

JUNE 2018

# MALNUTRITION CONNECTION

Providing Information to Share on Malnutrition Awareness and Advocacy

## Ohio Malnutrition Commission

Two states have passed legislation establishing Malnutrition Prevention Commissions, Massachusetts and Ohio. The Ohio Malnutrition Prevention Commission was created when House Bill 580 was signed into law by Governor John Kasich in 2016. It tasked the Commission with developing recommendations to reduce the incidence of malnutrition among older Ohioans, based on the Commission's collection of information and study of the issue.

The Commission held multiple hearings and considered malnutrition impacts and healthcare costs, opportunities for education and awareness, and steps for prevention. In April of this year, the Commission submitted their findings and 16 recommendations to the Governor and the Ohio General Assembly. Learn more and read the report at: <https://bit.ly/2MI5ZN4>



### Key Findings Include:

#### The Risk for Malnutrition is High:

- Chronic diseases such as cancer, stroke, diabetes, heart disease and their treatments can result in changes in nutrient intake and ability to use nutrients, which can lead to malnutrition.
- In 2017, 671,333 older Ohioans were isolated and living alone; 443,770 were threatened by hunger and 694,565 were living at or near the poverty line.
- According to the *American Journal of Public Health*, at least one-third of all 1.6 million nursing home residents in the U.S. may suffer from malnutrition or dehydration.

#### Malnutrition is Costly:

- Patients who are malnourished while in the hospital have a greater risk of complications, falls, pressure injuries, infections, readmissions, and a longer length of stay, which is associated with up to a 300% increase in costs
- Patients with malnutrition may experience longer hospital lengths of stays by up to 4 to 6 days.
- Malnourished hospital patients have up to five times increased mortality.

Ohio is continuing to lead on the issue of malnutrition, as groups such as the Healthcare Collaborative of Greater Columbus (HCGC) are considering how to act on the Commission's recommendations. On May 14<sup>th</sup>, HCGC hosted "Addressing Senior Malnutrition as a Quality Improvement Strategy: A Community Conversation." Goals of the Conversation included: Gain awareness of Federal and State malnutrition recommendations/actions thus far; Identify current regional activity addressing malnutrition care and connect partners; Learn opportunities for community-wide action and/or recommendation implementation; and Decide as a group of partners to consider pilot/project work together to operationalize the Commission recommendations, especially in community connections to care when not in the hospital. It was an extremely successful kickoff meeting and the invited organizations are now developing plans for follow-up meetings to take action.

### Social Media Content:

- The #OhioMalnutritionPreventionCommission report is out! Check out the 16 recommendations that the Committee made to end #malnutrition in Ohio! <https://bit.ly/2MI5ZN4>
- Learn more about what the #OhioMalnutritionPreventionCommission found at <https://bit.ly/2MI5ZN4> It is time for all states to study #malnutrition and how it impacts our senior citizens!