

# Background and Purpose

## A. Goals:

This project had two goals:

- 1) To increase nutrition knowledge among Georgia seniors (age 60+) by building a replicable means to connect those who have increased nutrition risk with a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) and;
- 2) To develop and utilize standardized web-based nutrition presentations for use in senior centers across the state of Georgia.

## B. Objectives:

- 1) Increase awareness of and participation in Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT) via a telehealth platform for older adults at high nutrition risk.
- 2) Design a nutrition education curriculum to send to the aging network which they can present to their seniors monthly.

## C. Overview of Project:

Open Hand Atlanta, in partnership with the Georgia Division of Aging Services and AAAs, provided two core innovations intended to bridge the gap between health and nutrition. First, we connected older adults to a RDN for those who screened high for nutrition risk, offering MNT via telehealth. Second, we developed a standardized set of nutrition presentations that senior centers can utilize monthly in a virtual setting. This project was mutually beneficial for older adults and for the AAAs to have consistent, evidence-based nutrition education created and delivered by an RDN.

## D. Project Results:

- An RDN provided over 5,012 engagements across 23 statewide senior centers and observed improvements in health-related confidence and motivation (Figure A).
- Open Hand provided 142 virtual MNT sessions and received about 469 referrals. The majority of participants reported at least one behavior change after participating in MNT sessions (Figure B).

Figure A. Demonstrates improvements in lifestyle behaviors after group education sessions.

Figure B. Demonstrates behavior changes following MNT sessions.

