

Multnomah County Aging, Disability and Veterans Services Division Community Services Satisfaction Study - 2014

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Executive Summary

This report describes the results of a consumer satisfaction study conducted by Portland State University's (PSU) Institute on Aging with users of sites where congregate meals and activities are offered in Multnomah County. The study gathered information about older adults' perceptions of services they receive at Multnomah County Aging, Disability and Veterans Services Division (ADVSD)-contracted District Senior Centers, congregate meal sites, and Enhancing Equity agencies, including clients' satisfaction with and knowledge of services and activities at sites that offer congregate meals. The study was intended to facilitate understanding, from the clients' perspective, of how well services are being delivered and how clients are being treated by staff and volunteers. It further intended to provide guidance concerning what might be done to improve clients' experiences. Data for this survey were collected in October, November, and December, 2014. Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

This Executive Report overviews the study's methods, summarizes the key findings, and presents the study team's conclusions and recommendations.

Study Method

A random sample of willing consumers at 13 contracted meal sites was interviewed, with approximately 10 surveys per site completed (N = 131). The interview guide used was developed by County staff, modified in concert with PSU project staff, vetted with advisory groups of elders, and further modified to take into account their suggestions. Consumers attending sites selected by ADVSD on a day chosen by the research team and the site manager received a numbered drawing ticket, and a drawing of 10 numbers was conducted to select respondents. Interviews were conducted in separate rooms to the extent possible, or in the corners of the room if not, with precautions taken to protect the confidentiality of respondents' answers (e.g., pointing to response options on a card when appropriate, rather than asking the respondent to state the response out loud). For clients who were not comfortable with being interviewed in English, Multnomah County or the site provided an interpreter. Upon completion of the interview, the survey participant received a \$5 Fred Meyer or Safeway gift card as a token of appreciation for his or her time and support.

Respondent Characteristics

All subjects were adults aged 18 or over. Of the 131 participants who completed interviews, 73 were women. Ages ranged from 48 years to 94 years, with a mean age of 72 years and a median age of 75. A total of 67 participants identified themselves as non-white and 64 identifying as white. Participants who defined their race or ethnicity as other than white were Armenian, Bhutanese, Ethiopian, Jewish, and Uzbekistani.

On balance, the findings from this study indicate that the majority of respondents are very satisfied or satisfied with their experiences at the sites they attend for meals, activities and socializing. There were a few reports of poor treatment and discrimination by staff, volunteers, or other participants, and some sites serve meals less frequently than others and provide fewer services or have had to cut back on services. Language is a barrier at times, with some respondents expressing a need for more bilingual staff or translators. In this section, the study's major findings are highlighted, and based on these findings the project team offers the following recommendations.

Language and Culture:

Multnomah County Consumer Satisfaction Survey participant responses highlight the importance of increasing accessibility to nutrition services, honoring unique cultures and languages, and providing a comfortable, inclusive environment where people can meet and interact.

Recommendations:

- Continue providing a comfortable environment where participants can socialize, experience culturally-appropriate meals, participate in activities, and find a gateway to needed services.
- Increase capacity so that more culturally-appropriate activities are offered at locations that serve several different cultural groups.
- Increase staff awareness and sensitivity to the needs and preferences of diverse groups participating at their site.

Disability and Access

Most of the sites are doing a good job accommodating elders' functional limitations and most participants found that their site's building provided easy access to eating areas and bathrooms, and had aisles wide enough for wheelchairs and walkers to navigate comfortably without fearing and risking falls.

Some respondents with mobility limitations who attended sites with interior and exterior steps discussed their need to move slowly on stairways, take breaks, or avoid an area altogether. Lack of parking in the site lots proved to be difficult for some participants.

Many participants use public transportation as their primary means of getting to and from the site, and access to busses and MAX trains is necessary for these individuals.

Recommendations:

- Exterior entrances with stairs and interiors with stairs to meeting rooms should be monitored at the times that older adults arrive and leave the location, and support should be offered for those with mobility limitations, visual impairment, and those who use assistive devices to go from place to place.
- Adequate parking for people who drive should be provided whenever possible, and when parking is limited staff and volunteers should designate specific times to assist participants who have to navigate uneven sidewalks and pavement during arrival and departure times.
- More lift bus rides for disabled participants who are unable to walk safely to and from bus stops would be very beneficial, as would having more time at the site to eat in a more leisurely fashion and socialize.
- Funding for bus tickets and passes that can be provided free of charge or at a reduced rate for individuals with limited financial resources is needed.

