



senior nutrition program

ANNUAL REPORT
FY 2021

SANTA CLARA COUNTY
SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF AGING AND ADULT SERVICES





*Helping older adults
live independently
in the community
of their choice,
one meal at a time.*

letter from the leadership

This last year has been quite eye opening for the Senior Nutrition Program (SNP). A full year in pandemic mode has taught us many things; some good and some not so good. I choose to see the group of SNP providers as incredibly resilient: a group that has married their rhythms to the ebbs and flows of the pandemic, taking the punches and hitting back even harder.

Despite it all, we have proven that we can meet the needs of the older adult community in a variety of innovative ways and reach more people than ever, at a time of greatest need. The pandemic switched us into hyperdrive. We created new policies and procedures for meal delivery, created drive-thru meal sites, offered to-go meals, augmented contracts to meet community demand, and moved all training and events to a virtual setting.

I would be remiss if I failed to mention that this work does not happen in a silo. The SNP team is so thankful for our partnership with cities, non-profits, and for-profit organizations that make all that we do possible. These partners collectively made it possible for us to expand service by more than 40% since the start of the pandemic.

Thank you. Truly and sincerely: thank you. It is important that I acknowledge the SNP team. This program is supported by nine (yes, just nine) amazing individuals deeply committed to providing older adults with quality meals and service.

If anything, this year has taught us that we can adjust quickly and offer services in a variety of modalities that will inform the way services are offered in the future. We look forward to collaborating with the community and come out on the other side stronger than ever.

Vanessa Merlano
Senior Nutrition Program Manager

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about the senior nutrition program

Our Mission:

Promote the general health and well-being of older individuals by providing services that are intended to:

- » reduce hunger and food insecurity,
- » promote socialization, and
- » delay the onset of adverse health conditions.

What We Do:

Provide healthy meals in group settings, such as senior centers, faith-based locations, and in the homes of older adults who live alone. In addition to meal services, the program offers a wide range of other services, including nutrition screening, socialization, assessment, education, and transportation.

Programs target adults aged 60 and older who are in greatest social and economic need, with emphasis on the following groups:

- » low-income older adults,
- » minority older individuals,
- » older adults in rural areas,
- » older individuals with limited English proficiency, and
- » older adults at risk of institutional care.

How We Do It:

Services are funded through the following sources:

- » County General Fund
- » Title III (Federal)
- » Title III (State)
- » Participant Contributions
- » Nutrition Services Incentive Program (Federal)
- » Community Donations

The aging community in Santa Clara County is increasing rapidly and growing more diverse. SNP serves those most in need. Many clients are minorities, over the age of 75, living in poverty, women, and at high nutritional risk.

dine-in/café program

Traditional dining program that provides meals, socialization, and support services in a congregate setting.

- **Site Home-Delivered Meals:** Hot, daily meal delivery service offered to clients that participated in the dine-in/café program pre-COVID.
- **Sheltering-in-Place Home-Delivered Meals:** Frozen, weekly meal delivery service for older adults that choose to shelter-in-place and would otherwise not qualify for traditional Meals on Wheels services.
- **To-Go/Drive-Thru:** Hot meals offered at all SNP locations during the shelter-in-place order and transition back to dine-in service.

meals on wheels

Frozen, weekly meal delivery program that provides 14 meals and supplemental grocery items.

neighborhood meals on wheels

Daily, hot meal delivery program for nutritionally at-risk older adults that offers a friendly safety check-in.

friends from meals on wheels

Friendly visits and check-in calls for clients enrolled in Meals on Wheels, sheltering-in-place, and Neighborhood Meals on Wheels clients.

mobility management program

Transportation support (paratransit, bus pass, gas cards) for dine-in/café program participants.

12,702

older adults served

2,113
new participants

2,059
online registrations
(since February 2021)

