



# Senior Nutrition Program

## Webinar Takeaways

### **Trifecta Introduction: Nutrition, Socialization, and Health & Well-Being**

March 4, 2021

[Webinar recording and PowerPoint](#)

This webinar was an introduction to a series of events held in March to celebrate the anniversary of the National Senior Nutrition Program, which began in 1972.

#### **Learning Objectives**

- Understand the intention of the Older Americans Act (OAA).
- Discuss virtual programs and how to market successfully to older Americans.
- Explore how to expand initiatives to increase reach by thinking creatively.

The webinar began with an overview of the webinar series and a game of “Nutrition Jeopardy,” followed by two speakers from local organizations that successfully adapted programs during the pandemic. The event concluded with closing remarks by Deputy Assistant Secretary of Aging Edwin Walker.

#### **Introduction**

*Keri Lipperini, MPA, Director, Office of Nutrition and Health Promotion Programs, ACL*

- Emphasized the importance of all three components – the trifecta – of senior nutrition programs: nutrition, socialization, and health and well-being.
- Introduced Jeopardy contestants: Beatrice, Peaches, and Ginger and the host of “Nutrition Jeopardy,” Judy Simon.

#### **Nutrition Jeopardy**

*Judy Simon, MS, RD, LDN, National Nutritionist, ACL*

**The ACL office leading the Celebrate the Senior Nutrition Program event is:**

- ***Office of Nutrition and Health Promotion Programs (answer)***
- Office of Nutrition
- Office of Eating Well
- Office of Smart People

**Which NEW issue was added to the 2020 reauthorization of the OAA that relates to the senior nutrition program? (select one)**

- Hunger
- Food
- ***Malnutrition (answer)***
- Meals

**Which of the following is a purpose of the OAA nutrition program?**

- Deliver meals to homebound older adults
- Educate people about eating blueberries
- ***Promote socialization of older individuals (answer)***
- Offer dessert first

**Which statement is true about the Senior Nutrition Program?**

- We must serve everyone who applies to participate
- Eligibility for meals is based on income
- Populations with poor nutrition should be targeted
- **Nutrition programs should target older individuals who are in greatest social and economic need (answer)**

**What national standards are the key nutrition requirements for the OAA nutrition program?**

- **Dietary Reference Intakes and Dietary Guidelines for Americans (answer)**
- Aging National Nutrition Standards
- Eating Well for Older Adults
- Older Americans Nutrition Guidelines

**When was the last time the Dietary Guidelines for Americans was released?**

- **2020 (answer)**
- 2005
- 1900
- Never

**Based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, what is an important component of a meal served in the Senior Nutrition Program?**

- Plenty of fiber, to help with constipation
- Raisins because they are a fruit
- Spicy food to help with decline in ability to taste
- **Protein, to help address risk of sarcopenia (answer)**

*Sarcopenia is age-related loss of muscle and strength. It results in functional declines and loss of independence.*

**According to the OAA, what professional is considered the source of reliable nutrition education?**

- Certified Dietary Counselor
- **Registered Dietitian (answer)**
- Nutritionist
- Keri Lipperini

**All states should have the same nutrition standards since they are all based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs) and the Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs).**

- True
- **False (answer)**

*While required to meet the DGAs and DRIs, each State Unit on Aging develops its own unique policies, procedures and reporting mechanisms based on the needs of their populations and their state priorities.*

**How can the senior nutrition program prioritize which clients they can serve?**

- First-come, first-served
- Oldest clients first, then younger
- Lottery system
- **OAA targeted populations and those with greatest social and economic need (answer)**

## Speaker #1

*Jason Echols, MSW, Manager of Special Initiatives and Fraud Protection, AgeOptions, Illinois*

- AgeOptions is the Area Agency on Aging for suburban Cook County, Illinois, outside of Chicago.
- Two programs that help to reduce social isolation; successfully transitioned to a virtual world:
  - Memory Café: focuses on people living with dementia or memory loss, and their care partners can meet others and enjoy time together.
  - Thrive with Pride Café: Faith-based and other community organizations that partner with AgeOptions to host programming for LGBT+ older adults
- Cafes offer many different activities, including art and music therapy, sing-alongs, educational speakers, and chair yoga.
- Federal, state, and private sources all contribute to funding.
- Programs are promoted through the aging network, partners, and online (e.g., Facebook, website).
  - Network, network, network – make connections with partners to further your promotion efforts.
- Quantitative measures include the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Loneliness Scale pre- and post-surveys and End of Year Surveys.
- They are now looking at ways to reach more people:
  - Memory Café: extend to people with limited English
  - Thrive with Pride: reach out to non-traditional partners

## Speaker #2

*Joel Sekorski, Director, Services for the Elderly, Sullivan Senior Center, Connecticut*

- “Food brings them in, awareness of programing content and services keep them coming back!”
- “Can’t Be Done?” “Not Funded?” “Not Enough Staff?”
  - “There are no good excuses, only good results.”
- Innovative ideas with OAA congregate meals.
  - Created events centered around holidays and special dates/events.
  - Partnered with caterers for special upgraded menus that meet the RDI requirements.
  - Partnered with area stakeholders for information and giveaways that meet the nutrition education requirements.
- The pandemic forced them to think outside the box:
  - Held car hops featuring live entertainment (outside)
  - Parking lot socialization
  - Incorporated fun extras like ice cream sundaes and popcorn
- Their tools for success include:
  - Partnerships with local stakeholders needing to market themselves in the community (e.g., First Responders, Municipal Department Heads)
  - Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares
  - Community gardens
- COVID-19 provided a unique opportunity to hit the reset button.
  - Continue the new ideas/events even after things open back up (e.g., technology).
  - Enhance nutrition programs and food options.
  - Keep staff engaged and involved when volunteers return.
  - Recommend that OAA continues takeout meals.

## **Closing Remarks**

*Edwin Walker, JD, ACL Deputy Assistant Secretary of Aging*

- Encouraged people to look at their programs with fresh eyes and dialogue with their participants by asking open-ended questions to ensure their program addresses the three intentions of the OAA: nutrition, socialization, and health and well-being.
- Reminded attendees about the upcoming webinars on March 11, March 18, and March 25 and asked them to go to the Celebrate Our Senior Nutrition Program website at [www.acl.gov/seniornutrition](http://www.acl.gov/seniornutrition).