



# MEALS ON WHEELS

# ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND EXPO

AUGUST 27-29, 2019

DALLAS, TX



# Promising Practices in Food Service

## SPEAKERS

1. **Uche Akobundu**, Meals on Wheels Bloomingdale - Washington, D.C.
2. **Betsy Cox**, Senior Services and Solutions - Waco, TX

# LOOKING BACK TO GO FORWARD



## **Uche Akobundu**

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# Overview

Setting the Stage

Looking back to Go Forward

A Tale of Two Service Models

Lessons Learned

Group Discussion



# We Listen To You

Past conference evaluations tell us that you want:

- 1) To discuss shared challenges and opportunities with fellow members, and
- 2) Practical food service practice models.

Topics of most salience to you are:

- A. How to expand food services
- B. Meal planning & preparation
- C. Meal delivery procedures



# Looking Back to Go Forward

Looking back over years of conference presentations, the main topics of interest have been:

- Expanding services
- Meeting the needs of diverse older adults
- Menu planning
- Operational efficiency
- Meal choice
- Restaurant quality meals



**Inspiration  
is the  
room!**



# Expanding services

Expanding services to meet the needs of new, unserved or hard to serve populations remains popular.

## ***Starting new meal service operations:***

- Cold breakfast bags
- Post-discharge meal package operations
- Collaborating with a food bank to offer food boxes
- Starting a restaurant voucher service



[www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/feeding-america-partnership](http://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/feeding-america-partnership)



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MEALS ON WHEELS AND FEEDING AMERICA  
WORKING TOGETHER





# Post-discharge meals

## *Range of Clients:*

- Healthcare systems, hospitals, hospital foundations, health plans

## Service considerations:

- Common duration: 30 days
- Meal types offered: Hot meals (breakfast, dinner meals and shelf-stable food boxes are possible additions)
- Wrap-around services: socialization, transportation, in-home safety, nutrition education, benefit enrollment assistance

# Practice Models



*Southern Maine*  
**AGENCY**  
*On AGING*  
*Creating Better Days*





# Meeting the needs of diverse seniors

The older adult population is growing large and more diverse. With the American dining public eating out almost 5 times a week, our tastes are growing more diverse as well.

## Keys to success

- Understand your local senior population
- Understand who your competition is
- Evaluate the needs and wants of your clients
- Consider offering menu choice – hot meals / frozen meals
- Involve local culinary experts/create new partnerships

# Practice Models





# Menu planning

Menus must represent proper and adequate nutrition, geared towards the population served – there may be variance in the populations served and dietary needs.

A common approach:

- Acceptable menus
- Nutrient density and variety
- Great flavor

# Menu choice

Choice is everything! Menu choice offers flexibility, dignity, and competitive advantage. There are several ways to offer choice menus:

## Modalities

- Hot meal delivery
- Chilled/frozen meal delivery
- Sides and beverages






# Restaurant Quality Meals

The competitive landscape is broader than ever: Mom's Meals, to Amazon Fresh to the local grocery store. Producing restaurant quality, on-trend meals is key – as part of regular meal service and/or private-pay or in-house catering activities.







# Efficiency initiatives: Food waste/sustainability

More than 40% of foods is wasted in this country. There is greater awareness of the issue in senior nutrition programs in recent years.

- Food waste evaluation and mitigation initiatives
- Energy management/sustainability initiatives



# Inventive meal delivery options

Expanding meal delivery options allows for serve new or more clients. Innovative approaches include:

Santropol Roulant, Montreal, Canada



Alexandria, VA



New York State Department of Aging



Missouri Alliance of Area Agencies on Aging

# Keeping up with trends

We are in the era of culinary-focused meals. Remaining on trend is vital when customers are seeking a have-it-my-way service.

## Key trends

- Chef-inspired
- Locally-sourced
- Ethnic
- Scratch cookery





# Staff capacity

Staff are the keys to your organization's success. Being able to meet changing business needs the available workforce.