54%
age 75 and older

45%
at or below poverty level

32%
live alone

67%
minorities



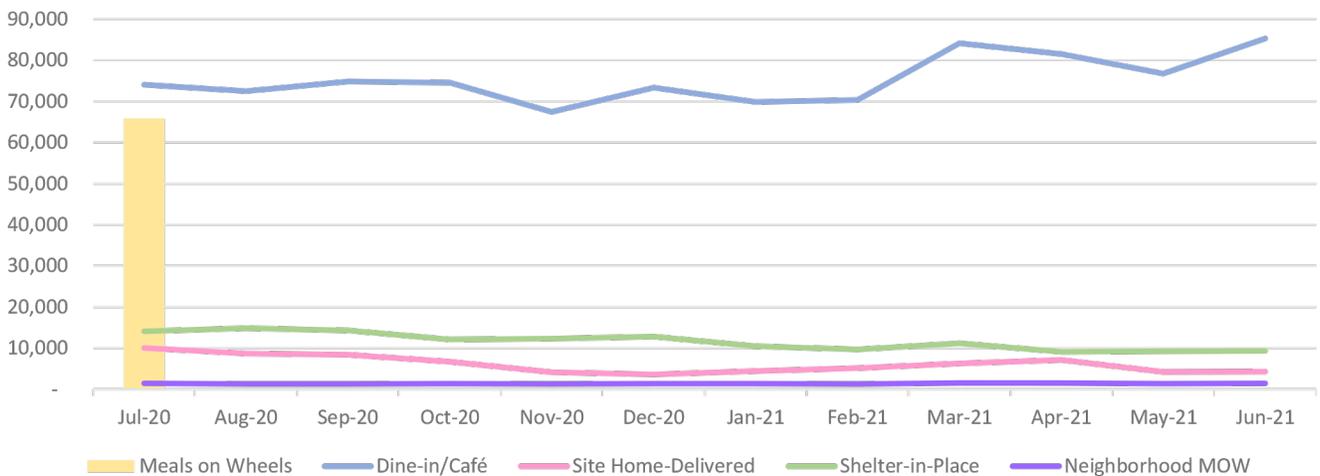


1,130 mobility management participants

4,305 monthly bus passes

1,539 gas cards

1,199,298 meals served



904,763
dine-in/café

139,418
shelter-in-place

72,873
site home-delivered

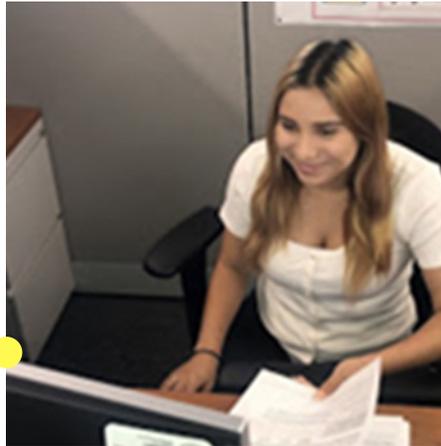
16,416
neighborhood
meals on wheels

65,828
meals on wheels
(July 2020 only)

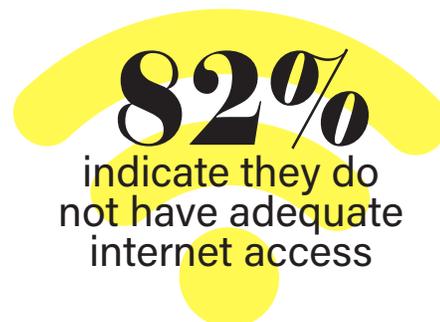
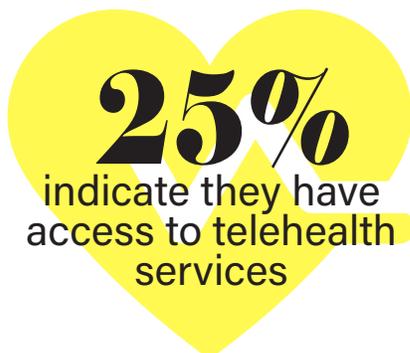
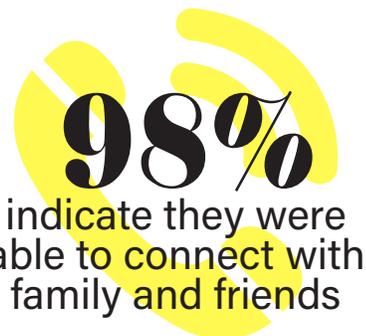
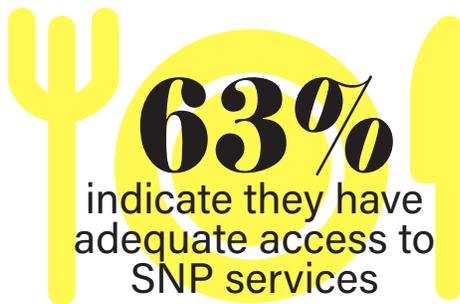
COVID-19 survey response and community voices

SNP added new questions to the annual survey to collect data on access to nutrition-related resources, health-related services, supportive services, and how participants stay connected with friends and family.

Through the CalWORKs summer Intern & Earn program, SNP hired two students, Isabella and Alexis, to intern for seven weeks and assist with the survey project. They received training on Qualtrics and entered a grand total of 3,530 surveys!



3,530
surveys completed
(28% response rate)



flagship programs

dine-in/café program



The Dine-In/Café Program offers nutritious and healthy lunches at 39 different nutrition sites throughout the County of Santa Clara. These lunches are either cooked on-site or catered by local restaurants or local food vendors and provide 1/3 of the Daily Reference Intake for an older adult.

Since the start of the shelter-in-place order, SNP transitioned from dine-in to a grab-and-go meal service at all congregate sites. The modified service allowed congregate meal sites to provide to-go meals, curbside drive-through, and home-delivered meals.

annual dine-in/café program

meal participant satisfaction survey 3,260 responses received

87% agree or strongly agree that SNP helps them to stay healthy

86% agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied with the meals provided by SNP

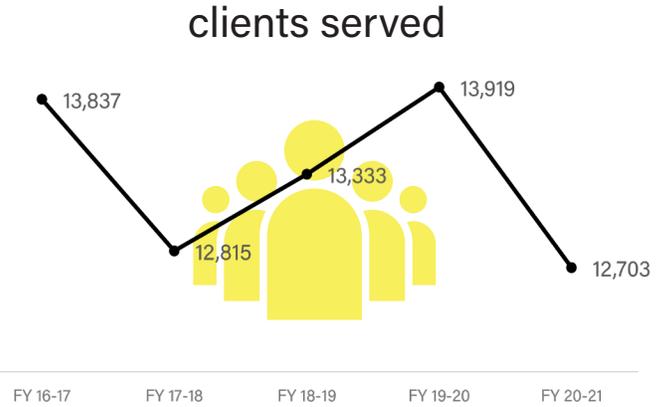
72% agree or strongly agree that they enjoy going to the nutrition sites for food

dine-in/café program meals

five-year trend

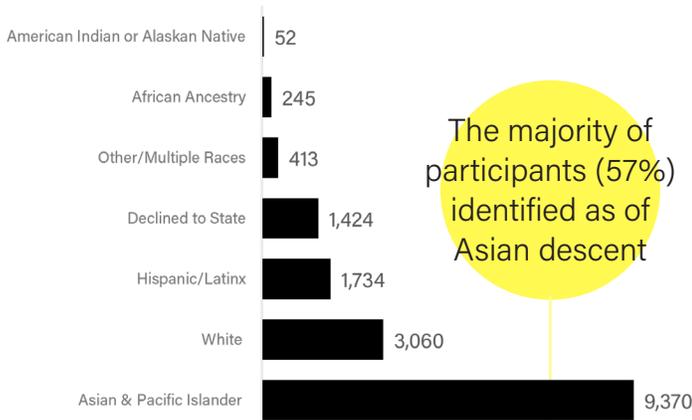


There was an 14% increase of meals served (108,927), indicating a greater need for meals among the older adults during the pandemic



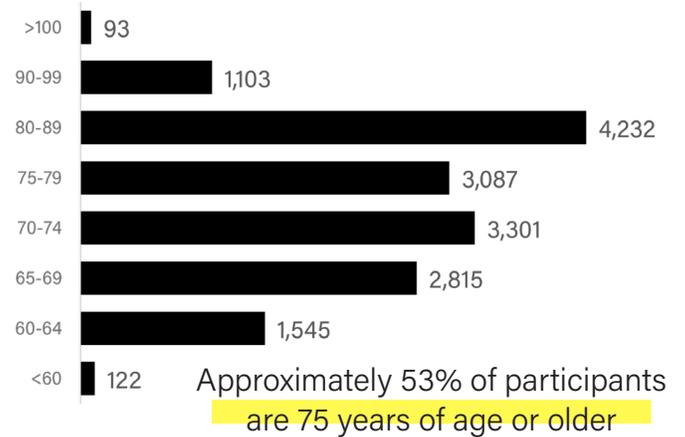
There was a 9% decrease in older adults (1,903 unduplicated clients) served in FY21, compared with FY20

participants by race

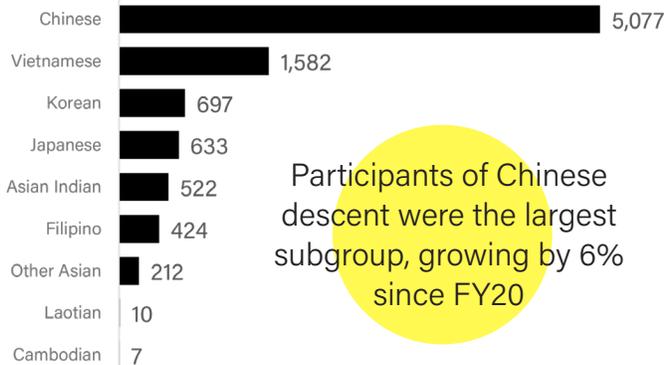


The majority of participants (57%) identified as of Asian descent

participants by age range



Approximately 53% of participants are 75 years of age or older



Participants of Chinese descent were the largest subgroup, growing by 6% since FY20

41% live at or below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)

22% are at nutritional risk



site home-delivered meals

dine-in/café program delivering meals to vulnerable older adults

As dine-in/café programs suspended on-site dining, clients who were receiving transportation to sites via site-sponsored vans were transitioned to the Site Home-Delivered Meals Program. The Korean American Community Services (KACS), Yu Ai Kai, Morgan Hill, and Portuguese Organization for Social Services and Opportunities (POSSO) expanded their program to deliver daily, hot meals.

In total, **1,272** participants received meals through this program.

extending the radius: meal delivery to assisted living facilities



Staff from Salvation Army delivering meals to Shires Memorial Assisted Living

Salvation Army, La Comida, and India Community Center (ICC) - Milpitas expanded their programs to accommodate the increased demand and delivered meals to assisted living facilities in their vicinity.

Salvation Army delivered meals to Shires Memorial Assisted Living, La Comida delivered to Lytton Gardens, and ICC - Milpitas delivered to Priya Assisted Living.

new times call for new service models

To increase safety, many sites changed their service model to reduce potential exposure to COVID-19. Asian Americans for Community Involvement (AACI) changed its service model from four days a week to two days a week, serving one hot meal and three frozen meals. Smaller sites like Alviso and Vista Center switched from providing a hot, daily meal to delivering frozen meals. In addition, donated grocery items were delivered to Vista Center participants each week.



letter from the community

During the Shelter in Place (SIP), my mom was not able to attend Senior Nutrition or other programs at AACI. As a caregiver to my mom with Dementia, I feel stressed to handle the daily work such as grocery shopping, cooking, and virtual doctor appointments during the pandemic.

I am very grateful about the extended home-delivered hot meal services AACI Senior Wellness was providing. My mom was able to receive the hot meals that she loved and preferred. These meals helped my mom to remember the past days she was at AACI. She would tell us stories about the times she joined AACI activities and workshops.

We wanted to THANK AACI Senior Wellness Program and the whole entire team for their hard work during these difficult times.

*Wishing everyone the best health and safety,
July Y.*

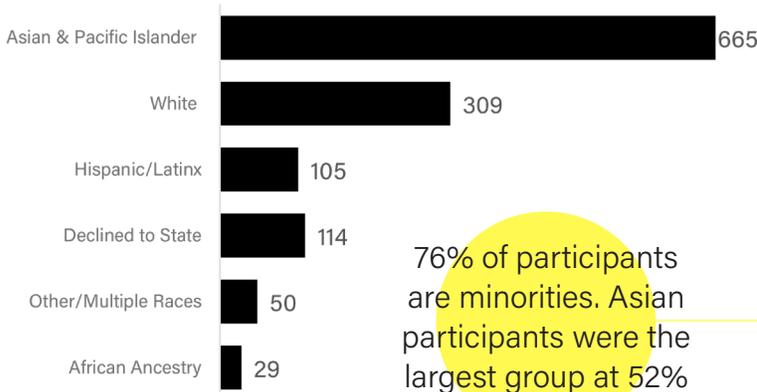


site home-delivered meals

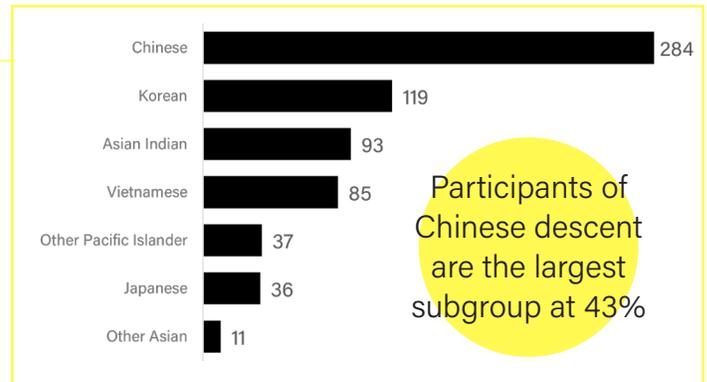
participant demographics

1,272
clients served

participants by race

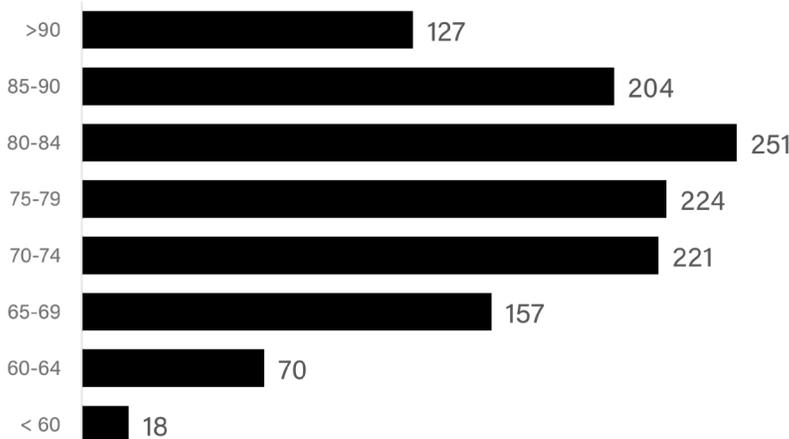


76% of participants are minorities. Asian participants were the largest group at 52%



Participants of Chinese descent are the largest subgroup at 43%

participants by age range



63% of participants are 75 years of age or older

50% live at or below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)

38% live alone



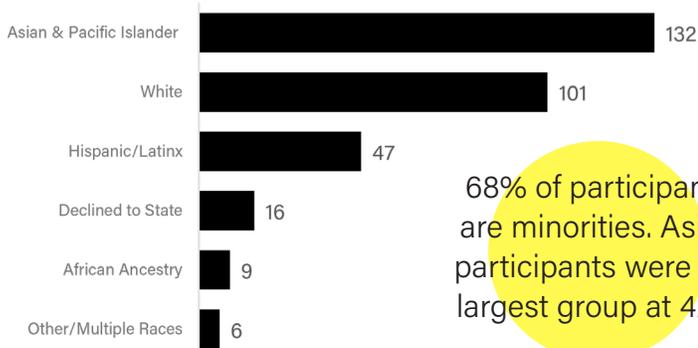
home-delivered meals for people sheltering-in-place

SNP ensured older adults in the community had access to nourishing meals by establishing a call center to answer questions about the availability of food and started a partnership with Trio Community Meals to deliver meals to older adults sheltering-in-place (SIP). Traditionally, these clients would not qualify for HDMs. Last year, the Older Americans Act and HDM eligibility criteria were extended to allow older adults who were SIP to receive meals.



sheltering-in-place home-delivered meals participant demographics

participants by race

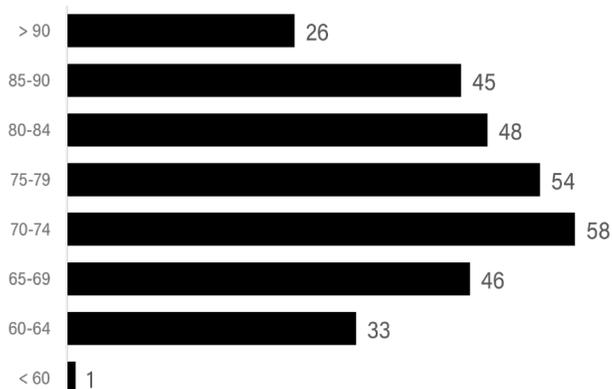


68% of participants are minorities. Asian participants were the largest group at 42%

311

clients served

participants by age range



56% of participants are 75 years of age or older



Participants of Vietnamese descent are the largest subgroup at 41%

participant satisfaction survey

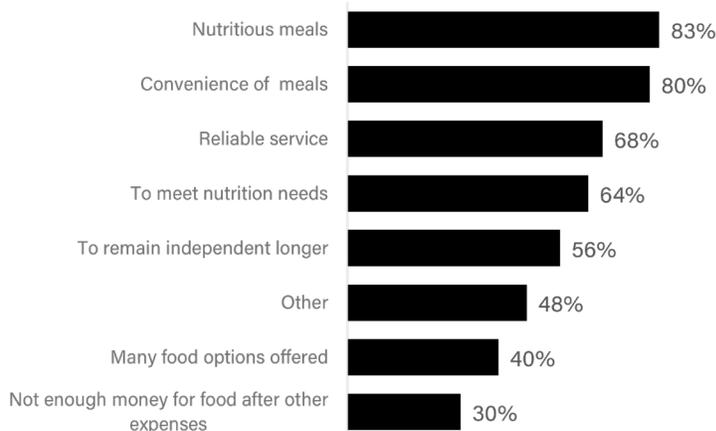
80 responses received

78% agree or strongly agree that SNP helps them to stay healthy

81% agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied with the meals provided by SNP

87% agree or strongly agree that SNP has assisted in maintaining independence

reasons for participation





meals on wheels

From 1974 through July 2020, SNP received Older Americans Act funding from Sourcewise, the Santa Clara County Area Agency on Aging, to operate the MOW program.

In Summer 2020, Sourcewise released a Request for Proposal (RFP) for these services and the County was not selected as the vendor. The County ceased operating the MOW program on July 31, 2020, and participants were transferred to the program offered by the new vendor.

