

Mid-Year Update January-June 2023

We are pleased to provide you with a mid-year update of 2023 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

- Promoted hospital-community connection of the Global Malnutrition Composite Score through webinars and resource development
- Advocated for older adult focus in the 2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans via public meetings, conducting focus groups, and comments
- Presented a Hot Topic Session at the USAging Conference on the malnutrition and the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health
- Published in the Capitol Hill newspaper The Hill with National Council on Aging (NCOA) President/CEO Ramsey Alwin and multiple other publications
- Updated our website and added new resources
- Presented on malnutrition at key conferences

PUBLICATIONS, COMMENTS AND STATEMENTS

We submitted eight comments. We wrote comments for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in support of expanding nutrition related [Essential Health Benefits \(EHB\)](#) for patients nationwide, including Medical Nutrition Therapy, Medically Tailored Meals, and Produce Prescriptions. We wrote in support of CMS' proposed rules that include nutrition care in the [Medicare Advantage \(MA\) and Programs for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly \(PACE\)](#) and on including [malnutrition in risk adjustments for MA](#).

We wrote comments on the National Institute of Health (NIH) Office of the Disease Prevention [Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2024-2028](#) and advocated for an increase in research focused on preventative nutrition care and how nutrition promotes health. We submitted comments on the RFI on [Food is Medicine](#) for the NIH Office of Nutrition Research (ONR), focusing on effective strategies to meet the unique nutrition needs and challenges faced by older adults. We wrote comments for the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP) on the [Protocols of the 2025 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee](#) and expressed the need to subdivide the adult age group to separately assess older adult needs. We submitted a comment to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), and Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) on the importance of improving [nutrition education and training](#) in medical schools

and residency programs. We also submitted to Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's (AHRQ) supporting an older adult focus on their review of the [research on protein needs](#).

We collaborated with NANASP on a Malnutrition Learning Collaborative Resource guide to assist State Units on Aging (SUAs) on adding malnutrition to their State Plans on Aging (SPAs). It will be published on ACL's Aging and Nutrition Resource Center website. We submitted an article to [OBM Geriatrics](#) on including nutrition and malnutrition in U.S. state hospital regulations as a way to improve malnutrition quality of care, which is under final review.

Bob Blancato, our national coordinator, and National Council on Aging (NCOA) President/CEO Ramsey Alwin co-authored an op-ed for the Capitol Hill newspaper The Hill, "[We can't throw older adults over a hunger cliff](#)".

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

- ICAA:
 - [A never-ending cycle: Malnutrition, food insecurity and mental-health risk](#)
Meredith Whitmire with Kathleen Cameron from National Council on Aging and National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging and Allison Lacko from Food Research and Action Center
 - [Nutrition program to fall short on addressing food insecurity and malnutrition](#)
Bob Blancato and Mary Beals-Luedtka from Northern Arizona Council of Governments
 - [Fueling recovery: The impact of nutrition on wound healing](#) Laura Borth
 - [Aging in Rural Areas: an important focus for addressing malnutrition and health equity](#) Bob Blancato with clinical Dietitian Suzanne Fleming
- Generations Now:
 - [Looking Forward to Progress on Malnutrition in 2023!](#) Laura Borth and Meredith Whitmire
 - [How Nutrition Benefits Wound Healing](#) Laura Borth
 - ["Focusing on Rural Healthcare and High Nutrition Risks"](#). Bob Blancato with clinical Dietitian Suzanne Fleming
 - ["SNAP Benefits Being Slashed."](#) Bob Blancato and Northern Arizona Council of Governments Aging Director Mary Beals-Luedtka

MEMBERSHIP

DMT welcomed New Members [Napa/Solano Area Agency on Aging](#), Senior Services Consortium of Ramsey County, [SCAN Health Plan](#), [Nutristyle](#), and [Caseworthy](#) bringing our membership to 127 organizations!

ADVOCACY WORK

- Endorsed bipartisan bill ([S.2133](#)) on Medically Tailored Meals Home Delivery Program
- Advocated for reintroduction of Medical Nutrition Therapy Act in conjunction with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and other organizations

WEBINARS, CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

We hosted a webinar in January to reflect on some key highlights from 2022 and discuss our 2023 policy priorities ([slides](#), [video](#)). 2023 DMT Federal Policy Priorities on our website. In April, we hosted a webinar on the Farm Bill and how it will affect older adults ([slides](#), [video](#)). Later that month, we hosted a webinar on a 6 month update on the White House Conference of Hunger, Nutrition, and Health ([slides](#), [video](#))

We also presented on malnutrition to several groups and conferences, including:

- ICAA webinar on “Strengthening the Hospital-Community Connection”
- National Black Nurses Association Hill Day
- Washington Association of Senior Nutrition Programs
- USAging Policy Briefing
- Coalition to End Social Isolation and Loneliness' event at the U.S. Capitol
- DC Aging Policy, Detroit Area Agencies on Aging
- USAging Conference-Hot Topic Session
- NANASP Conference - DGA focus group session

LOOKING FORWARD

We are continuing contact with the White House and the Hill, particularly Representative Bonamici, about Presidential and Congressional recognition of Malnutrition Awareness Week in September. We will continue to identify and promote successful community partnerships as part of the Global Malnutrition Composite Score Measure and work on early stages of its implementation, including resource development and collaborations with social work and discharge planning groups. We will be advocating for funding for federal nutrition programs and research, including the Older Americans Act (OAA) nutrition programs through regular appropriations. We plan to comment on malnutrition in the OAA proposed regulations. We will also continue to advocate for the Medical Nutrition Therapy Act and passage of the Elder Justice Reauthorization and Modernization Act. Finally, we will continue to work with the new Nutrition and Aging Resource Center to further disseminate coalition resources and further integrate malnutrition into the Center's priorities.