Participation, Treatment and Empowerment

Most people interviewed indicated they were better off due to their involvement at the sites. Several desired outcomes resulting from participation were identified including gaining a better understanding of ways to stay healthy by attending workshops, lectures, and exercise classes, and having a place to connect and feel at home.

Most participants are greatly appreciative of staff and volunteers who treat them with respect and courtesy and offer assistance in finding avenues to obtain needed social supports and services.

We found two sites where participants did feel racially discriminated against. At one, one group said the other got better treatment by volunteers who shared the better-treated group's race/ethnicity and that those volunteers saved bread for that group but not for the other. At another participants were angry and felt they were discriminated against by volunteers who did not share their race/ethnicity.

Most respondents are comfortable talking with managers, assistant managers, other staff, and volunteers about things they would like to see added, improved, or changed, and staff address concerns and requests with consideration and regard for cultural preferences. However, at the two locations where racial discrimination was reported, some participants believe that their requests would not be acknowledged, or that they would be regarded as unimportant.

Recommendations:

- Continue to provide culturally-specific meals and activities that target the needs of different ethnic/racial groups.

- Have Multnomah County ADVSD staff do spot checks at sites to ensure that each location serves its diverse populations equally, without favoritism, and without discrimination.
- Provide training to managers, staff, and volunteers of sites that address racism, bias, and unfair treatment.
- Increase staff and volunteers who are fluent in the languages most spoken at specific locations.

Respondents' General Likes, Dislikes, and Overall Satisfaction

Many participants were appreciative of staff that speak their language and are able to interpret for them and help with paperwork. At other locations, several respondents who spoke little English suggested that those in charge should be fluent in the language spoken by most, and some reported they would benefit from English language classes.

Many of those satisfied with their sites would like to see more of the same types of meals, services and activities offered, and on more days, and more transportation provided to and from the site.

Recommendations:

- The ability to connect and communicate is key in addressing participants' needs to socialize and more easily integrate into the greater community, so increasing capacity to provide regular English language classes at sites where participants speak little or no English is an important consideration.
- Increasing the number of days meals are offered at sites where meals are provided one or two days a week would facilitate health and well-being for a wide range of marginalized minority individuals.
- Financing public transportation for participants with limited financial means would enable them to more easily access their site and obtain the services they need to maintain health and quality of life.

Appendix B

Interview Sites, Providers, and Service Details

# Interviewed	Site	Providers		Activities Offered
10	East County congregate meal site - Ambleside Center	Meals on Wheels People	Congregate meals (Lunch M-F)	Enhanced Fitness
		Gresham Sr. Ctr. /YWCA		Board Games; Bingo; Walk with Ease; more
10	Asian Health and Service Center culturally-specific congregate meal site	Asian Health And Services Center contracts with restaurants	Congregate meals (Lunch M-F); home delivered meals	Evergreen Club (exercise; discussions; health info.; travel guide; cultural celebrations); Portland Senior Club; Mandarin-Speaking Club; Vietnamese Senior Group; Korean Portland Healthy Friends Clubs; Chinese Opera; Dance Club; Home Care Training; Tax Aid; Options Counseling; Older Americans Act Case Management; Evidence-based Health Promotion
		Asian Health And Services Center	Congregate meals (Lunch M-F)	
12	IRCO Mid County congregate meal sites – Cherry Blossom	Meals on Wheels People	Congregate meals (Lunch M-F); home delivered meals	Enhanced Fitness; Options Counseling, Older Americans Act Case Management, Recreation, Volunteer Services Games, Book Club
		IRCO		
10	El Programa Hispano; Catholic Charities culturally-specific congregate meal site	Catholic Charities	Congregate meals (Lunch M-F); home delivered meals	Options Counseling; Older Americans Act Case Management; Evidence-based Health Promotion; Recreation; Volunteer Services; Congregate Meals.
10	Elm Court Center congregate meal site	Meals on Wheels People	Congregate meals (Lunch Su-Sat); home delivered meals	Board Games; Aerobics; Yoga; Focal Point Leadership; e.g. outreach and senior center programming; Information & Assistance; Transportation Scheduling & Coordination; OPI Case Management; Options Counseling; Older Americans Act Case Management; Evidence-based Health Promotion; e.g. Chronic Disease Management & Education; Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance; Arthritis Exercise;
		Neighborhood House		

