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Your Update from AgeOptions

April 2017

Unexpected New Funding Will Increase Home-Delivered Meals and Reach More Clients

The Illinois Department on Aging unexpectedly released an additional \$1.1 million to AgeOptions for home-delivered meals during the current state 2017 Fiscal Year (July 2, 2016 – June 30, 2017).

Kim McCahill, AgeOptions director of Planning and Grants, reports that the new funding will support a second meal per day for many of our current clients, shelf-stable meals for weather and other emergencies during the year, additional special diet meals, and expanded outreach. “Our priority is to provide additional meals and improve nutrition for older adults while still supporting our infrastructure,” Kim said.

For current recipients, the focus is on expanding second and weekend meals for clients in need. Plans for reaching new clients include partnering with Hanul Family Alliance to provide ethnic meals for Korean older adults, partnering with food pantries to help reach frail older adults with additional food and working with hospitals and managed care organizations to have patients’ discharge plans include referral for home-delivered meals.

“Normally it takes two weeks for discharged patients to be assessed. We want meals to start within two days after the patient goes home,” said Spencer Harstead, AgeOptions nutrition specialist. “Nutritious meals when patients go home will help reduce the readmission rate.”

In addition to working with discharge planners, we are in the process of developing materials that can be given to patients and families at discharge with information about home-delivered meals and who to contact for assessment.

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In the 2016 fiscal year, AgeOptions partner agencies delivered more than 700,000 meals to 4,241 older adults in suburban Cook County. Approximately 188,000 additional meals are expected to be served with the new funding. Just under 10 percent of the funds will be used for equipment to support the increased volume of meals.

For information about home-delivered meals, call AgeOptions at (708)383-0258.

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