Meals on Wheels for WNY

Nourishing and Enriching Lives
About Meals on Wheels

**Mission:** To enrich lives and to promote independent healthy living by offering nutritious food and a friendly visit.

**Vision:** Every member of our community will receive a meal that meets their nutritional needs.
Our Programs

• Home-delivered (over 60, under 60)
  • Full program management
  • Approximately 3,600 meals a day (one hot, one cold)
  • 3,600 unique clients per year
  • More than 900,000 meals per year

• Congregate:
  • Meal production only
  • Approximately 1,200 hot meals a day
  • More than 250,000 meals per year

• Meals Express

• Private production
What we do

Home-delivered:
• Each weekday, meals are prepared at our centrally-located commissary and distributed to our 25 meal delivery sites throughout Erie County
• Each meal recipient receives one hot and one cold ready-to-eat meal
• Provide recipients with companionship and help them maintain independence, dignity and well-being

Congregate: Each weekday, meals are prepared at our commissary and delivered (bulk or unitized) to one of 45 senior centers throughout the county
Who we serve

• **Home-Delivered Eligibility:** Age 60+ or disabled; chronically ill and/or homebound; unable to prepare own meals or shop for groceries
  • 66% live alone
  • 70% are nutritionally at-risk
  • 94% have one or more chronic illnesses
  • 70% require special diets
  • 65% are functionally disabled

• Additional populations (short-term respite, bed rest, under 60, etc.) served through other agency programs

• **Congregate Eligibility:** Age 60+ or married to someone age 60+
Who we serve

They are real people like **Wayne:**

- Born deaf, worked as mechanic for 22 years.
- Surgical mishap left him quadriplegic.
- Less than 60 years old.
- Sister, Sharon, lives with/cares for him.
- “Meals on Wheels is a **Godsend.** He loves the food & I don’t have to worry about what he’s eating.”
Who we serve

They are real people like **Samuel**:

- Senior who lives alone.
- Diabetic with chronic heart & back problems.
- Cannot walk more than a block.
- Lived on canned goods.
- “I just don’t know what I’d do without Meals on Wheels. The food has helped me **feel so much better.**”
Who we serve

They are real people like Linda:

• Double-knee replacement surgery.
• No family.
• Unable to stand, drive or cook healthy meals.
• On short-term service, receiving 5 meals/week.
• “I am so pleased with Meals on Wheels. The program has been such a relief!”
Fast facts

We serve approximately 900,000 meals to nearly 3,600 homebound elderly and disabled each year.

One of the largest volunteer-based organizations in WNY with more than 1,500 volunteers.

We produce approximately 5,000 meals per day out of our commissary (across programs).
How we’ve grown

1969: Began as Food & Nutrition Services - 25 recipients in Buffalo
1976: 140,000 meals served annually
1979: 1st million meals served
1994: 10 millionth meal served
2000: Agency moved to 100 James E. Casey Drive
2006: 20 millionth meal served
2009: Production begins in new state-of-the-art commissary
2012: Served 25 millionth meal (only second out of 5,000+ MOW)
2013: Began food production for Erie County’s congregate dining program
2014: Began service in Southern Tier: Boston, Colden, Concord, Holland and Sardinia
How we do it: our departments

Social Work: Helps new recipients with intake process, maintains daily contact with recipients and caregivers and provides caregivers with safety net to ensure recipient well-being

Nutrition: Ensures seniors’ dietary needs are met through planning / preparation of safe and healthy meals. Provides in-home nutritional assessments and counseling

Support Services: Coordinates the daily movements, mechanical and statistical aspects of meal delivery, including route planning

Site and Volunteer Services: Recruits, trains and leads volunteers and manages all site operations and employees to ensure accurate and efficient delivery of meals
How Meals on Wheels Works

• Meals on Wheels is contacted by a person in need, caregiver or physician

• Meals on Wheels investigates the need (and refers individual to additional county services)

• Meals on Wheels works with an individual’s doctor to identify the correct diet

• Meals on Wheels begins service, relying on 1,500 volunteers to deliver daily meals
What recipients receive

• Clients receive a hot lunch and cold dinner each day. These nutritious and medically appropriate meals provide 2/3 of the necessary daily nutrients

• Clients are able to stay in their homes, maintaining independence, dignity and well-being

• Clients enjoy volunteers’ companionship, friendship and smiles
The crucial role of volunteers

Volunteers provide food, friendship and a daily well-being check. Our 1,500 volunteers are the lifeblood of our organization.

