Innovative FoodShare Outreach & Best Practices
Introduction

Caroline Gomez-Tom, MSW
Covering Wisconsin
Milwaukee Enrollment Network
Navigator Program Manager
cbgomez@wisc.edu
(414) 270-2963
Goals

- Outreach Strategies
- Best Practices
About CWi

- Covering Wisconsin (CWi), formerly Covering Kids & Families (CKF)
- Offices at UW-Madison and in Milwaukee, as well as subcontract offices in Racine, Rock, Iowa, Portage, and Outagamie Counties
- Since 2003, provides education and assistance with health coverage – Wisconsin Navigator Collaborative
- Co-convenor of the Milwaukee Enrollment Network (MKEN)
- Partnership with UW-Extension to provide health insurance education and resources
2015 – 2016 Navigators

Index

• Introduction
• Goals
• About CWi
• Navigators
• Outreach
• Next Steps

Covering Wisconsin (CWi) - WI Navigator Collaborative
Northwest Wisconsin CEP Inc.
Forest County Potawatomi Community
This area has no assigned Navigator. Call 211 for local enrollment assistance.
2015 – 2016 Navigators

Open Enrollment vs. Post-open enrollment
Index

- Introduction
- Goals
- About CWi
- Navigators
- Outreach
- Next Steps

Questions to Ask for Successful Outreach

- Who are the people you are trying to reach?
- Where do they hang out/shop/live?
- Where do they go for services?
- Who provides the services?
- Are their service providers your community partners?
Gather Information (And Partners)

- Prioritize community’s needs (meet with stakeholders)
- Develop a work plan with community stakeholders at the table
- Share resources and best practices
- Standardize message with partners as able
- Be everywhere (partners make this easier)
- Schedule time to revisit needs and priorities

Index

- Introduction
- Goals
- About CWi
- Navigators
- Outreach
- Next Steps
Forget “Outreach”, Build Relationships

- Never stop building rapport
- Ask what the people you serve care about
- Build reliable route of communication
- Have them tell their friends/share message
Next Steps

If you would like to receive healthcare updates, please sign up for Covering Wisconsin’s email list.

Questions?

Caroline B. Gomez-Tom
Covering Wisconsin Navigator Program Manager
cbgomez@wisc.edu
(414) 270-2963
Feeding Wisconsin Health and Hunger Summit 2016

FoodShare Outreach

Stephanie Jung
FoodShare Outreach Manager
Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin
Agenda

- FoodShare Basics
- Second Harvest FoodShare Outreach
- Strategy
- Partnerships
- Messaging
Second Harvest’s Mission:
To end hunger in southwestern Wisconsin through community partnerships.

Strategic Plan FY15:
Provide 2,378,671 meals through the FoodShare outreach program – **20% of the meals provided by the Foodbank**

The USDA states that **SNAP is the nation's first line of defense against hunger**. It helps put food on the table for millions of low income families and individuals every month and is the largest of USDA's 15 nutrition assistance programs.

Ultimately, enrolling families in FoodShare will reduce the need to rely on the emergency food network and shorten the lines.
Charity cannot do it alone

Charity + federal nutrition assistance programs

- In 2014, the Feeding America network of 202 food banks and 61,000 affiliated agencies distributed about 3.8 billion pounds of food, which had a value of about $5.7 billion dollars.

- By comparison, The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program disbursed nearly $75 billion in benefits for income eligible, low-income Americans to purchase food.

SNAP benefits provided more than 13 times more food than charity was able to.
The Triple Win

1. **Clients** – FoodShare puts healthy food within reach of people struggling to stretch their budget and put food on their tables

2. **Local Emergency Food Providers** – FoodShare participation reduces the strain on local emergency food providers (food pantries, meal sites, etc.)

3. **Communities** – Every $5 spent in FoodShare benefits generates $9 in local economic activity
What is FoodShare Wisconsin?

FoodShare is a federal food assistance program that helps people stretch their budgets.

FoodShare was created to help stop hunger and to improve nutrition and health.
ELIGIBILITY

You may qualify if your household’s gross monthly income is less than...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$1,962</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$2,656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$3,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$4,042</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Income guidelines are valid through September 30, 2016
Why aren’t people participating in FoodShare?

A. There is a lot of confusion about the name of the program.

B. People are confused or have incorrect information about eligibility requirements.

C. Many people find the application process daunting or overwhelming.

Many people don’t know where or how to start. Lack of assistance as well as other misinformation increases this barrier.
FoodShare Outreach
This Gap = Our Work

Outreach
Education
Myth Busting
De-stigmatizing
Application Assistance
Client Advocacy

SNAP Caseloads Closely Track Changes in Number of Poor and Near-Poor

In millions, through September 2014

*Poverty numbers are annual estimates and not yet available after 2013. Spikes in SNAP participants are from disaster benefits (i.e., after hurricanes).

Sources: Department of Agriculture (SNAP program participants); Census Bureau (annual estimates of individuals below 130% of poverty).
FoodShare Specialists can help with providing:

- **Education** to clients about FoodShare benefits, eligibility, and policy changes
- Quick, easy and confidential **screening** to see if clients *may* be eligible for FoodShare
- One-on-one **application assistance** (in person or over the phone)
- Assistance with **submitting verification documents** (proof of identity, income, medical expenses, and ABAWD exemption)
- Client **advocacy** in navigating the application process
- Assistance in **maintaining benefits**, including assistance with renewals, reporting changes, policy that impacts benefits such as the ABAWD work requirement, reporting a QUEST card lost or stolen, etc.
- Referrals to other **community resources**
Strategy
Education Strategies

- Traditional
  - Flyers/Posters
  - Partnerships
    - Application sites
    - Walk-in sites
    - Referrals (pressure off client for initial contact)
      - Partner Agencies (MOU)
    - Community newsletters/church bulletins
  - Quarterly e-newsletters to service providers

- Nontraditional
  - Direct Mail
  - Website
  - Facebook
  - Craigslist
  - Internet Banner Ads
  - Quarterly webinars for service providers
  - Google SNAP
Outreach Strategies and Sources
(SHFB FY2015 Data)

Helpline Calls by Referral Source

- Unknown: 25%
- GSNAP: 13%
- Service Provider: 12%
- Food Pantry: 10%
- Called Before: 8%
- Word of Mouth: 8%
- Newsletter: 3%
- Craigslist: 2%
- Facebook: 1%
- Internet Banner Ads: 0%
- Energy Assistance: 2%
- SNAP Staff: 2%
- GetAQuestCard.org: 4%

Applications by Referral Source

- Walk-in Clients (Staff onsite): 19%
- GSNAP: 11%
- Dane County Job Center (Staff onsite): 10%
- Service Provider: 10%
- Mailing: 8%
- Word of Mouth: 7%
- Food Pantry: 6%
- Newsletter: 2%
- SNAP Staff: 2%
- Craigslist: 1%
- Facebook: 0%
- Internet Banner Ads: 0%
- Energy Assistance: 2%
- GetAQuestCard.org: 3%
- Called Before: 5%
- Unknown: 13%
When searching for potentially eligible households who are not participating:

• Location & relationships matter
• Look for the “high hanging fruit”
• Consider stigma and pride that might make it difficult for someone to self-identify as being food insecure
Who’s claiming these benefits?

In February 2016...

- 43% of recipients are minors
- 50% of recipients are 24 and younger
- 44% of households have a member that is elderly, blind or disabled
- 41% of adult FS recipients have income from a job – this number would be greater if we didn’t include elderly or disabled adults

Source: [http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/foodshare/fsataglance.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/foodshare/fsataglance.htm) & Feeding America Hunger Study 2014
Who is NOT claiming these benefits?

Nearly 40% of all food pantry client households are not currently enrolled in FoodShare

Even though they are often most in need, an estimated 2/3 of seniors who could be participating in FoodShare are not enrolled.
Projections for the Growing 65+ Population (2005 v. 2035)

Source: WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES, Division of Long Term Care, P-00138 (10/2009)
Senior Outreach Project: Innovative Activities

Locations:
• Information distribution through:
  o Pharmacies
  o Health care providers (such as Gundersen Lutheran, more partnerships are in progress)
• Onsite application presence at:
  o Aging and Disability Resource Centers
  o Senior Centers
  o Low Income and Senior Housing

Relationship:
• Word of Mouth is key with seniors in particular
• FoodShare Ambassadors
• Senior Project Advisory Committee Meeting

Breaking down stigma (using positive peer pressure 😊)
• FoodShare BINGO
• Outreach at Senior Farmers’ Market Voucher Distribution and Senior Meal sites
Senior Outreach Project:
Innovative Activities

- Layered marketing activities:
  - Direct mail (in combination with AARP newsletter article)
  - Newspaper ads and newsletter articles
  - Radio
  - Car wrap
Partnerships
Effective Partnership Development

Some things to consider:

• Tapping into seasonal partnerships (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites during tax season, Senior Farmers’ Market Voucher Distribution in Spring & Energy Assistance in fall).

• Leveraging reciprocal relationships (landlords, insurance companies, utility companies, employment and training programs).

• Are there other programs with similar eligibility guidelines. Can you cross promote?

• Work with partners who are trusted by those you are seeking to serve.
Partnerships

We serve traditional and nontraditional partners in outreach:

- Many of Second Harvest’s 225 partner hunger-relief agencies and programs (food pantries, shelters, meal sites) in our 16 counties.
- Second Harvest’s 30 mobile pantry sites located in 14 of our 16 counties.
- Aging and Disability Resource Centers
- Health service agencies
- Libraries
- Primary schools (back-to-school events, resource fairs)
- Agencies serving Spanish speakers
- Low-income housing units
- Senior centers/housing units/retirement communities
- Job centers & Employment and Training Programs
- Senior farmers’ market voucher distributions
- Volunteer income tax assistance sites
- Businesses providing seasonal, temporary and/or lower skilled work
- Temporary job placement agencies.
- WIC clinics (Women, Infants, and Children)
- Energy assistance outreach sites
- UW Extensions (referrals and invitations to events)
- Department of Corrections offices, day report centers, etc.
- Technical colleges
- Job fairs
- Community resource fairs (health, senior, re-entry, dental)
Case Example: Senior Outreach Project

- Partnered with:
  - Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) and Elder Benefit Specialists
  - Renal centers
  - Medigap Helpline
  - AARP – co-mailer
  - Insurance Companies – running newsletter article

- Subcontracted activities with:
  - Wisconsin Council of Churches
  - The Dane County Timebank
Challenges

- **Stigma** - which leads to embarrassment
- **Pride** – program is seen for “needy” people and most aren’t willing to embrace the program; don’t want to be seen using the program
- **Confusion about eligibility** – people think you must have kids; can’t own a home, assets, or savings
- **Perception that it’s hard to apply** – which it is unless someone walks you through it (kind of like taxes…)
- **Perception of small benefit amount** – disappointment makes people think it’s not worth it
• Claiming your FoodShare benefits never takes benefits away from anyone else. It is an entitlement program available to anyone who is eligible.

• You’ve paid into this program through your federal taxes – take advantage of your own tax dollars! If you apply, you’re bringing this money right back to your local community.

• If you receive Social Security, and even a small pension you may be eligible.

• If you aren’t interested, do you know someone, a friend or family member who might be? (Seniors are great at word of mouth!)

• There’s no asset limit. You can have a savings account or own a home and car.

