



Nutrition and Aging
Resource Center



Nutrition and Aging Resource Center: A Year in Review

October 2024



Year Three in Review

The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services, in partnership with Iowa State University, reflects on its third year of hosting the Nutrition and Aging Resource Center (NRCNA). This "Year in Review" highlights successes and impacts for the year.

"One stop source for resources and understanding of the needs of the users."

-2024 Satisfaction Survey Respondent

Increased Reach of the Nutrition and Aging Resource Center

The NRCNA strives to increase the number of individuals reached on the website, social media, and newsletters. The number of total followers on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#), and [e-newsletter](#) increased to 31,383 (may be duplicated individuals). Our evaluation surveys further suggest that our resources are reaching new audiences. 22% of respondents became aware of the NRCNA within the past year. If you have not yet followed the Nutrition and Aging Resource Center on our e-newsletter or your favorite social media channel, please follow along today!

"I find their newsletter positive and informative – brief enough for me to read quickly and get key information."

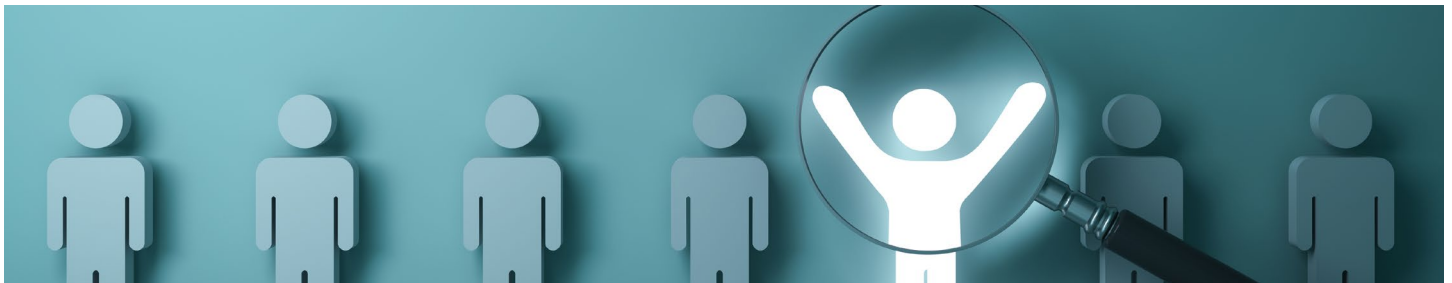
-2024 Satisfaction Survey Respondent

Published 46 New Resources

Forty-six new resources were developed and published on the NRCNA website. These resources were created and targeted based on the results of the evaluation activities completed by the NRCNA including a needs assessment and annual satisfaction survey. The NRCNA also uses direct feedback and requests from the senior nutrition program network to tailor resources. Resources created include full guides, infographics, social media toolkits, quick guides, webinars, ready-to-use materials, and quickinars.

Check out a few highlighted resources for the year:

- [Strengthen Your Staffing \(YouTube\)](#) - One-hour panel discussion with creative tips for recruiting and retaining staff and volunteers
- [Grab and Go 101: A Quick Guide for Aging Nutrition Programs](#) - Grab and go or to-go meals basics, considerations, and examples
- [Using Data Effectively in Federal Grant Applications \(YouTube\)](#) - Tips and practical examples to use data to meet an application's goals and objectives
- [Nourishing Older Adults: Insights from SUAs on Combating Malnutrition Through OAA State Plans \(YouTube\)](#) - Discover how SUAs take proactive steps to combat malnutrition by addressing it in their state plans on aging
- [Sample Choice Menu](#) - Examples of how choice menus are offered by four different programs
- [The Amazing Adventures of Captain Funds Finder](#) - Captain Funds Finder leads the way in this comic-style guide to finding and securing various funding sources
- [Embrace Technology to Innovate](#) - Five overarching reasons that health plans should work with CBOs and community care networks as contracted partners



2024 Summer Webinar Series

The 2024 Summer Webinar Series, [Navigating Partnerships: Connection to Collaboration](#), was a four-part series with network experts discussing how to grow and maintain successful partnerships in the community. The series had over 1,268 registrants and 505 attendees. Attendees reported an increase in knowledge after attending a webinar, and almost all (97%) of respondents said they would attend a future NRCNA-sponsored resource and recommend the NRCNA to a colleague.



