Health Issues Facing Older Americans: Importance of Nutrition to Healthy Aging

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Health stats

• Share of 65+ living in nursing homes dropped from 4.5% in 2000 to 3.1% in 2010
• Medicaid funding for home and community based care has increased from 13% in 1990 to 43% in 2007.
• Nutrition issues present challenges to older adults. Rising rates of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition are cause for increased concern.
Nutrition as a Vital Sign

Over 20 years ago, nutrition was proposed as a vital sign for older adults...

...but nutrition is still not a routine part of healthcare

A Hidden Epidemic of Malnutrition

Today, there is a focus on...

Poor Nutrition

...which most people define as...

Overweight & Obesity
Food Insecurity
Hunger

Malnutrition

...but a hidden epidemic of undernutrition and malnutrition must also be addressed
What is Malnutrition?

Malnutrition simply means **poor nutrition**.

It can be related to:
- An excessive or imbalanced diet
- Clinical conditions that impair the body’s absorption or use of foods
- A diet that lacks essential nutrients

Aging is a risk factor for malnutrition
Public Awareness of Malnutrition

The media has begun to recognize the impact malnutrition has, especially on older adults in America...
Policymaker Awareness of Malnutrition

Policymakers have also started realizing the impact of malnutrition in America and have begun to promote awareness...

2014 Malnutrition Resolutions:
IN HR 24, IL HR 418, LA SR41, OH HR 306

2015 Malnutrition Awareness Week Resolutions
FL HR 550, GA SR 254, LA HR 87, TX HR 1419
The Economic Impact of Malnutrition

300%

The increase in healthcare costs that can be attributed to poor nutrition status

21.6%

The reduction in hospital costs for patients who used Oral Nutrition Supplements

$157 Billion

The amount of money that disease-associated malnutrition costs the U.S. each year

In this Increasingly Quality- and Value-Centered Market, Malnutrition Has a Significant Impact

MALNUTRITION IS ASSOCIATED WITH A HIGH BURDEN OF DISEASE, INCREASED COMORBIDITIES, AND SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC COSTS

1 in 3 patients are malnourished upon admission

31 percent of patients experience declines in nutrition status during their hospital stay

Malnutrition-associated outcomes include depression of the immune system, impaired wound healing, and muscle wasting

Malnutrition increases length of stay by 4 to 6 days

Malnutrition increases costs by up to 300 percent

What is a Solution?

Changing Healthcare Practice and Accountability for Malnutrition

The Alliance to Advance Patient Nutrition (The Alliance) created this model for a **multidisciplinary** approach to addressing malnutrition in hospitals. The care model emphasizes six multidisciplinary actions.

Malnutrition Quality Improvement Initiative Offers a Solution to Enhance Quality of Malnutrition Care

Malnutrition Care Workflow

Screening
Nutrition screening using a validated tool for all patients age 65 years and older with a medical or surgical hospital admission

Assessment
Nutrition assessment using a validated tool for all patients identified as malnourished or at-risk for malnutrition

Diagnosis
Documentation of nutrition diagnosis for all patients identified as malnourished or at-risk for malnutrition

Treatment
Establishment and implementation of a nutrition treatment plan, including intervention and monitoring, for all patients identified as malnourished or at-risk for malnutrition
What is a Solution?

**Older Americans Act**
- A critical program that has helped older adults age 60+ remain at home and in community for 50 years
  - Nutrition (congregate, Meals on Wheels) is largest program in the Act, provides meals and nutrition education which should include more screening.
- Money flows to states and locally-based Area Agencies on Aging
- 4 years late in being reauthorized
  - New bi-partisan bill S 192 passed Senate HELP, on way to Senate floor
  - Also supports family caregivers who are key to helping prevent malnutrition
- Program saves Medicaid and Medicare, but need the data to prove it

**Long Term Care as A Solution**
- Long term care—biggest unfunded liability of the boomer generation
- Lacks a national policy, piecemeal to date
- CLASS act was an attempt that failed
- Rebalancing of federal dollars toward home and community-based care a good start
- Must address access, cost, financing, choices, outcomes
- Nutrition key to home and community based services
What is a Solution?

