDANCE ON ADDRESSING IN-HOME SAFETY ISSUES FOR OLDER ADULTS

Funded through our strategic partnership with The Home Depot Foundation, our *Older Adults and In-Home Safety* report seeks to explore safety challenges and hazards seniors face in their own homes. The report also offers information on solutions that are currently available or in development to improve in-home safety and falls prevention.

GUIDANCE ON ADDRESSING HUNGER IN OLDER ADULTS

Funded by AARP Foundation and Caesars Foundation, our *Hunger in Older Adults* report seeks to increase the understanding of a variety of food assistance programs that can work in combination to more effectively address the needs of the more than 10 million older Americans facing hunger each year.

HUNGER IN OLDER ADULTS

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES
FOR THE AGING SERVICES NETWORK

PROVING THAT MEALS ON WHEELS DELIVERS SO MUCH MORE THAN JUST A MEAL

The national Meals on Wheels network continues to face limited funding, rising costs, unprecedented demand and need and increasing for-profit competition. That is why Meals on Wheels America has set out to validate what we've all known for decades anecdotally through firsthand experience: *that Meals on Wheels does in fact deliver so much more than just a meal.*

MORE THAN A MEAL

INCREASING UNDERSTANDING OF THE OPPORTUNITIES AND LIMITATIONS WITHIN THE AGING NETWORK

It's crucial for the Meals on Wheels network to understand the opportunities and limitations that exist within states' policies that guide the implementation of the Older Americans Act Nutrition Programs. That's why we partnered with the Retirement Research Foundation to identify these commonly cited policy myths within our network through a year-long research project.

DISPELLING MYTHS: SUPPORTING PUBLIC POLICY FOR GREATER IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY