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October 2018

AgeOptions Receives Grant to Reduce Food Insecurity and Nutrition Risk

AgeOptions is one of five agencies nationwide to receive the U.S. Administration for Community Living's Nutrition Grant. The two-year grant will enable AgeOptions to develop and implement a referral system with health care providers to decrease the prevalence of food insecurity and increase the likelihood that patients who are experiencing food insecurity and/or are at nutrition risk will receive and act upon referrals to community-based resources. Participating health care providers are Rush University Medical Center and Oak Street Health.

Additional project objectives are to increase referrals from health care providers to nutrition programs and increase patient access to and utilization of nutrition programs, benefit programs (SNAP, Medicaid, etc.), and evidence-based wellness programs (Chronic Disease Self Management, A Matter of Balance). Findings will be shared with the aging network and Congress.

Kendon Conrad, Ph.D., and Karen Conrad, Ph.D, co-directors of Program Metrics, LLC, consultants in program design, measurement, statistics and evaluation, will evaluate the program.

Anticipated outcomes are:

- Older adults will have increased access to nutritious food that meets medically necessary health requirements
- Continuity of care between community and clinical settings will be established and enhanced
- Health care providers will prove a reduction in health care expenses for referred patients

- Analysis will reveal the long-term financial viability of maintaining and expanding the referral system
- A sustainability plan will be developed to support the initiative in the future