The County contested the results of that RFP, and the appeal was awarded in the County's favor. As a result, Sourcewise re-released the RFP for FY 2021-2022 services and the County was awarded the contract effective October 1, 2021.

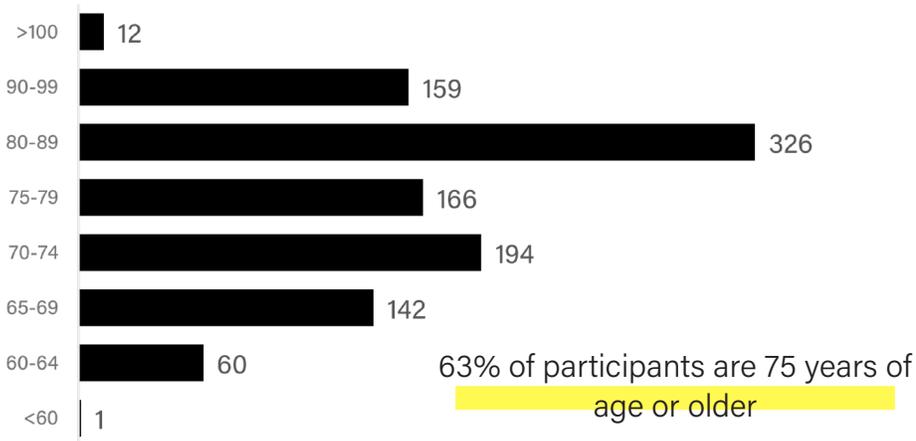
As a result of this change, the MOW data for FY 2020-2021 reflects one month of service.



meals on wheels

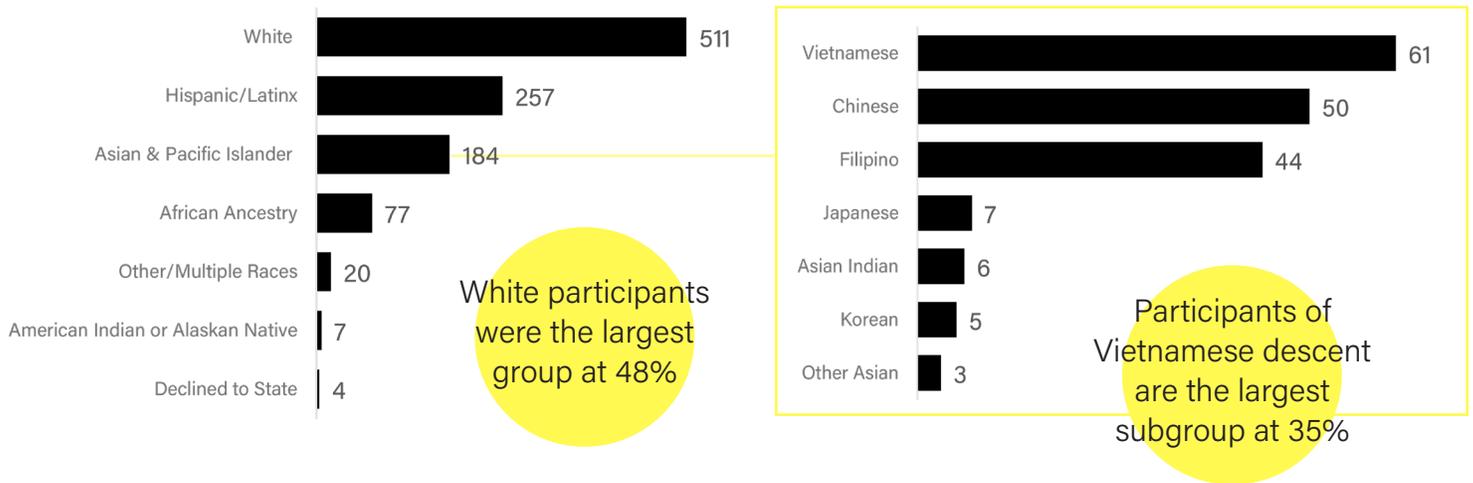
participant demographics (July 2020 only)

participants by age range



1,060
clients served

participants by race



84% live at or below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)

63% live alone

neighborhood meals on wheels

NMOW provides HDMs to qualified, homebound older adults. POSSO and Yu-Ai-Kai partner with the County to serve select zip codes within San Jose and Santa Clara. NMOW focuses on delivering daily, hot, ethnic meals. NMOW services are funded through the County General Fund and were not impacted by the County's MOW contract for FY 2020-2021.

POSSO's NMOW program delivers hot, authentic Portuguese meals to participants, Monday through Friday. Meals are delivered to Santa Clara, East Foothills, and Eastside areas of San Jose. These meals have helped older adults maintain their independence while having nutritious, tasty Portuguese meals to enjoy in the comfort of their homes. Being able to have a taste of their traditional homecooked food has helped POSSO's NMOW participants thrive and enabled them to improve their health outcomes as well.



7,274 meals delivered

79% 75 years of age or older

Yu-Ai-Kai

Yu-Ai-Kai's NMOW program provides eligible older adults in the Japantown and Berryessa areas with a daily hot Japanese and American meals. NMOW is a valued safety-net program for many older adults in the Japantown community.

9,142 meals delivered

57% 75 years of age or older



participant satisfaction survey

55 responses received

96% agree or strongly agree that SNP helps them to stay healthy

94% agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied with the meals provided by NMOW

91% agree or strongly agree that NMOW has assisted in maintaining independence

stories from the block: the impact of NMOW



Rita, a POSSO NMOW client, lost her husband during the pandemic. He meant the world to her and was her best friend. He took her to doctor appointments, did the grocery shopping, and fixed everything around their house. Unfortunately, he passed away from a heart attack, leaving Rita lonely and unsure of what to do next.

