

Food and Beverage Services

A Key Marketing Tool and Revenue Center

CULINARY CONNECTION

**“LET FOOD BE
THY MEDICINE
AND MEDICINE
BE THY FOOD.”**

— Hippocrates

THIS CE ARTICLE IS SPONSORED BY:



Food is medicine. Most of us in the healthcare world would adamantly agree with that statement. A major determinant for a hospital patient being discharged is whether or not they have eaten or are eating enough. Likewise, one of the biggest barometers of how a resident in assisted living is doing is how well they are eating. Sadly, a common contributing factor to someone's passing is they have stopped eating.

So why, with all of this knowledge about the key role food plays in a person's well-being, is the food and beverage operation not always seen as one of the most important components of health care? How do we help our administrators and executives view the food and nutrition

department as more than just a “cost center,” and instead see it as an area to market and celebrate?

Hospitals, retirement communities, and other facilities can greatly benefit from tapping into their food and beverage services to market their programs and boost revenues.

HOSPITALS/ACUTE CARE SETTINGS

A case study article titled “Improving Patient Satisfaction through Food” on the American Hospital Association's website clearly illustrates the importance of food service in an acute care setting (see box on page 2).

Continued on page 2



✉ sbucher101@yahoo.com

Shawn Bucher, MBA, CEC, CCE, CDM, CFPP

is the Director of Culinary Operations for the healthcare foodservice consulting firm of DM&A. He is the host of the Business Chef podcast, and author of multiple books including *Food People Management*.

Continued from page 1

One of the biggest factors in helping our hospital administrators understand the financial reward of increasing patient satisfaction has come from having patient satisfaction directly tied to government reimbursement. The happier the patients, the better the reimbursements.

This of course has to do with the Hospital Consumer

Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) surveys that we have been hearing about. These surveys have become one of the most talked-about data collection tools when it comes to patient satisfaction, and are the new measuring stick by which many establishments are gauging their success.

So how do you create happy patients, especially when most people who are in the hospital do not necessarily “want” to be there? It starts with going back to the basics. Many people do not completely understand the procedures they are undergoing or the medications they are taking, especially when they are in a bed not feeling great. But

“Northern Westchester Hospital is improving their patients’ experience through the Food Is Care program. Established by the hospital’s staff, the program first determines the patient’s food preferences and dietary requirements before providing fresh meals. Made with 90 percent of locally grown fruits and vegetables, meals are specifically made per patient’s order and preferences. The program also provides nutrition education in person or through the room service’s call center. The Food Is Care program resulted in:

- Improved patient satisfaction with food quality to 90 percent
- Elimination of production batch cooking
- Development of onsite herb and perennial garden

Because of its efforts, the hospital’s program has been recognized by the Planetree Organization for its best practices in delivering quality food and nutrition.”

Source: aha.org/case-studies/2016-09-26-improving-patient-satisfaction-through-food

regardless of how a person feels, they know if a room is clean, the staff is friendly, and the food is good. Everyone is an expert, especially when it comes to the food. Make it flavorful, attractive, temperature-appropriate, appealing, and comforting. And be sure the serving staff is friendly and helpful, as service is also key to a positive dining experience.

Continued on page 3

Continued from page 2

Another unique factor and advantage in food service is that of all of the support services in health care, food service is generally the only one that can be a revenue generator and not just a cost center. Many hospitals have first-rate cafeterias and coffee shops for guests, visitors and staff, keeping them on the property at mealtime and when they need a pick-me-up. Hospitals often have catering programs that produce income as well. In addition, onsite micro-markets featuring take-home meals, snacks, beverages, and more have become popular in facilities. These markets can increase revenues while generating goodwill due to their convenient nature.

Effectively marketing these programs to constituent groups, combined with delivering a quality service experience, can boost your profits and enhance your reputation.

ASSISTED LIVING AND RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

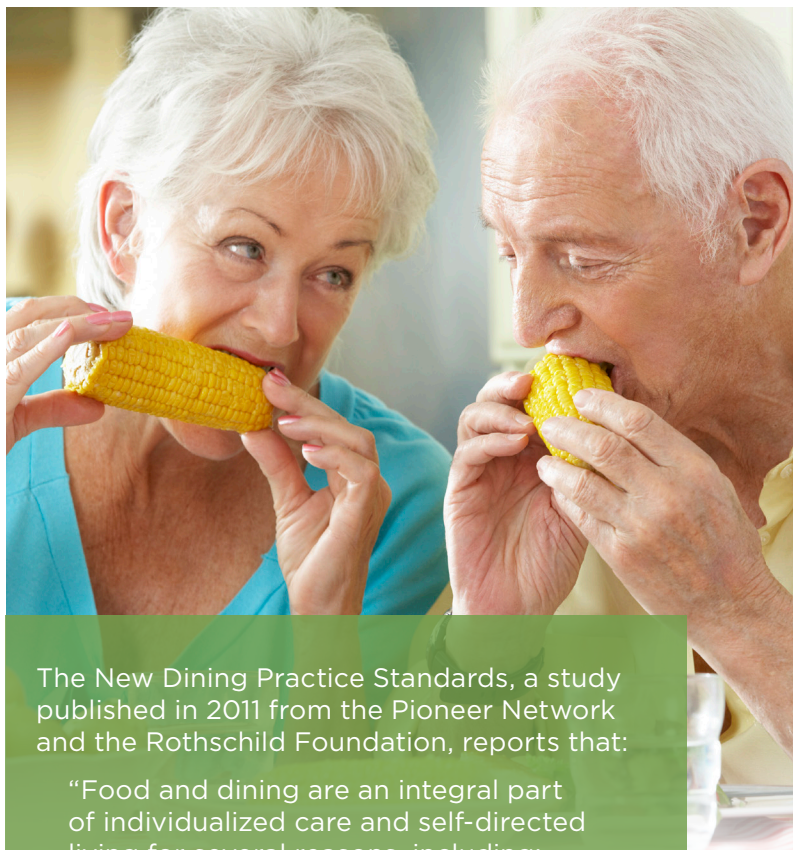
In assisted living facilities and continuing care retirement communities, countless studies show that food is one of the most important factors when it comes to the health and comfort of residents and the most frequent focus of regulators.

