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TO: OAA Providers

DATE: December 24, 2008

FROM: Barbara Suarez, Director of Program Integrity and Accountability

REF: Contracts and Programmatic Requirements

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On 12/8/08, a memo was sent to you about OAA contract and programmatic requirements for 2009. As there were some questions and concerns resulting from the information contained in the communication, we are resending the memo, modifying it with additional language that we hope will clarify or answer your questions or concerns.

By now, you should have received your new OAA contract from Carlos Lahitte. Although in the past, some providers may have been told that the 2009 contracts would be an extension of the 2008 contracts, we determined that it is more beneficial to the provider community to issue new contracts. By issuing new contracts we have the ability to provide advances to those providers who qualify and are in need of advances.

As indicated and explained in past communications, while we understand that some providers have expressed the need for higher rates, given the current economic climate and that a rate increase this year would have a negative impact on the availability of services to elders in our community, the Alliance is not able to increase any contract rates at this time. General revenue programs, including Local Service Programs, that provide meals and supportive services were reduced in the 2008 legislative session by over \$2.1 million, affecting more than 1500 elders. We made up part of that GR loss by using a small increase in OAA funds to supplant the budgets of those providers that receive funding from both sources. The Alliance will continue its efforts to raise awareness on the impact of no rate increases on providers as well as how funding cuts have affected the elders we serve.

We support your continued use of in-kind services and volunteers in order to maximize OAA funds.

The 2009 contract references the new July 2008 DOEA Programs and Services Handbook.

This new handbook is available for download at [www.allianceforaging.org](http://www.allianceforaging.org) . While there are

several new programmatic requirements referenced in the handbook, the Alliance has taken steps to assist providers in meeting the requirements so as to minimize any financial impact on providers. Please familiarize yourselves with the contents of the handbook, especially service definitions and programmatic requirements. Please note that the annual monitoring that will occur in 2009 will be based on the service definitions and programmatic requirements contained in the new handbook.

To help identify some changes, we would like to highlight the following items in the handbook:

- Page 2-19 addresses intake and prioritization. This function was outsourced to all OAA providers in 2008. The reporting requirements associated with this section are included as an attachment to your contract. As clarification, please note that a consumer cannot be made active in your program unless they have first been waitlisted and prioritized for services.
- Page 4-81 refers to the responsibility of providers in referring elders to other community resources if your agency does not have the specific service available for the client at the time of intake. The efforts made to refer individual elders to other community resources must be documented.
- Page 4-90 indicates that records now must be retained for a period of 6 years.
- Pages 4-100 through 4-161 contain information specifically for nutrition providers. The following are some of the requirements referenced:
  - While the previous handbook indicated that every nutrition service provider shall have a licensed registered dietician involved in planning and providing nutrition services for a minimum of eight hours, the new handbook eliminates the minimum number of hours that this person must be available. Rather, the new handbook gives the provider flexibility by stating that the number of consultation hours should be determined by the size and complexity of the meals provider and should be sufficient to meet all programmatic requirements.
  - The new handbook clarifies that the licensed registered dietician shall be employed by the provider or be an independent consultant hired by the provider. The dietician paid by the project's food service vendor/caterer does not meet the requirements of this position. A list of the Registered Dietician's responsibilities is listed in Chapter 4.
  - Menus continue to be approved by the provider's dietician. The new handbook, however, requires that each page must be signed by the provider's dietician as opposed to only the first page. It also indicates that menus must be submitted to the Alliance no less than six weeks prior to implementation rather than the former four

weeks. The Alliance will continue to review the menus prior to implementation. Please note that a dietician employed by the food vendor/caterer may not approve the menus because it is a conflict of interest (page 4-115).

- The use of the computer assisted nutrient analysis to develop menus will be continued. The Alliance obtained clarification from DOEA that the caterer's dietician can continue to develop the nutrient analyses; however, as a part of the approval process, your dietician must verify that all menus comply with DOEA standards and that the information contained in the nutrient analysis is correct and applicable.  
This can be achieved, for example, by conducting random samples of the products used by the caterer. We are attaching a new attestation statement that has been developed by our dietician which must be signed by both the caterer's dietician and your dietician.
- All meals must continue to provide each elder with a minimum of 33 1/3 % of the current Dietary Guidelines per meal. For example, if two meals are provided, it is required that a minimum of 66 2/3 % of the dietary reference intake as well as 2/3 of the food groups recommended in the Dietary Guidelines be provided. The new guidelines also specify that potassium is now one of the required nutrients that must be analyzed. Any nutrients slightly over or under the required levels should be acknowledged in the attestation signed by the provider's dietician. Please note that there has been a change in that each menu should be developed on the nutritional needs of a 70+ female.
- Please note also that there has been a reduction in the amount of calories required for each meal. Although the handbook states that each meal should be approximately 600 calories, we are establishing the standard as between 600-700 calories per meal to give providers flexibility.
- Whole grains and high fiber foods should be included as much as possible in the menus. The handbook also encourages the use of fortified foods. As clarification, please note that the dietary guidelines suggest the consumption of whole fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, dried) rather than fruit juices to ensure adequate fiber intake. If frozen or canned fruits are used, they must be packed in juice or water as OAA funds can only pay for full strength fruit juices.
- The handbook also requires that nutrition education be conducted on a monthly basis. To assist the providers in complying with this requirement, the dietician for the Alliance has agreed to develop the monthly nutrition educational materials. These materials can be used by your site managers to conduct monthly nutrition education. We welcome any suggestions regarding topics for discussion that you would like to see incorporated in these materials.

For any menus that have already been submitted to the Alliance for approval, Contract Managers

will provide technical assistance to providers where needed; however, any menu submitted after January 1, 2009 must comply with the new handbook. A provider training will be scheduled in the next few weeks. In the meantime, as always, please do not hesitate to contact me or your contract manager if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Barbara Suarez  
Director of Program Integrity and Accountability