Rita heard about POSSO's NMOW program through a friend and signed up for the meal program shortly after. She is so grateful for the home-cooked meals and feels the nutritious meals have helped her survive during this hard time. Moreover, Rita is also grateful the meals were delivered to her, and she did not have to leave her house during the pandemic.

friends from meals on wheels

FMOW began in April of 2016 and operated through March 2021 as a partnership between SNP and The Health Trust. The goal of the program is to increase socialization and improve physical and mental health, happiness, and the quality of life of the County's isolated and homebound older adults.

To qualify for the program, participants must be enrolled in MOW. With the traditional MOW program ending in July 2020, participation in FMOW was expanded to include participants NMOW.



Activities provided to FMOW participants include:

- initial home-visit assessments
- subsequent home-visits
- telephone calls
- exercise home-visits or virtual calls
- pet food deliveries
- birthday card and gift deliveries

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, services were modified to ensure safety with visits moved outdoors or to a virtual format, when appropriate.

friendly visits making an impact



Eighty-seven-year-old Paul joined FMOW during the COVID-19 pandemic in search of companionship. He shared that his wife was struggling with moderate dementia and that he was not able to socialize with her the way that he once was able to. Paul has no contact with any immediate family and had begun to feel very lonely and isolated with the local shelter-in-place orders.

He began receiving weekly calls from his friendly caller, and they quickly formed a friendship. He shared his love for laughter and was always ready with a joke or funny story.

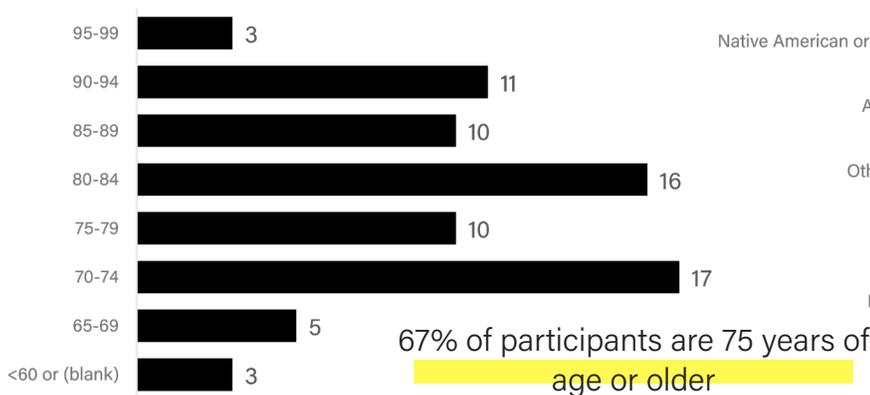
Once some COVID-19 restrictions were lifted, Paul's friendly caller was able to visit him weekly in person, and he was overjoyed! Paul came prepared for each visit with a printed list of jokes or photos to tell stories. He shared how he and his wife used to dress up as clowns and visit nursing homes to give out balloons, tell jokes, and spread some cheer.

Paul's FMOW has given him something to look forward to each week and provided a sense of purpose and normalcy to an otherwise shrinking world. The visits have lifted his spirits, renewed interest in his hobbies, and given him the courage to continue to provide the love and support his wife needs.

friends from meals on wheels

participant demographics

participants by age range



participants by race



75

clients served

48%

live alone

79% female

21% male

mobility management program

MMP provides free transportation benefits including bus passes, gas cards, and paratransit rides for eligible SNP participants. This transportation benefit enables participants to access meal sites and provides an avenue for engaging in social interaction with others.

The eligibility Requirements for bus passes or gas cards are:

- Low-income, according to the Elder Economic Security Index for the County
- No available transportation to meal sites
- Receives eight (8) or more meals per month at meal sites

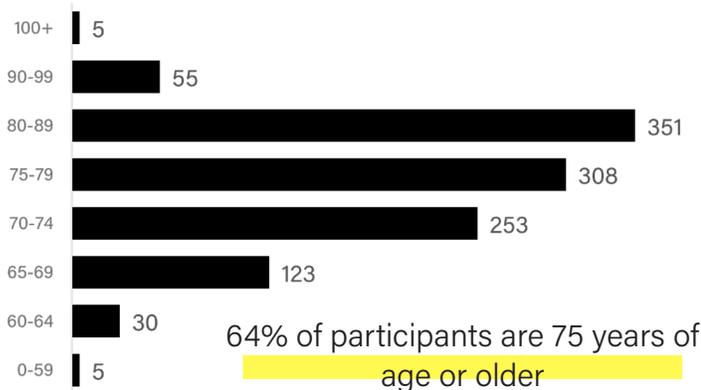
While the MMP was offered throughout FY 2020-2021, demand for services was low because of the pandemic. The numbers below reflect the temporarily reduced demand.



mobility management program

participant demographics

participants by age range



participants by race



1,130
clients served

36%
live alone

75%
live at or below the FPL

COVID-19 supplemental report

SNP modified its services to keep participants safe in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout the last year, SNP continued to provide services in response to the continually evolving public health orders.



Debby Reynolds Awarded President’s Medal for Exemplary Service During COVID-19 Pandemic, by the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors

Debby, the Site Manager for Salvation Army-Silicon Valley, has been honored for organizing the Central Supply Warehouse when SNP sites switched from congregate meals to a to-go service model. Debby and the Salvation Army staff received and distributed to-go containers for packaging meals and personal protective equipment.

Debby commented, "It was a great experience and a new challenge taking on the county hub. It gave me the opportunity to really get to know my peers and see the unity that was happening across the centers. SNP is such a vital source for our older adults, and I am proud to be part of such an amazing program. It was wonderful to be honored alongside the other recipients and to see how our community is striving to get through this together! Thank you for nominating me for something that I have a privilege of doing each day!"

nutrition education pivots



11 virtual education classes in partnership with the Public Health Department

19,000

nutrition education brochures distributed



Food Safety

SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAM
Fall 2021



sites serving above baseline

SNP has seen more than a 37% increase overall in the number of Dine-In/Café meals since March 2020. Meal demand increased at 27 out of 39 meal sites. Ten sites increased services by 49% or more.