Many seniors who are choosing to live in retirement communities are well educated, have money, have traveled, and they enjoyed great food while doing it. That is partly why the level or quality of food service is a major factor for many people when it comes to choosing a place to live. With the increasing numbers of retirement centers around the country, the food can be a key differentiator and deciding factor for a person choosing your facility over a competitor.

Food and beverage options should be plentiful, providing a wide array of choices to satisfy every palate. Offer favorite comfort foods along with fusion dishes which combine culinary traditions from different cultures. Utilize fresh ingredients that are locally sourced when available. Flex your creative muscles to keep meals interesting.

SUMMING IT UP

Although food service and the hospitality industry have not always been seen as the most important department or service, what we do truly matters. It matters more than we sometimes realize or give ourselves credit for. We not only provide nutrients, we can contribute to a person's happiness and overall well-being. So stand a little taller, hold your head a little higher and know that you are part of a crucial service that doesn't just make a difference, but often makes all the difference.



The New Dining Practice Standards, a study published in 2011 from the Pioneer Network and the Rothschild Foundation, reports that:

“Food and dining are an integral part of individualized care and self-directed living for several reasons, including: 1) the complexity of food and dining requirements when advancing models of culture change; 2) the importance of food and dining as a significant element of daily living; and 3) the most frequent questions and concerns CMS receives from regulators and providers consistently focus on dining and food policies in nursing homes.”

Source: aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Practice/Aging/Resources/New%20Dining%20Practice%20Standards%20final%208-26-11.pdf

ARTICLE REFERENCES

American Hospital Association. aha.org
Pioneer Network. pioneernetwork.net

ONE FREE CE HOUR THROUGH SEPTEMBER 11, 2020

Fieldstone Bakery is generously sponsoring 1 free continuing education (CE) hour for CDM, CFPPs who read **Food and Beverage Services: A Key Marketing Tool and Revenue Center** and answer the following CE questions through September 11, 2020. You must log into the **ANFP Marketplace** and access the online CE quiz there for this members-only offer. Follow the directions on the quiz below to access your free CE.

Article Sponsored by:



CE Questions: Culinary Connection



This Level 1 article assumes that the reader has entry level knowledge of the topic. The desired outcome is to ensure a foundation of basic concepts of the subject matter.

Reading *Food and Beverage Services: A Key Marketing Tool and Revenue Center* and successfully completing these questions online has been approved for 1 hour of continuing education for CDM, CFPPs. CE credit is available ONLINE ONLY. To earn 1 CE hour, access the online CE quiz in the ANFP Marketplace. Visit **www.ANFPonline.org/market** and select “CE Articles.” If you don’t see your article title on the first page, then search the title, “*Food and Beverage Services: A Key Marketing Tool and Revenue Center*.” Once on the article title page, purchase the article and complete the CE quiz.

No payment is required for ANFP members through September 11, 2020.

- What is one of the determining factors for whether a patient can be discharged?
 - They are eating or have eaten
 - They have a trusted family member available to pick them up
 - They have had at least two visits from a doctor
- Hospital food and beverage programs can boost facility profits by
 - Charging extra for condiments
 - Offering first-rate cafeterias, coffee shops, and catering
 - Cutting foodservice employees
- Why is the food and beverage department often not seen as important as other services?
 - The facility may be overlooking or not marketing the key role of food in a client’s well-being
 - Administration often doesn’t want to be in the food business, and views it as a cost center
 - Both of the above
- What was the result of the Food Care Program developed by Northern Westchester Hospital?
 - Improved patient satisfaction with food quality to 90 percent
 - Elimination of production batch cooking
 - Both of the above
- What does HCAHPS stand for?
 - Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems
 - Hospital Consumer Accessory of Healthcare Physicians and Surgeons
 - Healthcare Customer Assessment of Hospital Providers and Systems
- Food service is typically the only support service that can be a/an
 - Asset to a select few
 - Revenue generator
 - Cost reducer
- The most frequent questions and concerns CMS receives from regulators and providers consistently focus on
 - General health of residents
 - Dining and food policies
 - Opportunities to increase reimbursements