

Oral Health Education for Meals On Wheels Volunteers



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Abstract

Program Goal: Educate volunteers participating in Spokane County Meals on Wheels delivery services on the importance of nutrition and cavity prevention in the aging population.

Implementation: Provide informational oral health videos for volunteers to aid in their understanding and recognition of common oral and systemic occurrences relating to nutrition and oral disease seen in the geriatric community.

Evaluation: Creating evaluation forms for the volunteers to complete on rating the effectiveness of the videos in covering program objectives.

Conclusion: Videos will be posted on the Meals on Wheels (MOW) website for volunteers to revisit and watch for their weekly deliveries.

Mission and Vision: Community Partners

In this project, we partnered with Meals on Wheels of Spokane County and Aging and Long Term Care of Eastern Washington (ALTCEW).

- The vision of ALTCEW is vision is to provide the best home and community-based services to support healthy living and aging in place.
- In this project we partnered with ALTCEW in their mission to promote well-being, independence, dignity, and choice for all older persons and for all individuals needing long-term care. In this project, we helped to achieve the mission by “Creating innovative outreach and information mechanisms to reach isolated vulnerable individuals” (ALTCEW).

Implementation: What We Did

In partnership with ALTCEW and Spokane MOW, we developed the first in a series of training videos aimed to prepare Meals On Wheels volunteers for addressing common oral health questions, nutrition for seniors, and oral health in our senior population. The end-product is in the form of two sort voice-over presentations, available to MOW volunteers upon orientation as well as permanently on the MOW website.

A second opportunity in this partnership is the *Check and Connect* program for seniors. Students complete an orientation to the program, followed by assigned seniors to connect with on a weekly basis.

Evidence-based Practice



- Nearly all adults (96%) aged 65 years or older have had a cavity; 1 in 5 have untreated tooth decay (CDC, 2021).
- Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (HANES) data indicated that 16% of community-dwelling Americans older than 65 years consumed fewer than 1000 calories per day.
- Persons from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and members of vulnerable communities are at a higher risk of tooth loss, oral disease, and edentulism.