A four part webinar series on Navigating Partnerships: From Connection to Collaboration.

[Playlist](#)

Instructional Campus on Aging Nutrition (ican!)

ican! a series of study-at-your-own-pace training modules covering a wide array of topics relevant to Older Americans Act (OAA) nutrition programs including:

- Basics of the Older Americans Act nutrition program
- Participation, Promotion, and Partnerships
- Nutrition, Health and Wellness Needs
- Operating a Nutrition Services Program: Volunteer and Employee Management

ican! users who filled out an evaluation survey responded with high satisfaction of the course (537 total respondents). 92% reported they would recommend ican! to others, and 97% reported they were committed to applying what they learned to their work.



Published in *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*

The NRCNA published its first peer-reviewed journal publication this year. The study highlights the effectiveness of needs-based training as the training modality, and topics were chosen based on the 2022 Needs Assessment Report. Additionally, the study practices equitable evaluation by assessing whether outcomes were fairly achieved by respondents regardless of race, age and education. Check out the abstract:

Schultz, S., Francis, S. L., Shelley, M., & Datta, M. (2024). Ageism webinars: a needs-based continuing education training for the national aging network. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02701960.2024.2340982>

Audience Satisfaction and Impact

The NRCNA distributed a satisfaction survey in May 2024. 81 respondents identified as primarily female (85%), white (78.9%), and having an advanced or post-graduate degree (47.9%). The average age of respondents was 50 years. Most respondents worked in the aging field for at least 3 years (83.3%) with the most common duration of more than 15 years (30.3%) and 3 to 5 years (24.2%). Around one quarter (25.9%) of respondents serviced primarily rural locations.

92% of respondents said they would recommend the NRCNA to a colleague, friend, or family member. When asked how they used the NRCNA resources, the top three uses included to gather ideas for my nutrition program (80%), towards nutrition program management and operations (73%), and towards professional development and education (52%).

Additionally, the top three words respondents chose to describe the NRCNA were "Credible, Accessible, and Helpful."

"I always find the resource center helpful when exploring new ideas, menus, and information and assistance for support staff."

– 2024 Satisfaction Survey Respondent

"It's a trusted source. Provides up-to-date and reliable information"

–2024 Satisfaction Survey Respondent

"Knowledgeable, warm, welcoming, helpful, passionate about nutrition issues!"

–2024 Satisfaction Survey Respondent

Credible

Accessible

Helpful

Meeting the Network

The NRCNA loved meeting the network this year! Staff traveled to ten states to present to state, region, and national events. Topics of the presentations included overviews of valuable resources, senior nutrition program 101, innovations in congregate nutrition, malnutrition, and promising practices across the network. Are you wanting the NRCNA at your next event? [Complete this form](#) to send us a request.

Presentations were highly interactive and well-attended. 102 individuals provided conference presentation feedback:

- Almost all attendees (95%) indicated they were "likely" or "very likely" to access the NRCNA website and resources in the next 3 months.
- Familiarity with the NRCNA and Senior Nutrition Programs rose significantly from pre to post-sessions ($p < 0.0001$). This indicates that conference sessions were effective at increasing familiarity.

Highlighting Innovations in Nutrition Grantees

The NRCNA is the technical assistance center for all ACL Innovations in Nutrition Programs & Services grantees. Two newly organized webpages dedicated to [highlighting grantees](#) and [grantee capstone projects](#) were created and updated regularly. The NRCNA also hosted an annual in-person gathering in May 2024 in Des Moines, Iowa. The theme was “Innovations in Nutrition Synergy Summit: Bridging Ideas and Innovations.” Attendees reported positive feedback, were satisfied with the conference, and planned to utilize the learnings in their work.



Learning

INNU grantees gather each year and hear top-tier national speakers on topics that relate to current projects.



Networking

Events are scheduled to allow interaction among grantees and discussions with the NRCNA team members.



Empowering

Innovative grant projects encourage ideas and possibilities. Grantees receive a boost from the gathering and discuss ways to successfully implement learnings in their communities.