

Adult Services Division – Older Americans Act Nutrition Programs

Program Overview

[Older Americans Act \(OAA\)](#) services, provided through Vermont’s five Area Agencies on Aging, support Vermonters age 60 and older and are designed to help older Vermonters remain as independent as possible with a high quality of life. OAA services include case management; nutrition services; health promotion and disease prevention; information, referral and assistance; legal assistance; and family caregiver support. This summary focuses on the [OAA Nutrition Programs](#) for people 60 and over, referred to as Home Delivered Meals and Congregate Meals.

Home Delivered Meals and Congregate Meals contribute to the food security of older adults and can play an important role in promoting good health, preventing disease, and lowering rates of disability, hospitalization, depression and mortality. According to the [USDA](#) over 8% of Vermont senior households are food insecure; over 17,000 are threatened by hunger, and nearly 40,000 are isolated and live alone.

The demand for senior meals is growing. Efforts are being made at the federal, state and local levels to strengthen meal programs and develop innovations in nutrition services.

Staff and Partners

The Adult Services Division (ASD) State Unit on Aging (SUA) manages the OAA services. The unit consists of five staff that manage nine different grants, five area plans and the VT State Plan on Aging. The OAA Nutrition Program partners include the VT Association of Area Agencies on Aging (V4A) and its five-member agencies:

[Age Well](#)

[Senior Solutions](#)

[Central Vermont Council on Aging](#)

[Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging](#)

[Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging](#)

Each agency works with a network of meal providers who prepare nutritious meals that meet current USDA Dietary Guidelines. Meals are delivered by dozens of volunteers across the state every day.

Recent Developments and Accomplishments

The SUA has worked closely with the AAAs to monitor the growing demand for meals across the state and find creative ways to serve more people with limited

Adult Services Division – Older Americans Act Nutrition Programs

funding. Examples include streamlining transportation, closing under-performing congregate meal sites, increasing local and private fundraising efforts, implementing a new home delivered meals screening tool to prioritize those at highest risk, and encouraging the use of home delivered meals by people enrolled in Choices for Care and the Attendant Services Program.

Future Directions

With limited funding, an aging population in need, and a growing understanding about the critical link between good nutrition and positive health outcomes, the AAAs will continue to work closely with the SUA staff to prioritize services for Vermonters at greatest risk and to utilize new performance measures to monitor outcomes and improve performance.

Results

In Federal Fiscal Year 2016 (most current available data):

- 5,616 Vermonters received home delivered meals (14% increase)
- 812,423 meals were delivered to people's homes (0% increase)
- 13,451 Vermonters participated in community meals (21% increase), receiving 353,164 meals across the state (4% decrease).



The five AAAs are now all using the following nutrition program performance measures:

- The number and percentage of home delivered meals clients who report they have enough to eat
- The number and percentage of home delivered meals clients who report that meals help manage or improve their medical condition