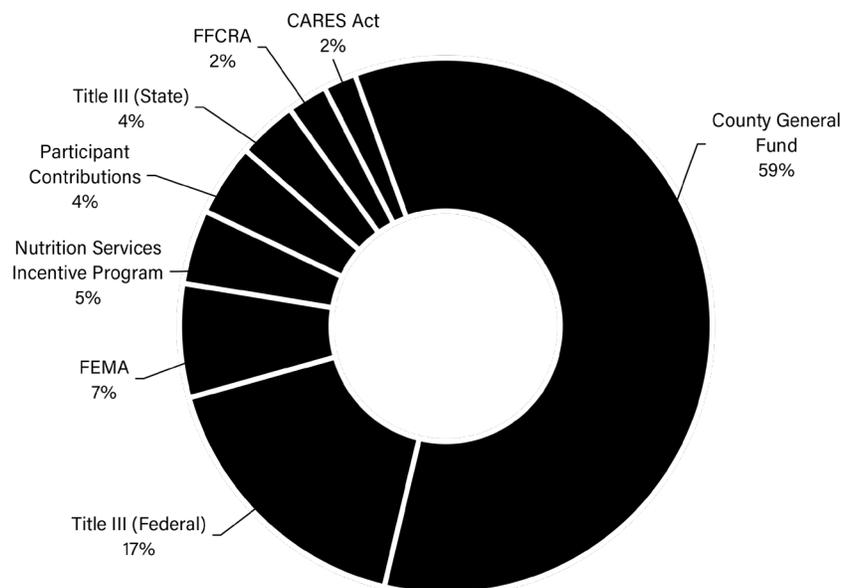
69% of SNP sites served above baseline

Site name	Meals above baseline %
POSSO	49%
Villa Vasona	55%
Sunnyvale	61%
Los Gatos	63%
Berryessa	99%
AACI	112%
Evergreen	112%
Camden	132%
Masonic Center	178%
Almaden	225%

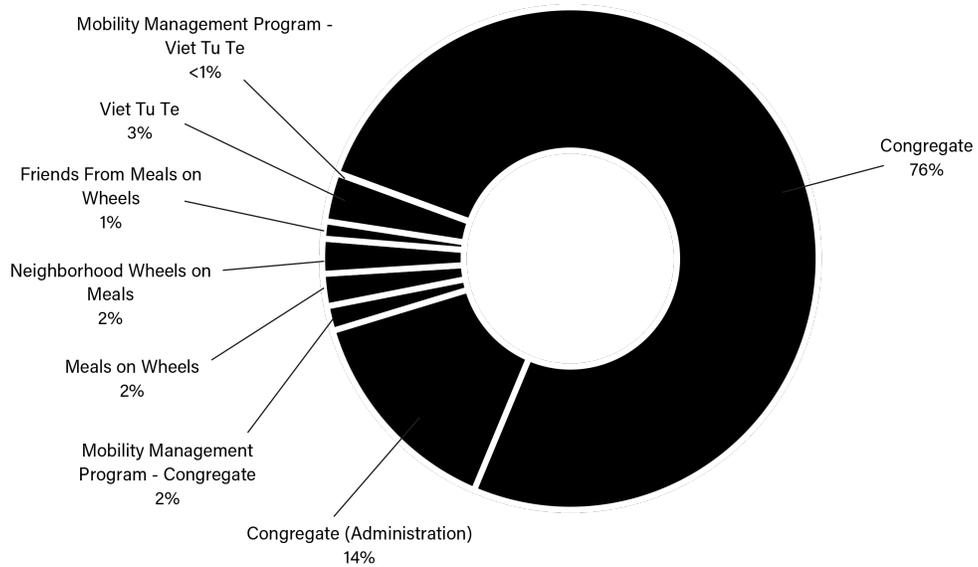
financial summary

In FY 2020-2021, SNP expended a total of \$10,999,029. SNP received a variety of federal dollars to respond to the increase in food demand.

Funding source	Amount
County General Fund	\$6,519,015
Title III (Federal)	\$1,867,300
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	\$756,198
Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP)	\$494,805
Participant Contributions	\$479,754
Title III (State)	\$396,611
Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)	\$269,000
Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act	\$216,346
Total	\$10,999,029



Expenditures	Amount
Congregate (Direct)	\$8,335,503
Congregate (Administration)	\$1,541,151
Mobility Management Program - Congregate	\$175,548
Meals on Wheels (MOW)	\$228,398
Neighborhood Meals on Wheels (NMOW)	\$247,068
Friends From Meals on Wheels (FMOW)	\$123,166
Viet Tu Te	\$343,665
Mobility Management Program - Viet Tu Te	\$4,530
Total	\$10,999,029



innovation & partnerships

food, friends, and fun pilot program

To help reduce social isolation, SNP partnered with TeleVisit to implement the Food, Friends, and Fun pilot program. TeleVisit is a non-profit organization that connects older adults to each other through their participation in interactive group activities from the convenience and comfort of home.

Topics discussed included: food trivia, quizzes, travel, falls prevention, emergency preparedness, and more.

Participating sites:

Mayfair
Eastside
Vista Center
Self-Help for the Elderly



“The program gives me the opportunity to meet others and be interactive.”

SNP collaborates with SJSU's department of nutrition and food science to train future dietitians

Students are provided practical experience in food service and community nutrition through the Field Experience course and Dietetic Internship. Under the supervision of SNP's registered dietitians, students apply theoretical knowledge learned in the classroom to hands-on work experience. SNP has recently grown as a popular food service rotation – in the last year it increased preceptorship by 400%!

Despite the pandemic, in FY 20-21, the SNP dietitians trained four dietetic interns.



