

2008 Senior Nutrition Task Force

July 15, 2008

12:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Whitney Senior Center, St. Cloud

Attendees

Barb Arrell, Senior Services Consortium of Ramsey County
Kari Benson, MN Board on Aging staff
Margaret Bisek, MN Board on Aging staff
Monica Douglas, Lutheran Social Service
Linda Giersdorf, MN River Area Agency on Aging
Rolf Hage, MN Board on Aging staff
Ruth Hunstiger, Catholic Charities of St. Cloud
Gail Jerve, Prairie Five
Grace Lee, MN Board on Aging
Beth Nelson, Task Force Chair, MN Board on Aging
Marilyn Ocepek, Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency
Mary Pat Raimondi, Facilitator, The Milestone Group
Ethan Roberts, Director, Twin Cities Jewish Community Govt Affairs Program
Annette Sandler, Jewish Family and Children's Service
Rachel Shands, MN Board on Aging staff
Dawn Simonson, Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging
Arlene Theye, Southeast MN Area Agency on Aging
Ellie Vollmer, MN Board on Aging
Lori Vrolson, Central MN Council on Aging
Jean Wood, Executive Director, MN Board on Aging staff

Welcome: Beth Nelson, Task Force Chair

Beth thanked the 2008 Senior Nutrition Task Force (Task Force) members for coming to the table and participating in the Senior Nutrition Task Force process. Beth thanked everyone for their commitment to Senior Nutrition and for their time to be involved. She asked that members not come to the table with their minds already made up but to be open to new ideas and to the perspectives of the other members.

Beth shared that the Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA) feels that the Senior Nutrition Program is a very important program in the lives of older Minnesotans. She stressed the importance of the Senior Nutrition Task Force in guiding the program through the necessary changes to ensure that it can meet the needs of today's and tomorrow's participants.

Overarching Goal

Help older Minnesotans maintain their independence through access to healthful foods.

Meeting Summary

Through the Task Force Member Survey, Perspectives and Perceptions presentations, and the Task Force discussion, several areas emerged as consensus priorities to address by the Task Force.

A. Maximize Resources

1. Achieve a collective understanding of available resources and identify ways to leverage/maximize them
2. Target the most vulnerable
3. Empower consumers to make healthful choices
4. Improve data collection and methods of information sharing
5. Update the contracting process to address multiple responsibilities and needs for streamlining

B. Build Relationships

1. Improve communication channels across Minnesota's aging network
2. Build trust at all levels
3. Work together to determine efficient/effective use of funds
4. Recognize differences
5. Forge new partnerships

C. Improve Sustainability

1. Enhance methods to assure quality of service
2. Meet unmet needs of older adults
3. Build agency capacity both individually and collectively
4. Expand use of technology to achieve greater efficiencies and increased coordination
5. Identify innovative models and approaches to reinvent senior nutrition and support high risk older adults

The following pages will outline these areas of consensus in more detail, based on the discussion of the Task Force. The notes represent just the initial thoughts of the Task Force. The Task Force will continue to delve into each area to refine their priorities and identify near-term action steps. Each section below also includes assumptions identified by the Task Force. We will continue to collect these assumptions and challenge them as a part of the next steps. Finally, questions raised and innovative models identified by the Task Force are included in each section.

A. Maximize Resources

1. **Achieve a collective understanding of available resources and identify ways to leverage/maximize them:** more information on the history of nutrition program funding and current status is needed; multiple Older Americans Act nutrition titles and new requirements/parameters are challenging for everyone

2. **Target the most vulnerable:** congregate and home delivered meal (HDM) participants are looking increasingly similar (older and more frail); HDM participants often have multiple chronic conditions and are at more of nursing home placement
3. **Empower consumers to make healthful choices:** enhance nutrition education efforts
4. **Improve data collection and methods of information sharing:** we can be getting more through NAPIS data collection, in particular nutrition risk assessment; an increased commitment to data integrity is needed
5. **Update the contracting process to address multiple responsibilities and needs for streamlining:** the Title III nutrition program provides more than a meal; there is a need to look more closely at each responsibility and identify opportunities for regional or statewide funding and/or delivery

Assumptions

- All home-delivered meal recipients are isolated.

