

THE ESCALATING PROBLEM OF SENIOR HUNGER AND ISOLATION



UNITED STATES 2018

OUR NATION'S SENIOR POPULATION IS GROWING EXPONENTIALLY



WITH **12,000 MORE**
turning 60 each day



Average life
expectancy today

This population is set to
NEARLY DOUBLE BY 2060



LEAVING MORE AND MORE AMERICANS AT RISK OF HUNGER AND ISOLATION



NEARLY 9 MILLION SENIORS
FACE THE THREAT OF HUNGER



1 IN 4 SENIORS LIVES ALONE



A 14 YEAR DISADVANTAGE
Food insecure seniors can have
limitations comparable to food
secure seniors 14 years older

1 IN 5 FEELS LONELY
and the negative effects of loneliness on health
are similar to smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day



AND WHILE HUNGER AND ISOLATION CAN AFFECT ANYONE WITH LIMITED MOBILITY AND DECLINING HEALTH, FINANCIAL STRAIN MAKES THEM MUCH WORSE



6.9 MILLION SENIORS
LIVE IN POVERTY



THAT'S AN INCOME OF \$228 A WEEK OR LESS,
which, after housing, utility and medical
expenses, leaves very little for food



Older adults living at or below poverty are nearly **twice as likely** to be unable to live independently, **forced to either leave home** for costly long-term care facilities or rely on caregivers

THESE THREATS FROM AGING NOT ONLY JEOPARDIZE THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF OLDER ADULTS, THEY ALSO PLACE A SIGNIFICANT STRAIN ON OUR COUNTRY'S HEALTHCARE SYSTEM AND ECONOMY



The healthcare costs associated with malnutrition in seniors



Among seniors, the healthcare costs associated with isolation are equal to the same costs associated with having high blood pressure



Medicare spending is disproportionately concentrated on older adults with multiple chronic conditions and/or functional limitations

5% OF SENIORS ON MEDICARE ACCOUNT FOR 42% OF SPENDING

MEALS ON WHEELS IS THE ONLY FEDERALLY SUPPORTED PROGRAM DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY TO MEET THE NUTRITIONAL AND SOCIAL NEEDS OF SENIORS, YET THIS SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP REMAINS SIGNIFICANTLY UNDERFUNDED



3 OUT OF 4 SENIORS IN NEED

of community supports do not receive services

83% OF LOW INCOME, FOOD INSECURE SENIORS ARE NOT RECEIVING THE HOME-DELIVERED MEALS THEY NEED

AND WE KNOW THAT SENIORS WAITING TO RECEIVE MEALS ON WHEELS ARE MORE LIKELY TO:

REPORT FAIR OR POOR SELF-RATED HEALTH

REPORT NOT HAVING ENOUGH MONEY TO BUY FOOD THEY NEED

REPORT RECENT FALLS OR FEAR OF FALLING THAT LIMITS ABILITY TO STAY ACTIVE

SCREEN POSITIVE FOR DEPRESSION

REQUIRE ASSISTANCE WITH SHOPPING FOR GROCERIES OR PREPARING FOOD

TAKE THREE OR MORE MEDICATIONS EACH DAY

WE NEED INCREASED FUNDING AND SUPPORT FOR OUR SENIORS NOW TO PREVENT EVEN GREATER SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES LATER

Meals on Wheels America is the leadership organization supporting the 5,000+ community-based programs across the country that are dedicated to addressing senior isolation and hunger. This network serves virtually every community in America and, along with more than two million staff and volunteers, delivers the nutritious meals, friendly visits and safety checks that enable America's seniors to live nourished lives with independence and dignity. By providing funding, leadership, education, research and advocacy support, Meals on Wheels America empowers its local member programs to strengthen their communities, one senior at a time.