More Than a Meal: Leveraging Meals on Wheels nutrition program to identify and coordinate services for at-risk seniors

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Meals on Wheels Provides More Than a Meal

• Home-delivered meal programs serve our nation’s most vulnerable seniors
  – Medical and nonmedical social needs
• Meals on Wheels delivers ‘more than a meal’
  – Friendly visit, and wellness check
• Opportunity to leverage routine interactions to identify and address unmet needs for at-risk seniors
Study Design

Two-year study: March 2016 – March 2018

• Phase 1: Assessed interactions and potential for standardization

• Phase 2: Piloted a technology-enabled wellness check
Pilot Sites

• Site 1: Meals on Wheels San Diego County, CA
  – Program with 3,000+ volunteer drivers delivering meals to 3,000+ clients across urban, suburban, and rural areas in one county

• Site 2: Meals on Wheels Guernsey County, OH
  – Program with 18+ paid drivers delivering meals to 600+ clients across several rural counties
Proactive Approach to Identify and Address Needs

- Driver uses mobile application to deliver meal
- Driver receives prompt to indicate concern or change in client condition
- Driver selects wellness category and submits electronic alert
- Care Navigator follows-up with client and connects them to services and supports
Preliminary Findings

• Implementation
  – Site 1: 5 routes, 35 drivers, 208 clients
  – Site 2: 16 routes, 18 drivers, 641 clients

• Preliminary findings for Site 1
  – 168 electronic wellness alerts were submitted for 48 MOW clients
    • ~25% of clients on test routes
    • ~10% had multiple alerts across time
    • Average age 82 years old, 56% female, 67% lived alone
Preliminary Findings

*Total Wellness Alerts (N = 168) by Category for MOW Clients at Site 1

- Health: 65 alerts (40%)
- Self-Care: 33 alerts
- Mobility: 22 alerts
- Home: 20 alerts
- Social: 16 alerts
- Nutrition: 11 alerts

*Total Wellness Alerts (N = 168) by Category for MOW Clients at Site 1
Referrals by Category

- Medical Equipment: 2
- Social/Veterans Services: 3
- Food Assistance: 3
- Housing/Utility/Legal: 4
- Personal Care: 4
- Healthcare Services/PCP: 4
- Other: 5
- Caregiver Support: 5
- Care Management: 5
- Transportation: 8
- Personal Safety: 9

*Total referrals (N = 52) by service category for MOW clients at Site 1
Meals on Wheels is Helping At-Risk Seniors Age in Place

- Demonstrated feasibility of leveraging drivers to conduct electronic wellness checks
- Used a proactive approach to help at-risk seniors remain in their homes
- Opportunity to demonstrate value to healthcare payers and providers