Questions

- We do not have waiting lists so how do we know about potential demand?
- Why has the number of congregate dining participants gone down?
- Is there a market for congregate dining?
- Are more elderly accessing food shelves? Community kitchens?
- How do we target services? Does everyone do it the same way?
- Who are we reaching with our current service delivery models? How effective are we right now in targeting the most vulnerable?
- How is the rural factor of the intrastate funding formula determined?
- Should we focus on the older-old or the baby boomers?
- How can we operationalize nutrition services as caregiver support?

Models

- Swipe card to collect, update, track participant data. Can also be used for billing.
- Evidence-based health promotion linked to meals and healthy eating
- SE MN AAA's Eat Better Move More program: includes nutrition education, chronic disease self-management, falls prevention; delivered at congregate dining sites

B. Build Relationships

1. **Improve communication channels across Minnesota's aging network**
2. **Build trust at all levels**
3. **Work together to determine efficient/effective use of funds**
4. **Recognize differences**
5. **Forge new partnerships:** new partners could include other organizations (public and private) providing nutrition services and/or health plans, hospital discharge planners, for-profit businesses;

Assumptions

- It is not possible to increase the utilization of food stamps beyond the existing 10% of the older adult population who use them.
- Nutrition service providers have meaningful opportunities to provide input into local decision making and planning related to the nutrition program.

Questions

- How can we increase referrals between public and private programs to ensure continuity of service for participants, especially in the metro area?
- What percentage of those participating in a Title III-funded program are also using food stamps? Are they already using but just not for site donations?
- What role does the senior nutrition program play in providing nutrition services to the individuals under age 60 with disabilities?

Models

- Joint purchasing by nutrition service providers (including training, menus)

C. Improve Sustainability

1. **Enhance methods to assure quality of service:** linked to choice
2. **Meet unmet needs of older adults:** expand bundled service delivery
3. **Build agency capacity both individually and collectively:** need for training
4. **Expand use of technology to achieve greater efficiencies and increased coordination**
5. **Identify innovative models and approaches to reinvent senior nutrition and support high risk older adults**

Assumptions

- The preferences of older adults are changing.
- Certain delivery models are the best way to provide nutrition services.

Models

- Aitkin County bundled service delivery program
- Isanti County bundled services pilot
- Ethnic meal sites with scratch kitchens
- Diners clubs

Nutrition Priorities and Directions: Initial Review

Kari Benson proposed that the Task Force update the 2001-2005 Senior Nutrition Priorities and Directions and make it a product of the Task Force. The document was created in 2000 through a consensus building process that involved all stakeholders. The Task Force can make any changes that it would like to the document, update the timeframe to 2009-2013 and use it as the guiding framework for the program into the future.

Task Force members agreed to update the document and finalize it as a product of their work. Members provided initial thoughts regarding the priorities and directions including changing words such as “increasing” or “expanding” to “continuing” or “maintaining” given the resource constraints we are experiencing. One member recommended that a survey be conducted of the Task Force members to gather more detailed feedback regarding the priorities and directions.

Next Steps

Homework Assignments:

- Send Mary Pat a list of assumptions that you or others have related to the program by Friday, August 8.
- Send Mary Pat information on innovative models by Friday, August 8.
- Be prepared to participate in a workgroup between now and the September meeting.

Next Meeting:

September 16

10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

American Heritage National Bank

2915 2nd Street South

St. Cloud

320-654-9555

[Whitney Senior Center meeting space was not available on this date for the full meeting time period. Since we will not be meeting at a dining site for this meeting, MBA will provide lunch for everyone.]