

February/March '07 Nutrition InfoGram

Issue Number 15

A bimonthly Electronic Newsletter from the Nutrition and Health Promotion Team of the California Department of Aging

Inside This Issue

- **AAA Nutritionists Meetings**
- **Guidance**
 - **Guidance for Reporting Nutrition Education Data**
- **Customer Service**
- **Website Updates**
- **Video Library Updates**
- **Resources of Interest**
- **Meals on Wheels Association of America Information**
- **Contact Information**

AAA Nutritionists Meetings

Southern California

Wednesday, February 21. 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

City of Los Angeles Department of Aging

2404 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 400

Los Angeles, CA 90057

(213) 252-4073

Bertha Hurd will be hosting the meeting

Northern California

Friday, February 23. 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

California Department of Aging, Conference Room 1A

1300 National Drive, Suite 200

Sacramento, CA 95834

(916) 928-3330

The CDA Nutritionists will be hosting the meeting

All interested persons are welcome to attend.

Older Americans Month will be highlighted in the next InfoGram. If you are planning any special events and would be willing to share your ideas, please e-mail them to Violet Henry at vhenry@aging.ca.gov.

Guidance

Guidance for Reporting Nutrition Education Data

Authority:

Elderly Nutrition providers are required to submit data on the number of Nutrition Education Sessions provided for both congregate and home-delivered meal participants. This guidance provides clarification on what a Nutrition Education Session is and how they should be counted and reported to the California Department of Aging (CDA). Section 339 (J) of the Older Americans Act (OAA) and the California Code of Regulations (Title 22, Section 7638.11 below) specifies the requirements for providing Nutrition Education to ENP participants.

Section 339 (J) provide for nutrition screening and, where appropriate, for nutrition education and counseling.

Title 22 Section 7638.11 (a) Nutrition education shall be provided a minimum of four (4) times per year to participants in congregate and home-delivered meal programs. Nutrition education for congregate sites is defined as demonstrations, presentations, lectures or small group discussions, all of which may be augmented with printed materials. Printed material may be used as the sole nutrition education component for the home-delivered meal participants, as well as in conjunction with a congregate meal nutrition education presentation.

The November 2004 Reporting Requirements for Title III and VII provided by the Administration on Aging defines Nutrition Education as follows:

Nutrition Education (1 session per participant) – A program to promote better health by providing accurate and culturally sensitive nutrition, physical fitness, or health (as it relates to nutrition) information and instruction to participants, caregivers, or participants and caregivers in a group or individual setting overseen by a dietician or individual of comparable expertise.

Policy Guidance

The following guidelines have been developed to clarify what a Nutrition Education session is and how Nutrition Education sessions should be reported to CDA.

Congregate

- Nutrition Education is counted as one session per participant. For example, if there were 50 people attending a congregate nutrition education session, this would be counted as 50 sessions, not as one session.

Home-delivered meal

- Nutrition Education is counted as one session per participant as the definition indicates. For example, if there were 50 people receiving home-delivered meals

that were provided with printed material on Nutrition Education, this would be counted as 50 sessions, not as one session.

- Printed material may be used as the sole nutrition education component for the home-delivered meal participants. However a menu that has been annotated to include caloric counts and sources of various nutrients could not be counted as Nutrition Education.

Customer Service

This section will begin a series of articles, tips, resources, and information to assist providers in developing strategies to improve customer service and increase program participation. They are based on business principles that can also be used in the public/non-profit sector. The panel members who presented the *Addressing Declining Congregate Meal Numbers* workshop at the C4A Conference in November used many basic customer service strategies to improve their programs and increase participation. This series will help you develop a solid customer service based program using many of these same principles.

Successful dining centers attract older adults and provide a warm and welcoming environment where they can enjoy a nutritious meal, socialize with their friends and peers, participate in classes and wellness activities and have access to information and other services which help them stay healthy, active, and engaged in the community. Staff and volunteers who are trained in operational policies and procedures, and who also have the people-skills to help create such an environment are essential to the success of the program.

The following article is for the business community. However, the ideas can also be useful for non-profit programs.

