



IT'S **MORE**
THAN A MEAL

Nutrition and Adult Day Health Programs

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Food Program (CACFP)

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Clarify your program's role in promoting your participants' health. Learn how the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) works to promote good nutrition.

This section will cover the following topics:

The Role of your Program in Promoting Health

This section will explain the role of your program in promoting the health of your participants who are older adults.

Facts About the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

This section will also provide some facts about the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) that you may find useful, whether you are new to CACFP or have already been participating in this program. These include:

- A description of the CACFP program
- The types of facilities that provide CACFP benefits
- How the meals are paid for
- How much federal reimbursement is available
- How programs receive credits for providing meals
- Who prepares the meals for these programs
- Who controls the content of meals
- Where your program can get more information

The Role of Your Program in Promoting Health

Recent trends show that more Americans than ever are living longer lives. These days, few older adults live in nursing homes. The majority of older adults live in a community setting with a spouse, family members, or friends, or alone. Preventive health can help maintain or improve their independence and quality of life.

Nutrition and physical activity are important parts of preventive health. Since older adults in day health programs eat many of their meals in this setting, your program can help contribute to a healthful diet. Your program can also play a role (when appropriate) in encouraging physical activity to help improve well-being, increase flexibility, improve bone health, and reduce the risk of falls leading to injuries or fractures.

Many older adults face changes that can affect their food intake and nutritional status. The changes may be physical, health-related, social, or psychological. The nature and extent of these changes will vary among adults. Good nutrition can address many of these changes to help older adults improve their health and maintain their quality of life.

This manual will focus on nutrition and health, nutrients in foods, special needs of older adults, and cultural issues and foods that may be relevant to your program. It will show you how to apply this information to plan healthful meals, and to choose foods that qualify for reimbursement from the Child and Adult Care Food Program. The manual is accompanied by educational materials that you can share with staff, older adults, and caregivers. As you expand your knowledge about nutrition, foods, and cultural issues, you can play a greater role in promoting your participants' health and well-being.

Facts about the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

WHAT IS CACFP?

CACFP is the Child and Adult Care Food Program. This federal program provides healthy meals and snacks to children in day care centers and adults in day health programs. It plays a vital role in improving the quality of care and making it more affordable to families.

CACFP reimburses participating programs for their meal costs. There are three tiers of administration for the CACFP program: federal, state and local. At the federal level, CACFP is managed by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In most states, the state education department or health department administers CACFP. At the local level, independent centers and sponsoring organizations enter into agreements with their state agencies to operate the program.

The website address for CACFP is www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/cacfp/cacfphome.htm.

What types of facilities participate in CACFP?

Many facilities choose to participate in CACFP. These may include childcare centers, family day care homes, after-school care programs, adult day health programs, and homeless shelters. This manual will focus on issues and needs relative to adult day health programs.

Adult day health programs are public, private, nonprofit, and some for-profit adult day health facilities that provide structured, comprehensive services to functionally impaired, non-resident adults. To qualify for CACFP meals and snacks, adult participants must be functionally impaired or age 60 and older. They may receive up to 2 meals and 1 snack each day at the adult day health programs that participate in CACFP.

How are the meals paid for?

Some adult day health participants are charged the full price for their meals. Others qualify for free or reduced-price meals. Those from families with annual gross incomes at or below 130% of the federal poverty level may qualify for free meals; those from families with income between 130% and 185% of the federal poverty level may qualify for reduced-price meals; and those from families with income above 185% of the federal poverty level pay full price.

How much reimbursement is available?

Most programs include meals as part of their fees. Programs receive payments based on the type of meal served and adults' eligibility for free, reduced-price, or paid meals. As of July 1, 2005,* programs in most states also receive an average of 17.5 cents in commodities (or cash in lieu of commodities) for each lunch or supper served, in addition to these rates:

* Rates change annually on July 1.

Meal Type	Free	Reduced-Price	Paid
Breakfast	\$1.27	\$0.97	\$0.23
Lunch or Supper	\$2.32	\$1.92	\$0.22
Snack	\$0.63	\$0.31	\$0.05

How do programs receive credit for meals?

Programs must serve meals and snacks that meet federal guidelines. Information on crediting meals and snacks is in the *Crediting Foods* section of this manual. The USDA has prepared documents that describe the full set of regulations.

Who prepares the meals for these programs?

Adult day health programs make different arrangements for meals. Some programs prepare their own meals. Some are located in a nursing home that prepares meals for residents as well as day health program participants. Some contract out to a vendor for meals. There are a variety of vendors. Examples are local restaurants, school food service programs, or community food service agencies that also operate *Meals on Wheels* programs.

Who controls the content of the meals?

Due to the variety of meal arrangements and vendors, the degree to which your program can influence the content of meals will vary. In all cases, meals and snacks that qualify for reimbursement in the CACFP must meet standardized specifications (see the *CACFP Meal Pattern for Adults* in the *Crediting Foods* section of this manual). These specifications meet nutrient needs using a variety of food groups, in specific quantities of foods, with specific kinds of ingredients (such as whole grain or enriched flour). However, the meals may vary in terms of the source of these foods. Some vendors may use USDA commodity foods as ingredients for some of their meals. Other vendors may purchase packaged foods from other sources, or buy fresh foods from a local supplier.

Some vendors must comply with regulations different than, or in addition to, those set by CACFP. For example, a school food service vendor may also be subject to regulations set by its local school district. A vendor that also provides meals for congregate meals in a community center or home-delivered meals (such as *Meals on Wheels*) must also comply with standards of the U.S. Administration on Aging's Elderly Nutrition Program (Elder Affairs Menu Policies and Nutrition Standards) which specify that meals provide a certain amount of calories while staying within specific guidelines for fat and sodium.

Many adult day health programs do not use the CACFP program for snacks. They may have more options for purchasing food, and for types of foods to serve.

In implementing the recommendations of this manual, your program will need to evaluate the degree of direct control that you have over the content of meals and snacks. You can then decide how many changes you can implement to improve the content and appeal of meals and snacks, and to address the diversity of older adults served by your program.

Where can your program get more information?

- To learn more about the CACFP in Massachusetts, contact the Massachusetts Department of Education, Nutrition Health and Safety Unit, 350 Main Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148, phone 781-338-6498.
- To learn about CACFP in other states, refer to the list of state agencies in the Resources section of this manual. This list was current as of June 2005. You can also find the most recent list of state agencies at this website: www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm.
- To learn about USDA's nutrition assistance programs, check the Food and Nutrition Service website at www.fns.usda.gov/fns. You can contact the FNS public information staff by phone at 703-305-2286, or by mail at 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 914, Alexandria, Virginia 22302. If you have further questions that state or local agencies cannot answer, contact the Food and Nutrition Service headquarters by email at cdinternet@fns.usda.gov.