				Walk with Ease; and Powerful Tools for Caregivers and others
10	Fook Lok	Meals on Wheels People	Congregate meals (Lunch M-F); home delivered meals	Enhance Fitness
10	North/Northeast District Center Hollywood Senior Center	Meals on Wheels People	Congregate meals (T; Th)	Focal Point Leadership; e.g. outreach and senior center programming; Information & Assistance; Transportation Scheduling & Coordination; OPI Case Management; Options Counseling; Older Americans Act Case Management; Evidence-based Health Promotion; e.g. Chronic Disease Management & Education; Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance; Arthritis Exercise; Walk with Ease; and Powerful Tools for Caregivers and others.
		Hollywood Senior Center		
11	IRCO Mid County congregate meal sites - Glisan St.	Meals on Wheels People	Congregate meals (Lunch Tu; Wed)	Focal Point Leadership, e.g. outreach and senior center programming; Information & Assistance; Transportation Scheduling & Coordination; OPI Case Management; Options Counseling; Older Americans Act Case Management; Evidence-based Health Promotion, e.g. Chronic Disease Management & Education, Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance, Arthritis Exercise, Walk with Ease, and Powerful Tools for Caregivers and others.
		IRCO		
9	NE Multicultural Senior Center congregate meal site - Martin Luther King Jr. Center	Meals on Wheels People	Congregate meals (Lunch M-F)	
	Urban League of Portland	Urban League		Fitness classes; Tai Chi; Games; Celebrations; Home Visits; Guardian Assistance; Money Management Services; Congregate Housing Services; Focal Point Leadership; e.g. outreach and senior center programming; Information & Assistance; Transportation Scheduling & Coordination; OPI Case Management; Options Counseling; Older Americans Act Case Management; Evidence-based Health Promotion; e.g. Chronic Disease Management & Education; Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance; Arthritis Exercise; Walk with Ease; and Powerful Tools for Caregivers and others

10	Metropolitan Community Church LGBT culturally-specific congregate meal site	Meals on Wheels People	Congregate meals (Lunch W)	
10	West District Center - Neighborhood House	Meals on Wheels People	Congregate meals (Lunch M-F)	Food Boxes; Information and Assistance/Referral Senior Transportation and Volunteer Driver Program; Activities; Focal Point Leadership; e.g. outreach and senior center programming; Information & Assistance; OPI Case Management; Options Counseling; Older Americans Act Case Management; Evidence-based Health Promotion; e.g. Chronic Disease Management & Education; Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance; Arthritis Exercise; Walk with Ease; and Powerful Tools for Caregivers and others
		Neighborhood House		
9	NAYA Family Center culturally-specific congregate meal site		Congregate meals (Lunch M-F)	Congregate Meal
		NAYA		Potlucks; Exercise; Educational Services; Trips; Options Counseling; Older Americans Act Case Management; Evidence-based Health Promotion e.g. Chronic Disease Management & Education; Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance; Arthritis Exercise; Walk with Ease; and Powerful Tools for Caregivers and others; Recreation; Focal Point Leadership; e.g. outreach and senior center programming; Information & Assistance; Transportation Scheduling & Coordination; OPI Case Management;
10	Impact NW congregate meal site – Belmont Center	Meals on Wheels People	Congregate meals (Lunch M-F)	Enhance Fitness;; Belmont Boutique; Open Mic; Focal Point Leadership; e.g. outreach and senior center programming; Information & Assistance; Transportation Scheduling & Coordination; OPI Case Management; Options Counseling; Older Americans Act Case Management; Evidence-based Health Promotion; e.g. Chronic Disease Management & Education; Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance; Arthritis Exercise; Walk with Ease; and Powerful Tools for Caregivers and others
		Impact NW		