Ten Fundamentals of Legendary Service

By Rick Tate and Gary Heil

Improving the quality of your customer service requires commitment and consistent effort from everyone. Creating a product or service that is unique in the eyes of the customer is becoming increasingly difficult in today's competitive environment. Therefore, more companies are relying on service to achieve competitive advantages. Outstanding service companies share some basic similarities, but they also customize systems, structures, management styles, and employment practices to suit their strategic goals.

These 10 fundamentals will help create a culture of continuous improvement. Companies must define success for everyone in the organization as continually improving everything – everyday. Nothing less will do.

1. Make a commitment to service. The return on investment for companies that impress their customers with value added service can be staggering. These returns are

not the result of providing excellent service but of customers perceiving that a company delivers service that is unique. Achieving quality service takes a serious commitment from every employee in the organization to remove the “s” word (satisfy) from service goals and instead work to **exceed** customers’ expectations to the point that customers are willing to tell others.

2. Develop a proactive recovery strategy. The quickest way to improve your service reputation is to improve your recovery process. Customers are impressed by companies that make an empathetic, hassle free effort to recover when customers perceive that they received less service than they expected. These efforts dramatically communicate to customers that the company cares, that it is sensitive to the customer’s business and that it will stand behind its product or service, no matter what. An effective recovery strategy requires going all out to find disgruntled customers.

3. Ensure continuous improvement. Effective service improvement is the cumulative effect of a thousand small improvements made daily at every level in the organization. It often requires changing the culture from one that accepts the status quo to one that is excited about change and continuous improvement. Innovating service practices and redefining service delivery must be everyone’s job. Start small and demand improvement from everyone. Define success as continually improving in all areas, including service, first-time quality, cost reduction, productivity, and development of human resources.

4. Listen to customers. Listening is the foundation of all good relationships and a prerequisite to business success. But surprisingly few companies systematically listen to customers, suppliers, employees, and competitors. Because service professionals spend so much time with customers, they must be the primary source for developing and updating the system.

5. Facilitate Change. Service problems are leadership problems, often resulting from management’s unwillingness to change structures, reduce the number of inflexible policies and procedures, set higher service goals for themselves and their work groups, and spend more time on customer-related issues. Service improvement efforts fail more from ineffective management practices than from lack of front-line effort. Yes, the front-line people are often unwilling or unable to take risks necessary to embrace their changed role and enthusiastically deliver service that consistently exceeds customer expectations. But this happens because leaders fail to ensure that:

- Desired service outcomes are well defined;
- The service delivery process is clearly communicated and perceived to be flexible;
- Guiding principles and core values are established;
- Everyone understands their role in the program.

6. Define the playing field. Front-line employees must understand the rules of play and how to win before they can successfully customize service for the customer. There must be a clearly defined direction (a goal-line that indicates how to score) and

predefined parameters (the “rules” or boundaries) that outline the limits of responsibility and decision making. In the past, outlining boundaries has been accomplished primarily by correcting mistakes. Unfortunately, this does not communicate what is desirable, only what is out of bounds. When employees are not secure, they focus on avoiding problems and mistakes and not on creativity and customization. This uncertainty often results in such responses as “I’d like to help you but it’s not my job,” “I just work here,” or “It’s just our policy.” These responses are the consequence of a risky service culture created by uncertain boundaries and inconsistent goals.

7. Provide autonomy. Creative, dedicated, enthusiastic service professionals who routinely make business decisions and improvise when necessary are the foundation of excellent service. Yet many companies ignore the benefits of engaging the talents of their work force. Too often they ask front-line employees to park their brains at the front door and blindly obey pre-determined policies and procedures. Serious service improvement involves people meaningfully in every aspect of service delivery, including service planning, innovation, and process improvement. It means replacing many “rules” with judgment, allowing for greater flexibility in front-line decision making within well defined parameters. It requires more trust between leaders, employees, and their unions, a greater sharing of information and an unprecedented commitment to continuous education. The heroes in a customer-focused culture must be highly trained, enthusiastic front-line service professionals who make hundreds of decisions daily to deliver a customized product faster than ever before.

