



AUGUST 2021

MALNUTRITION CONNECTION

Providing Malnutrition Awareness and Advocacy Information to Share

The Congressional Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) Caucus has officially launched!



The newly established [SDOH Caucus](#) brings together members of Congress from disparate jurisdictions to highlight the opportunities for coordination to improve health outcomes and maximize existing and future federal investments in health, food, housing, transportation, and other important drivers of health.

How Will the Congressional SDOH Caucus Help?

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the vulnerability of many populations and has greatly impacted Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) and opportunities for healthy aging. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines the [five SDOH](#) as economic stability, education access and quality, healthcare access and quality, neighborhood and built environment, and social and community context.

The SDOH Caucus will explore opportunities to improve the impact of services delivered to address social determinants with the support of federal funding. This will work to amplify evidence-based approaches to holistic well-being. It also provides an opportunity to advocate for nutrition as a social determinant of health. The social isolation and economic pressures of the COVID-19 pandemic have placed more older adults at risk of poor nutrition, negatively impacting their health. Thus, Congress needs to continue to fully fund the federal nutrition programs that support older adults. In addition, because malnutrition [disproportionately](#) impacts older adults and lower income and Black hospitalized patients, nutrition is an important health equity issue that should be addressed across the spectrum of healthcare, including through the [Medical Nutrition Therapy Act of 2021](#).

What Will the Congressional SDOH Caucus Do?

- Shine a spotlight on how the COVID-19 public health emergency has had a disparate impact on certain populations and communities, including people with social needs.
- Convene bipartisan thought leaders to educate members on the evidence around social determinants, why it is necessary to explore, and what's currently working.
- Collect input and feedback from community-based organizations, health, public health, and social service organizations, and state and local government leaders on how best to facilitate effective social determinant interventions, and how Congress can take action to advance this work.
- Discuss bipartisan legislative efforts to address social determinant challenges across multiple committees of jurisdiction; and
- Highlight priorities on behalf of interested members of Congress to external stakeholders and the Executive branch.



Call for Comments! Caucus Request for Information

The Congressional Social Determinants of Health Caucus is seeking feedback on challenges and opportunities related to social determinants of health. Let them know how nutrition is a critical SDOH and where Congressional action is needed. Please share feedback to the questions included in [this form](#) on challenges and opportunities, which will be shared with SDOH Caucus co-chairs.

Submissions are due by September 21, 2021.

To Learn More:

Check Out This Recorded Webinar: "How social determinants of health impacts older adults, nutrition risk, chronic disease, and active aging and models for successful intervention" held on August 10th with leaders from the Better Medicare Alliance, New York University, and the National Hispanic Council on Aging. To learn how their organizations are successfully working to address the SDOH that impact nutrition and older adults, [click on the webinar image on the right](#).

