



## FACT SHEETS SOURCES & METHODS 2019: DELIVERING SO MUCH MORE THAN JUST A MEAL

MEALS ON WHEELS IS THE ONLY FEDERALLY SUPPORTED PROGRAM DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY TO MEET THE NUTRITIONAL AND SOCIAL NEEDS OF SENIORS

“Home-delivered meal recipient characteristics” figures come from *Evaluation of the Effect of the Older Americans Act Title III-C Nutrition Services Program on Participants’ Food Security, Socialization, and Diet Quality*, a report prepared for the Administration for Community Living’s (ACL) Administration on Aging by Mathematica Policy Research (2017). **Full report available at:** [https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2017-07/AoA\\_outcomesevaluation\\_final.pdf](https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2017-07/AoA_outcomesevaluation_final.pdf)

“Meals served” figure comes from ACL’s 2017 State Program Reports (SPR). Count is for 50 states, DC and territories; calculated by adding counts for *Congregate Meals* and *Home Delivered Meals*. *Note:* Figure includes meals funded in part by the Older Americans Act (OAA) and does not include meals that are funded exclusively by private dollars. **Data available in ACL’s AGing Integrated Database (AGID) under Units – Counts:** <https://agid.acl.gov/CustomTables/SPR/Year/>

“Seniors served” figure comes from ACL’s 2017 State Program Reports (SPR). Count is for 50 states, DC and territories; calculated by adding counts for *Congregate Meals* and *Home Delivered Meals*. *Note:* Figure includes seniors served meals funded in part by the OAA and does not include those provided meals that are exclusively funded by private dollars. **Data available in AGID under Clients – Persons Served, By Service:** <https://agid.acl.gov/CustomTables/SPR/Year/>

FREQUENT IN-HOME VISITS PROVIDE UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET NUTRITIONAL NEEDS, COMBAT SOCIAL ISOLATION, ADDRESS SAFETY HAZARDS AND PROVIDE HOLISTIC CARE

“Helps them live independently” figure comes from ACL’s 2018 National Survey of OAA Participants and is for recipients of *Congregate* and *Home Delivered Meals*. **Data available in AGID under Results of participating – Help stay in own home:** <https://agid.acl.gov/CustomTables/NPS/Year/>

“Helps keep recipients from falling again” figure comes from the *More Than a Meal Pilot Research Study: Results from a pilot randomized control trial of home-delivered meal programs*, a report for Meals on Wheels America prepared by K. Thomas and D. Dosa (2015). **Full report available at:** <http://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/mtam>

“See friends more often” figure comes from ACL’s 2018 National Survey of OAA Participants and is for recipients of *Congregate Meals*. **Data available in AGID under Results of participating – See friends more often:** <https://agid.acl.gov/CustomTables/NPS/Year/>

“Home-delivered meal recipients living alone” figure comes from *Evaluation of the Effect of the Older Americans Act Title III-C Nutrition Services Program on Participants’ Food Security, Socialization, and Diet Quality*, a report prepared for ACL’s Administration on Aging by Mathematica Policy Research (2017). **Full report available at:** [https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2017-07/AoA\\_outcomesevaluation\\_final.pdf](https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2017-07/AoA_outcomesevaluation_final.pdf)

## MEALS ON WHEELS PROVIDES A COST-EFFECTIVE SOLUTION THAT SERVES US ALL

“Helps improve health” figure comes from ACL’s 2018 National Survey of OAA Participants and is for recipients of *Home Delivered Meals*. **Data available in AGID under *Results of Participating – Improve health***: <https://agid.acl.gov/CustomTables/NPS/Year/>

“Cost of Meals on Wheels for a year” figure is based on an aggregated, inflation-adjusted meal cost estimate calculated using the national meal cost averages for congregate and home-delivered meals from Older Americans Act Nutrition Programs Evaluation: Meal Cost Analysis, a report prepared for ACL’s Administration on Aging by Mathematica Policy Research (2015). This estimate includes both purchased and value of donated resources of a meal - including donated volunteer labor and non-labor resources- and therefore is not necessarily reflective of the true paid cost, which can vary widely. Estimate also reflects the estimated cost for one meal per recipient per day, with 250 operating service days per year. To calculate the estimate, we applied the following methodology and information sources:

1. We started with base estimates for both congregate and home-delivered meals using the respective national per-meal cost averages reported in ACL’s *Meal Cost Analysis* report available at: <https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2017-02/NSP-Meal-Cost-Analysis.pdf>  
*Congregate meal: \$10.69*  
*Home-delivered meal: \$11.06*
2. Averages were adjusted for price inflation of **3.4%** that occurred between the time of data collection (2015) and the most recent data year (2017). Inflation rate comes from the US Inflation Calculator tool using the U.S. Department of Labor Consumer Price Index (CPI) available at: <https://www.usinflationcalculator.com/>  
*Congregate meal:  $\$10.69 \times 0.034 \text{ inflation rate} = 0.36 \rightarrow \$10.69 + 0.36 = \$11.05$*   
*Home-delivered meal:  $\$11.06 \times 0.034 \text{ inflation rate} = 0.38 \rightarrow \$11.06 + 0.38 = \$11.44$*
3. We calculated a weight factor for the congregate and home-delivered meal cost averages based on the relative proportion of the type of meal served in 2017 (see “*Meals served each year*”), then applied each factor to the respective average.  
*Congregate meal:  $76,071,485 \text{ served} / 219,916,859 \text{ total} = 0.35 \rightarrow \$11.05 \times 0.35 = \$3.87$*   
*Home-delivered meal:  $143,845,374 \text{ served} / 219,916,859 \text{ total} = 0.65 \rightarrow \$11.44 \times 0.65 = \$7.44$*
4. We added congregate and home-delivered components together for an aggregated average per-meal cost then multiplied by 250 service days.  
 $\$3.87 + \$7.44 = \$11.31 \rightarrow \$11.31 \times 250 \text{ service days} = \$2,828 \text{ per year}$

“Cost of 1 day in a hospital” figure comes from a special data request for the American Hospital Association from the Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF). Cost estimate reflects national average for hospital adjusted expenses per inpatient day (2017). **Data available at the KFF State Health Facts website:** [www.kff.org/health-costs/state-indicator/expenses-per-inpatient-day/](http://www.kff.org/health-costs/state-indicator/expenses-per-inpatient-day/)

“Cost of 10 days in a nursing home” figure comes from the 2018 Genworth Cost of Care Survey. Estimate reflects the daily cost of nursing home care for a semi-private room multiplied by 10 days. *Note:* Genworth updates the tool annually to reflect the most current year but does not archive previous years within the tool. **Data available at the Genworth Cost of Care Survey tool website:** [www.genworth.com/aging-and-you/finances/cost-of-care.html](http://www.genworth.com/aging-and-you/finances/cost-of-care.html)