8. Measure performance. Managers must educate everyone to routinely measure all of the responsibilities crucial to success. Cost-reduction measures should be balanced with measures of service, quality, leadership, employee flexibility, and continuous improvement. The most valid measures of service quality are the subjective opinions of customers. Only customers can evaluate service in light of their unique expectations. Consequently, responsibility for measuring and demonstrating continuous service improvement should be focused closer to the service professional. Only when service teams are actively involved in every facet of the service business, including measurement of quality, can organizations capture the creativity and enthusiasm needed to radically enhance service delivery.

9. Hold everyone accountable. When we ask, “Who is responsible for service improvement in your organization?” We are usually given the names of several people whose responsibilities cross many functional areas. When a service problem surfaces, these people point out that the root cause of the problem exists with another group. This “fragmented accountability” is no accountability at all. Until a single person is accountable for service improvement and until serious personal consequences are set for failing to achieve service goals, continuous service improvement is unlikely. Lack of individual accountability allows leaders to avoid focusing on ineffective managerial practices, such as adhering to time-wasting routines, attending endless meetings, failing to set goals that test their talents and failing to change ineffective reporting and promotional structures. If all employees were held personally accountable for

influencing the perception of the customer, customer service would be perceived as a part of the strategic plan instead of a “slogan” or theme program.

10. Celebrate Success. Every organization must develop a culture of celebrated discontent – a simultaneous feeling of accomplishment and a desire to improve. Too often, though, organizations create an almost schizophrenic “either/or” mentality celebrating one minute and being emphatically discontent the next. People find these environments confusing and uncomfortable. Organizations must celebrate often, making the celebrations sincere and spontaneous. Those who consistently demonstrate improvement must become the heroes.

CDA Web Site Updates

Additional changes were made to subsections 7638.5(a) and (b) of the Elderly Nutrition Program Title 22 regulations. Notice of availability of modified ENP Regulations and text of the modified regulations can be found at the following website:

http://www.aging.ca.gov/regs/elderly_nutrition_program.html.

The final rulemaking file has been submitted to the Office of Administrative Law.

Video Library Updates

Tippy Rose Mangaran is in the process of updating the video library list. Each library item will be numbered. The numbering system will facilitate processing library requests and assist in tracking items that are on loan. A new video library listing will be posted on the website when the list and revised procedures are completed.

Resources of Interest

Menu Planning

The New York City Department of Aging has developed a set of menus that can be used by their providers. This website contains 180 pre-approved lunch menus that meet program requirements. The menus reflect the diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds of the population served and include Latino, Korean, Kosher, and vegetarian menus, as well as regular, summer (cold), and holiday menus. Menus and more information can be found on the following website:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dfta/html/community/menus.shtml>

For healthy menu planning ideas consider attending the *Food Management and Restaurant Hospitality Healthy Customers Healthy Profits Seminar* on March 2, 2007 from 8am-3pm at the Anaheim Hilton, Anaheim, CA 92802.

For more information contact: Katie Smith by telephone: (216) 931-9559 or e-mail: ksmith@penton.com or visit the following website at: www.food-management.com. The seminar is being presented by: Food Management Magazine & Restaurant Hospitality Magazine. To register visit the following website: www.expowest.com.

Food Safety

The following is the link to the “Reducing Risk Factors at Retail and Food Service” the Food and Drug Administration’s sponsored Satellite Broadcast that aired on November 30, 2006: <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/retrsk4.html>. The program can now be viewed on-line. The site contains resources, contact information, and information on how to borrow videos of the program.

Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

The American Heart Association has published their year-end report on the incidence of cardiovascular disease and stroke in the United States. Information can be found at the following website: www.americanheart.org/statistics. Select Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics 2007 update.

The following website is for cardiovascular healthcare professionals: www.theheart.org. The site contains *Heartwire*, a professional news service of WebMD.

Meals on Wheels Association of America Information

March for Meals is scheduled for March 2007. The theme is branding and collaboration. Contact Heather Skelton at Image Marketing 706-376-2015 for more information.

Mayors for Meals is March 21, 2007. For information go to the following website: www.mowaa.org

The Nutrition and Health Promotion Team Contact Information

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