CalFresh Senior Outreach

Summer 2011

Purpose

1. **Enroll CalFresh-eligible seniors who are not receiving CalFresh**
   - 4,279 seniors (60+) are currently enrolled
   - Rough target: about 3,500 eligible seniors

2. **Increase access to hot meals among seniors via Restaurant Meals Program**

Strategy

1. <u>Raise awareness of recent changes:</u>
   - Elimination of resource limits
   - New name and branding, “CalFresh”
   - User-friendly online application

2. <u>Catalyze involvement of senior service providers</u>
   - Engage senior agency staff in doing CalFresh outreach
     - Educating clients about CalFresh and assisting with application

3. <u>Expand use of Restaurant Meals Program</u>
   - Include more neighborhood-based healthy restaurants
   - Raise awareness among seniors, senior agency staff, and CalFresh staff
   - Update EBT accounts of seniors on caseload to use Restaurant Program
   - Train CalFresh staff to continually update EBT accounts when clients become age eligible

Background: Jan-June 2011

Activities pursued to increase senior clientele

- Outreach by mail:
  - Mailers to IHSS populations not getting SSI/SSP
- Partner with senior service providers working with target population such as:
  - Aging and Disabilities Resource Center with Episcopal Community Services
- Initiation of pilot program:
  - IHSS staff to take CalFresh applications

Outreach to Agencies: June-July

Site visits and presentations:

- 30th St. Senior Center
- Jewish Community Center
- Bayview Hunters Point Adult Day Health Center
- Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP)
- Chinatown Branch Library

Initial contact made, more follow-up needed:

- Open House
- Western Addition Senior Service Center
- I.T. Bookman Community Center
- Kimochi Senior Center
- OMI Senior Center – Catholic Charities CYO
- Bayview Hunters Point Senior Center
- Family Services Agency

Findings

1. There is interest and need
   - Applications taken (paper and online) during presentations and afterwards
2. Confusion among seniors about whether they are receiving SSI
3. Concern among seniors that travel to CalFresh office is too difficult
4. Common additional concerns:
   - Invasiveness of application process
   - Conception that applying takes a long time
5. Staff are often too busy or don’t have the resources to pursue CalFresh outreach
   - Best fit are those currently doing benefit outreach
   - Some staff perceive there is no need (think all are on SSI)

Recommendations

1. <u>Develop reference sheet</u>
   - For agency staff about differences between SSI and other forms of Social Security

2. <u>Develop CalFresh outstations</u>
   - Utilize senior service providers
   - Reduce travel for seniors and disabled

3. <u>Hire part-time outreach worker</u>
   - Continue to inform staff and clients of senior service providers
     - Target agencies already doing benefit outreach
     - Target neighborhoods with highest density of low-income seniors
     - Train agency staff in Calwin website
   - Market Restaurant Meals Program and assist in signing up more restaurant options
   - Translation is essential for diverse outreach