

defeat **malnutrition** today

2021 Year in Review

We are pleased to provide you an overview of 2021 actions of the Defeat Malnutrition Today coalition. The main purpose of DMT is to advocate for the creation of federal policy changes toward a greater emphasis on screening, detecting, treating and preventing older adult malnutrition.

HIGHLIGHTS IN BRIEF

- We successfully advocated for \$750 million in the American Rescue Plan Act for Older Americans Act nutrition programs in conjunction with the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs, Meals on Wheels America, and other DMT member organizations.
- We successfully advocated for inclusion of questions on malnutrition and food insecurity in the National Survey of Older Americans Act Participants.
- We advocated for the Medical Nutrition Therapy Act in conjunction with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and other organizations.
- We also advocated for the creation of a White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, Hunger and Health.
- We published updated toolkits for both state legislators and state advocates.
- We were published in the *Journal of Elder Policy* and in *Health Affairs Forefront*, as well as numerous other publications.

MEMBERSHIP

DMT welcomed 12 new members to the coalition in 2021:

- Jewish Federations of North America
- Women In Government
- Alabama Dietetic Association
- Dakota Dietitians
- Feeding Florida
- Guntersville Lions Club
- Fordham University Henry C. Ravazzin Center on Aging and Intergenerational Studies
- National Senior Corps Association
- Treasure Coast Council of Black Nurses
- DocRD® L.L.C.
- Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement
- New Era Healthcare

This brings our membership up to **119** organizations!

PUBLICATIONS, COMMENTS AND STATEMENTS

This year, we partnered with Women In Government to publish [updated state toolkits](#) for both advocates and state legislators.

We also had an [article](#) published in the *Journal of Elder Policy* outlining the interrelation of older adult malnutrition and food insecurity with COVID-19.

Bob Blancato, DMT National Coordinator, was co-author of an article published on *Health Affairs Forefront*, "[To Advance Health Equity, Measure Hospital Malnutrition Care.](#)"

We wrote [comments](#) in support of the Global Malnutrition Composite Score to the National Quality Forum and to CMS. We also wrote comments to CMS on the [Physician Fee Schedule for CY22](#), [enteral nutrition local coverage determinations](#), [frailty measures in skilled nursing facilities](#) and comments to USDA on [underserved communities](#).

We issued a press statement in support of the proposed [White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, Hunger and Health](#). We also provided a statement for the record for the "State of Nutrition in America 2021" Senate hearing held in November.

National Coordinator Bob Blancato was [quoted on malnutrition](#) in a *New York Times* article on older adult nutrition programs.

We also published ten Malnutrition Connection newsletters:

- [January 2021](#) - #BeANutritionNeighbor
- [February 2021](#) - Dietary Guidelines for Americans and Healthy People 2030
- [March 2021](#) - National Nutrition Month
- [April 2021](#) - Global Malnutrition Composite Score
- [May 2021](#) - State Legislative Toolkits
- [June 2021](#) - Older Adult Food Insecurity
- [August 2021](#) - Social Determinants of Health
- [September 2021](#) - Malnutrition Awareness
- [October 2021](#) - Pharmacy Partnerships
- [December 2021](#) - Lessons from COVID-19

We were published in the International Council on Active Aging's blog and on Generations Now, the American Society for Aging's blog:

- ICAA: [US Healthy People 2030 includes goals for older adults](#)
- ICAA: [A Comprehensive Federal Agenda for Older Adult Nutrition Can Help Support Active Aging](#)

- Generations Now: [New Dietary Guidelines Include Focus on Older Adults](#)
- Generations Now: [Ideas for Fortifying the Federal Agenda for Older Adult Nutrition](#)

We also contributed to and supported the Alliance for Aging Research's launch of their [Food for Thought: The Role of Nutrition in Healthy Aging](#) video.

We encourage you to use all these new resources in your work!

ADVOCACY WORK

- National Coordinator Bob Blancato testified before the House Appropriations Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee on Older Americans Act nutrition funding for federal FY 2022. The House provided an increase of \$436 million for the nutrition programs in its Labor-HHS appropriations bill, even higher than the President's proposed increase of \$390 million. Final decisions have not yet been made on FY 2022 funding.
- The Older Americans Act nutrition programs and other federal nutrition programs also received significant funding in the March COVID-19 emergency funding package, known as the American Rescue Plan Act. OAA nutrition programs have received over \$1.6 billion in the emergency funding packages.
- We have been working with other organizations to advocate on behalf of the Medical Nutrition Therapy Act and have been part of multiple Congressional meetings.
- We have been in conversations with Sen. Booker and Rep. McGovern's offices on malnutrition and food insecurity, and we attended a press conference on their bill to create a White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, Hunger and Health.
- We are working with Rep. Pascrell to have the Congressional Research Service update its [memo](#) on older adult malnutrition. Rep. Pascrell also gave a [statement in the Congressional Record](#) for Malnutrition Awareness Week.
- We have been working with the HHS Administration for Community Living on implementing malnutrition screening-related questions on their National Survey of Older Americans Act Participants.
- We also advocated for the Elder Justice Reauthorization and Modernization Act, which contains funding for community-based organizations to address social isolation, which can lead to malnutrition.

WEBINARS, CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

We hosted a webinar in February to explain our 2021 policy agenda ([slides](#), [video/audio](#)), co-hosted a webinar in May with the International Council on Active Aging on [Nutrition, Physical Activity, and National Health Goals](#), and hosted a webinar in September on Collecting Data on Older Adults: Opportunities to Learn About Nutrition Status ([slides](#), [video/audio](#)). We are now hosting all our [webinar recordings on YouTube](#).

We participated in the National Council on Aging's Obesity and Equitable Aging Roundtable in October, which brought together over a dozen organizations to discuss the issue of obesity in the older adult population.

We presented on malnutrition to several groups/conferences, including:

- Ideagen
- Virginia Commonwealth Council on Aging
- Massachusetts Malnutrition Prevention Commission
- American Society on Aging
- Ohio Malnutrition Prevention Working Group
- Florida Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
- USAging
- Women In Government
- National Black Nurses Association
- Florida Council on Aging

We also had virtual booths at these meetings:

- American Society on Aging
- American College of Preventive Medicine
- National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials
- National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs

LOOKING FORWARD

We will be continuing our work to advocate for inclusion of the Global Malnutrition Composite Score in the CMS Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Program. We will be advocating for further funding for federal nutrition programs and research, including the Older Americans Act nutrition programs, through regular appropriations and through the Build Back Better Act. We will also advocate for a White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, Hunger and Health and passage of the Elder Justice Reauthorization and Modernization Act. Finally, we will be working with the Administration for Community Living to continue to implement the 2020 Older Americans Act reauthorization's malnutrition provisions.

GET ACTIVE!

Email Meredith Whitmire at mponder@matzblancato.com to get involved in comments, letters, advocacy and more!