Other Policy Solutions

Affordable Care Act

• Emphasize malnutrition screening and intervention in care transitions grants and other relevant grants and or projects

• Make future grants or projects contingent on inclusion of malnutrition screening and intervention in care delivery models, such as integrating nutrition into the Coleman Care Transitions Intervention

• Expand Essential Health Benefits to include malnutrition screening and therapy

Hospital Readmissions

• Include malnutrition screening and interventions in state healthcare quality initiatives and care models, especially those related to hospital readmissions and healthcare-acquired conditions

• Include malnutrition screening and intervention in electronic health record templates visible to all healthcare professionals
What is a Solution?

Other Policy Solutions

Federal and State Health Goals

• Add malnutrition into the Healthy People 2020 goal for nutrition and weight status and as a key indicator of older adult health

• Address increased protein requirements of older adults and need for increased protein Dietary Reference Intake for this group

• Expand Medicare-covered medical nutrition therapy to include diabetes and other conditions

• Address malnutrition in state obesity plans
What is a Solution?

Other Federal Opportunities

- Senate Finance Committee
  - Chronic Care Management: working to include nutrition
- 21st Century Cures: House Energy and Commerce Committee
  - Does not include nutrition, must work to have this included in final version.
- Managed Care Rules from CMS
  - Does not include nutrition as a part

Elder Justice as A Solution

- Elder abuse, neglect and exploitation growing threat to health of older adults
- 1 in 10 persons over age 60 are victims
- Those victims of elder abuse lose at least $3 billion a year.
- Self neglect on the rise malnutrition can be a factor
- Federal response has been minimal to date
- EJA passed as part of ACA. Funding remains elusive
White House Conference on Aging

• Held yesterday July 13, 2015, 6\textsuperscript{th} in history. Proud to attend, 4\textsuperscript{th} one of my career

• 2 of the 4 priority topics are \textit{Healthy Aging} and \textit{Long-Term Services and Supports}
  – Both are relevant to \textbf{nutrition}. NANASP and others have worked to make nutrition a key indicator and combating malnutrition as a goal

For more information, visit the website: http://whitehouseconferenceonaging.gov/
White House Conference on Aging

• NANASP working with Abbott submitted responses to the policy papers issued by the WHCOA on healthy aging and LTSS.
• Hosted a listening session at the NANASP annual conference in June
• Submitted a petition on need to recognize malnutrition by the WHCOA
White House Conference on Aging

Nutrition = Solutions to Healthy Aging and Long-Term Services and Supports

2015 WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE on AGING

National Listening Session
January 29, 2015

The WHCOA hosted a National Listening Session on nutrition Conducted by NANASP, AND and Abbott Nutrition

The archived presentation is available at: ANHI.org
• At the conference
White House Conference

• Now that the WHCOA has been held, focus is on its final work product. Follow up advocacy on malnutrition will be needed.

• A new national malnutrition coalition will be forming to do follow up advocacy on the solutions and issues presented today.
Why the time is NOW!

2015 is...

- 80th Anniversary of Social Security
- 50th Anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid
- 50th Anniversary of the Older Americans Act
- The 6th White House Conference on Aging
- 5th Anniversary the Affordable Care Act

This makes 2015 the opportune time to assure that these policies are aligned with current healthcare priorities, which include a focus on:

- Preventative care
- Quality of Care
- Cost Containment

And malnutrition screening and intervention support all of these goals.

References

Resource Page

- National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs, NANASP: http://www.nanasp.org/
- The Alliance to Advance Patient Nutrition: http://malnutrition.com/getinvolved/hospitalnutritiontoolkit
- White House Conference on Aging: http://whitehouseconferenceonaging.gov/
- NOBEL Resolution on Malnutrition: http://www.nobel-women.org/downloads/Malnutrition%20Resolution%20June%202012.pdf
- Archived White House Conference on Aging National Listening Session, Nutrition = Solutions to Healthy Aging and Long-Term Services and Supports: ANHI.org
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