Volunteers are placed at a site near their home/work:
• 25 sites available
• Delivering meals directly to those in need
• Weekdays at mid-day
• About an hour
• Drivers and Servers needed
• Volunteers select their frequency
• Most volunteers say that they “get more than they give”
• Groups can volunteer through our “Adopt-A-Route” program
Volunteering: Roles

• Most volunteers elect to be either a Driver or a Server. *(Some are okay being either; some like to go out alone.)*

• **Drivers** use their own vehicles to pick up the meals at their site, and – following turn-by-turn instructions – to take the server from stop to stop for delivery.

• **Servers** meet the Driver at the site and help get everything loaded for delivery. They get out of the car at each stop, get the correct meals from the equipment and go in to visit the client. They share a few minutes of conversation and observe any changes with the client or home.
Volunteering: The client visit

Volunteers provide significant value to the clients through their visits.

• **Meals** – The meals they deliver are nutritionally balanced and, for some, medically appropriate. We offer a regular diet as well as diabetic/calorie controlled, renal, ground and bland diets.

• **Companionship** – Can you imagine having no one to talk to all day, every day? The majority of our clients live alone so having someone to talk to each day is absolutely critical. The clients appreciate it so much!

• **Well-being check** – Volunteers observe many things in the home – including meals that are stacking up in the fridge, a change in grooming or speaking, or even dangerous conditions. Reporting these to the Site Manager enables the MOW team to follow up with caregivers and emergency services to make sure the client is healthy.
Volunteering: Getting started

• Prospective volunteers select a role (Driver, Server, both)

• Prospective volunteers are paired with a site based on where they are at mid-day (work, home, school)

• Prospective volunteers select their frequency (e.g., once a week) and indicate what days work best

• Volunteers are set up with a first day at their site. They fill out registration paperwork, receive training and go on their first delivery with an experienced volunteer

• Volunteers then set their schedule with their Site Manager. On an ongoing basis, volunteers share any questions, concerns or changes with their manager
Adopt-A-Route (group volunteering)

Groups can volunteer as well with the Adopt-A-Route program.
• “Adopt-A-Route” near the office once a week
• 8 – 10 employees volunteer to assist
• Each employee gives up just one lunch hour per month

Adopt-A-Route is
• A great (and free) way for employers to get involved with the community
• A great way for busy professionals to give back while maintaining work-life balance
• A huge help for Meals on Wheels!
The Value / Importance of “Meals”

• **Brown University** recently did an intensive 9-year study of the relationship between the Older Americans Act and the prevalence of low-care individuals in nursing homes.
  • The major finding of this study was that programs such as Meals on Wheels have a tremendous impact on the community and the ability of people to live independently while also saving money for the system overall.
  • According to the data, for every additional $25 a state spends on home-delivered meals each year per person over 65, the low-care nursing home population decreases by an entire percentage point.

• **The United Way of Buffalo and Erie County** recently released its 2011-12 Community Needs Assessment Report.
  • Erie County is home to the nation’s 9th oldest population.
  • Between 2000 and 2010, the number of adults over 60 in E.C. grew 4%. The number over 85, grew 27%.
  • The ratio between potential caregivers (E.C. residents aged 20 – 65) and those over 65 decreased from 4.6 to 3.5... The United Way expects this number to decline further.
The value of volunteering

In late 2012, we completed a brand awareness study, with more than 1,000 clients, volunteers, staff, and community members responding.

- Clients identified us as a true lifeline
- Clients identified strongly with the companionship aspects – not only are they hungry, many of them are desperately lonely
- Many clients provided write-in responses that they would not be able to eat or live independently without MOW
- The large majority of clients indicated that volunteers were there “close friends / family”
- The large majority of volunteers listed interactions with the clients as one of their favorite three aspects of volunteering
Ways you can help

• **Donate** – Donations are always needed and used very efficiently

• **Volunteer** – Volunteers are needed in many of our communities. It’s so easy to “share an hour, save a life.”

• **Adopt-A-Route** – Sign your business or community group up to Adopt-A-Route

• **Share leads** – Let us know about businesses who may have need of high quality, affordable meals
Ways you can help (cont.)

Spread the word – Help other learn about Meals on Wheels

• **Speaking engagements** – MOW has individuals available to speak about the program, impact of the program, volunteerism and more to your group.

• **Hunger & Hope Tour**
  • Want to learn more about Meals on Wheels? Come in for our one-hour “Hunger & Hope Tour” to hear stories about our clients and caregivers and to receive a partial tour of the facility
  • Find dates and times at www.mealsonwheelswny.org or call 822-2002 and ask for Rachel or Lisa to RSVP
Questions?
Meals on Wheels for WNY

822-2002

www.mealsonwheelswny.org

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