## Recipes for success

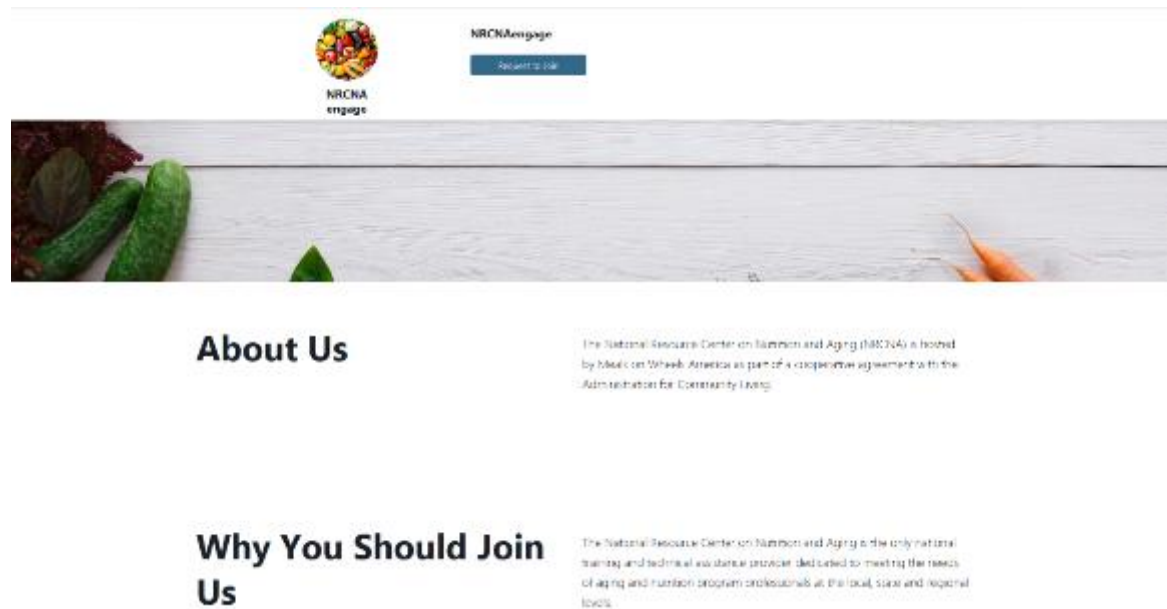
- A mix of staff with backgrounds in restaurants, hotels, dietetics, and food service management
- New positions to drive practice change (Ethnic meal coordinator)
- Elicit support from volunteers to chop, package, serve and deliver meals
- Consider establishing or collaborating to develop job training program to seed a staffing pipeline

# NRCNAengage – Online Social Network

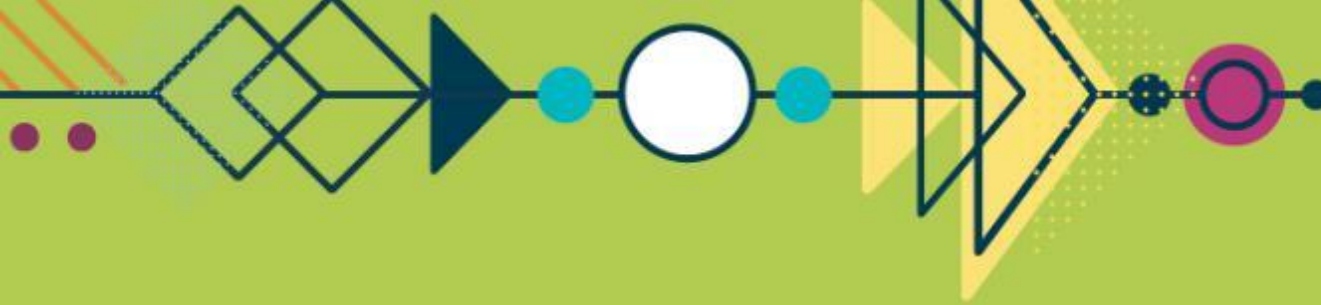
Carry on the  
conversation via  
**NRCNAengage!**

## *Why?*

- ✓ Exclusive content
- ✓ Connect with your peers
- ✓ Swap insights and ideas
- ✓ Stay inspired!