• It isn’t necessary to go into a county office! Applying for benefits, completing the interview with a consortia worker and renewing benefits can all be done by phone.
Senior Outreach Project: FoodShare Talking Points

FoodShare benefits can be saved and rollover for up to a year!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
<th>YEARLY TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$16</td>
<td>$16</td>
<td>$16</td>
<td>$16</td>
<td>$16</td>
<td>$16</td>
<td>$16</td>
<td>$16</td>
<td>$16</td>
<td>$16</td>
<td>$16</td>
<td>$16</td>
<td>$192</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$16 of food! Items were purchased from Aldi’s on 12/12/2015 and totaled $15.72.
Senior Outreach Project: FoodShare Talking Points

IS MONEY TIGHT? ¿NO LE ALCANZA EL DINERO?

What is FoodShare and the QUEST CARD?

FoodShare helps stretch your budget by depositing money on a debit-like card once per month to help buy groceries.

FoodShare ayuda a aliviar la presión de poner dinero en una tarjeta una vez al mes para ayudar a comprar la comida.

The QUEST Card is helping nearly 800,000 Wisconsinites buy groceries.

ELIGIBILITY LIMITES DE INGRESOS BRUTOS
You may qualify if your household's gross monthly income is less than...

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1,962</td>
<td>$2,656</td>
<td>$3,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$4,042</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Income guidelines are valid through September 30, 2016

Call the toll-free FoodShare Helpline with any questions or to set up a confidential appointment.

1-877-366-3635
GetAQuestCard.org

Applying is fast, easy & confidential!

With one phone call you will learn if you might be eligible for FoodShare benefits and can make an appointment in your area for free help with an application.

Did you know?

- Many people working or receiving Social Security, SSI, SSDI or Unemployment are eligible.
- 2/3 of eligible seniors are not enrolled.
- Unused benefits can roll over for up to 365 days.
- You might be eligible even if you have a car, home and savings.
- Adults without children may also be eligible.
Stephanie Jung  
FoodShare Outreach Manager  
(608) 216-7238  
StephanieJ@shfbmadison.org  
SecondHarvestMadison.org  
GetAQuestCard.org  

Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin  
2802 Dairy Drive  
Madison, Wisconsin 53718
FoodShare Outreach Program

- **Collaborate** and **coordinate** FoodShare application assistance, provide client advocacy, and provide education to Wisconsinites

- Previously a service of Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern WI, but transitioned to FWI in October 2015 to better coordinate calls across the state

- 9 FSO Specialists in 24 counties in Wisconsin
FoodShare Helpline

**Educate**
FoodShare policies, procedures and application process; other food resources

**Assist**
Applications over the phone, help screen about possible eligibility

**Advocate**
Fair hearings, issues with applications, inconsistencies with policies, etc.

**Coordinate**
Set up appointments with other specialists, mailing and advertising materials
Outreach Efforts

- Mailings for seniors that may be eligible
- Google SNAP Project referral process
- Website referral process
- Food pantry flyer distribution
- In-person assistance and information
Populations Served

• Our model allows us to reach:

  • **Rural** communities where limited services are available

  • **Younger people** comfortable with computer, just need extra help

  • **Seniors** or **disabled** that are immobile
By the numbers

October 1, 2015 – Present:

• 3,000+ calls to our helpline across the state
  • Approx. 50% of calls result in applications

• In total over 2,044 applications submitted by helpline and member food banks

• Highest call volume: Dane (654 since Oct. 1)
Best Practices

• Connecting callers to in-person assistance within 2-3 days
  • Phone call with consortium/mailing documents, etc. can take longer!

• When in-person not available: Phone Assisted Application
  • Walk through the access.wi.gov website
  • Explain in detail the “next steps” after submitting application
  • Provide follow up assistance

• If no computer available: Phone Conferences to Consortium
  • Provide education, advocacy, and clarification
Best Practices

• Connecting callers to in-person assistance within 2-3 days
  • Phone call with consortium/mailing documents, etc. can take longer!

• When in-person not available: Phone Assisted Application
  • Walk through the access.wi.gov website
  • Explain in detail the “next steps” after submitting application
  • Provide follow up assistance

• If no computer available: Phone Conferences to Consortium
  • Provide education, advocacy, and clarification