Ashley Reinke



Anitza Romero



Michelle Chillino



Katherin Guevara

database and scanner portal

In the fall of 2020, SNP piloted a new scanning system for collecting meal information using a cloud-based system on a mobile phone or tablet at five meal sites and launched the system more broadly on April 1, 2021.

The new system also proved to be more modifiable than the past system, allowing meal data collection for multiple funding streams, including various COVID-19 emergency funds. The scanner portal system allowed separate data to be collected on meals by funding source and delivery modality. The sites can now provide real-time meal data to Technical Services and Support (TSS) and SNP can access detailed meal information before the end of each month.

online registration form

In March 2021, SNP launched an online registration form to make it easier for participants to enroll into the program. Since its inception, 2,059 online registration forms have been submitted.



new community partner page and calendar of events coming soon

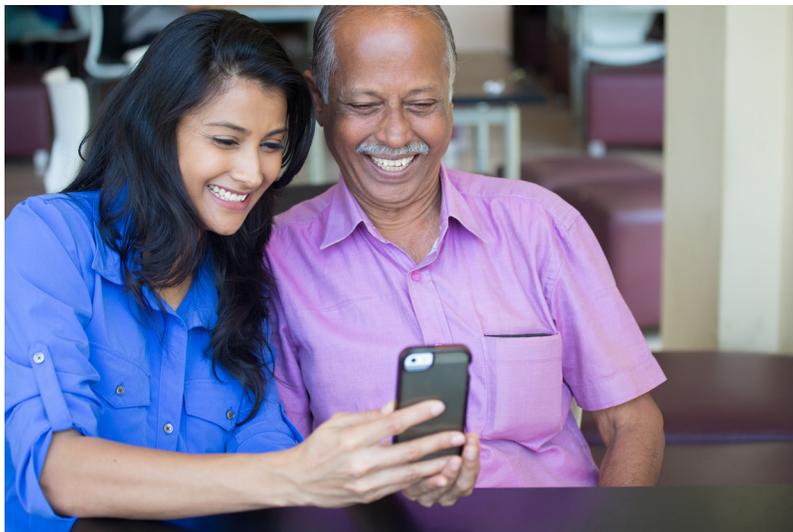
SNP enhanced the webpage to include a new Community Partner page and Calendar of Events. This page is dedicated to SNP community partners with best-practice resources to strengthen services for older adults, SNP resources, calendar of events, community partner spotlight, real-time SNP dashboard data, and other national and local resources.



opportunities & challenges

The pandemic has been a learning opportunity for SNP and shown that traditional service models of providing in-person meals in a cafeteria-style setting or providing large deliveries of frozen American-style cuisine may not be the ideal service model that meets the needs of the diverse older adult community.

addressing the digital divide among older adults



It is unclear precisely how many older adults in Santa Clara County lack access to digital technology and the internet. A recent survey shows that 36% of older Californians do not have access to broadband at home, which would translate to over 97,000 Santa Clara County residents. A 2021 survey of SNP participants found that 82% lacked adequate internet access.

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the need to close the digital divide for older adults. SNP will collaborate with the Seniors' Agenda to pilot innovative programming to address and attempt to close this digital and equity divide.



pandemic and difficulty in long-term planning

The pandemic disproportionately impacted older adults. Black, Latino, and Native American populations were more likely to contract COVID-19 and, after adjusting for age, death rates were almost triple or more than that of white Americans.¹ People 60 and older represented 14.8% of cases in Santa Clara County, yet they comprised 85.2% of total deaths.²

SNP will continue to work under an abundance of caution when assessing mass site reopening. Site opening will be in a phased, slow approach and will consider the impacts of the pandemic on SNP's populations.

RYDE partnership

The SNP Mobility Management Program will join forces with RYDE in 2021. SNP will be hiring a coordinator for the role. The goal is to develop a plan for countywide transportation coordination and institutionalize older adult mobility planning within the County.



References

1. Department, S. C. (2021, October 8). COVID-19 Data and Reports. Retrieved from Santa Clara County Public Health Department Emergency Operations Center: <https://covid19.sccgov.org/dashboards>
2. Dietetics, A. O. (2020, September 11). From the Magazine Understanding and Promoting Nutrition and Health Equity. Retrieved from Food and Nutrition.org: <https://foodandnutrition.org/from-the-magazine/understanding-and-promoting-nutrition-and-health-equity>

diversity, equity, & inclusion

Homeless/transient populations

Project Roomkey started in March 2020 and was provided to individuals experiencing homelessness to self-isolate if infected or exposed to COVID-19. Project Roomkey secured a total of 10,974 hotel and motels rooms and 1,133 trailers throughout California. However, the project ended in September 2020.

Santa Clara County was awarded four Homekey awards as of September 2020, which resulted in the creation of 364 homes for homeless individuals and families. The cities of Palo Alto, Mountain View, San Jose, and Santa Clara have additionally submitted Homekey proposals for FY 2021-2022 to continue housing the homeless population. This creates an opportunity for SNP to collaborate with the Housing Authority and provide meals to older adults housed in these units.

Meeting the needs of LGBTQ community

The Billy de Frank LGBTQ Community Center SNP meal site closed its doors in March of 2020 in response to the pandemic and officially ceased operating its dine-in/café program in July 2020. This was the only SNP location serving this population and continues to be a gap in service.

FY 2019-2020 there were a total of four participants that answered any sexual orientation or gender identity (SOGI) questions. This year, 124 people responded, a 322% increase in response rate to SOGI questions, with 1.2% identifying as LGBTQ+.

Recently, the Office of LGBTQ Affairs surveyed adults ages 50 and older to inform future programs and policy. In the next year, SNP will work collaboratively with the Office to identify partners, leverage the results of the survey to inform programming, and assess how to best support the establishment of a dine-in/café program targeting this community.