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# A TALE OF TWO SERVICE MODELS



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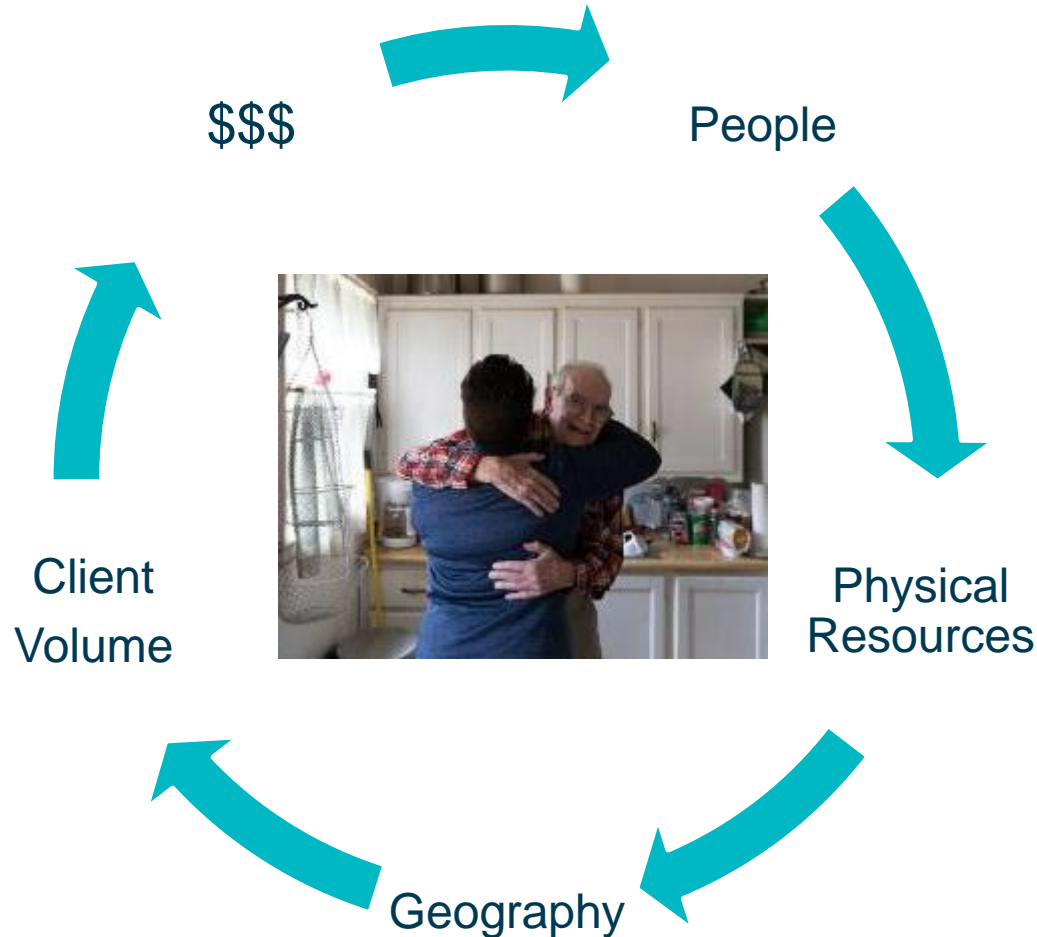
# Setting the Stage

- Urban or Rural?
- Meal Program Types?
- Biggest Challenge?
- “Innovative”?





# Keeping the Wheels Turning



# Urban Nutrition Service Models: Realities

- Big Team
- State of the Art Kitchen
- Client Density
- “More” Services
- Competition
- Big Budget



# Urban Nutrition Service Models: Challenges

- Turnover
- Upkeep
- Crime & Traffic
- “How about this ...?”
- Unmet Need



# Urban Nutrition Service Models: Solutions

- Set Up For Success
- Preventive Measures
- Route Planning
- “No, thanks”
- Stand Out From Crowd



# Rural Service Models: Realities

- Fewer Hands
- Small Board of Directors
- Self Operating or No Kitchen
- Geography
- Limited Reserves



# Rural Nutrition Service Model: Challenges

- Quality & Skills
- Lack of Sophistication
- Cost Control
- Middle of Nowhere
- Small Market





# Rural Nutrition Service: Solutions

- Mitigate Turnover
- Educate
- Explore Options
- Restructure
- Who You Know





# My Challenges





# Board of Directors: Progress

## Combatting Founder's Syndrome

### Interactive Meetings

- Consensus Agenda
- Mission Moment
- Revised Financials
- Catalytic Question
- MOW 101

### Update Bylaws & Board Manual

([www.boardsource.org](http://www.boardsource.org))



# County Model: Progress

Re-envision County Coordinator Role

## Involve Delivery Team

- Redirect Paperwork Tasks

- Listen & Learn

- Review Route Distribution

- Driving Directions & Visual Cues

- Hire Additional Paid Driver

- Thanks



# Cost Control: Progress

Review of Position Descriptions

Analyze Kitchen Operations Costs & Time

- Payroll
- Monthly Food & Supplies
- Client Feedback

Explore Outsourcing Opportunity



# Image: Progress

## 30+ Years of One Culture

- Informal Feedback
- Listen & Learn
- SWOT
- Commit to Incremental, Sincere Change

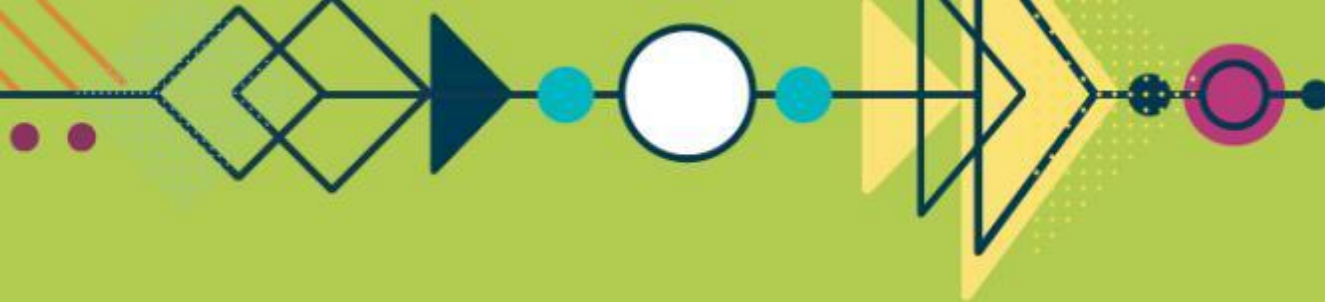
## Website & Social Media

## Establishing Myself

# Forward Momentum

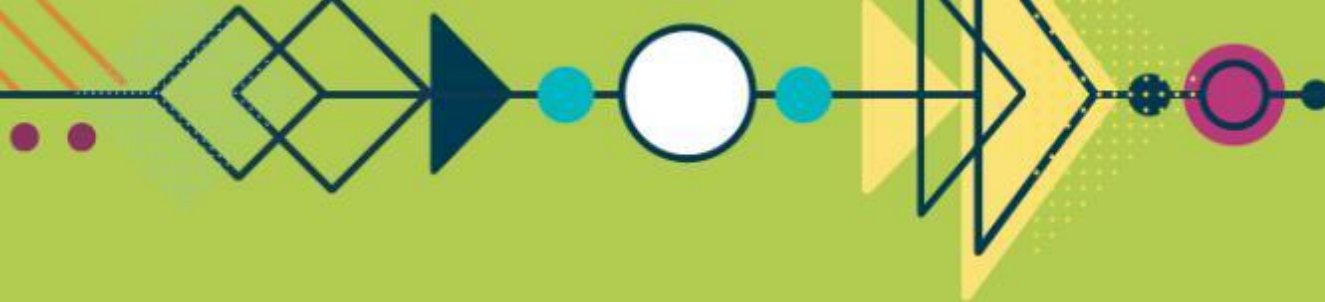
- ID Pain Points
  - Root Cause(s)
  - Prioritize
- Engage Others
- Make Mistakes
- Be Patient
- Celebrate Successes





# Group Discussion





**Thank You!**