

Measuring Home Meal Delivery Service Activities

Sample Survey for RSVP Projects

with Supporting Materials

About these Materials

This sample survey was developed for RSVP projects that provide home meal delivery services to help homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities live independently. The survey measures Healthy Futures performance measure outcome **H9**, increased social ties/perceived social support.

This survey and supporting materials are part of the tutorial, [Measuring Home Meal Delivery Activities: RSVP Project Example](#), available at the National Service Knowledge Network's Online Learning Center. You are encouraged to review the tutorial at the [Online Learning Center](#) to gain a more complete understanding of the materials presented in this packet.

The tutorial follows an RSVP project as they determine whether Healthy Futures performance measures H8 and H9 are appropriate for their activities. Project staff considers whether to use this survey and discuss the best way to manage data collection.

If your RSVP volunteers provide this type of activity, this survey may be appropriate for you.

This packet includes:

- [Home Meal Delivery Survey Sample](#) (page 1)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#) about the survey (page 2)
- [Performance Measure Checklist](#), H9 Example (page 5)
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Home Meal Delivery Survey (Sample)
Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)

INDEPENDENT LIVING PERFORMANCE MEASURE SURVEY
Home Meal Delivery

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. We would like to know how the RSVP Volunteer who has been assisting you has affected your life.

All information will be kept confidential; please do not disclose your name. You may choose not to answer questions.

Because I have a RSVP volunteer...	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Not applicable
1. ... I am eating regularly scheduled meals.					
2. ... I feel less lonely.					
3. ... I feel I have close ties to more people.					
4. ... I can remain living in my own home.					
5. Overall, I am satisfied with my RSVP volunteer.					
6. Overall, the RSVP Program has met my expectations.					

Feel free to comment on your experience on the back of this page.

Frequently Asked Questions: Home Meal Delivery Survey Sample

Who should receive the survey?

Clients who receive services which allow them to live independently - specifically home-delivered meals - may receive this survey. Decide in advance the minimum amount of service clients should receive before being included in the survey (e.g., 5 times a week for at least one year). These criteria should be a part of your work plan.

Can I add questions to the Home Meal Delivery Survey?

Yes, you can add questions to the survey. Additional questions may collect information about other results experienced by the client or information that will help you improve the service.

What are the options for conducting the surveys?

The survey can be given to the client in any of the following ways:

- In person, by handing it to them to fill out;
- In person or over the telephone, by reading it to them and taking down their answers on paper or on a computer using an electronic version of the survey; or
- Sending it to them through the mail

Regardless of how you conduct the survey, surveys must be kept confidential. This means there are no names on the completed surveys, completed surveys are returned in a sealed envelope, and they are stored in a safe place.

How do I collect the information from the volunteer stations? Who can help?

When considering the agency-wide performance measure, first think about the capacity of the volunteer stations where you place volunteers and your working relationship with those volunteer stations. Responsive stations are your best partners in distributing and collecting the surveys.

RSVP volunteers may be able to serve as “survey helpers” by distributing the survey to clients. A brief orientation offered by the volunteer station or RSVP staff will help RSVP volunteers introduce the survey and respond to clients’ questions.

How do I know if I have met the H9 outcome?

There are two questions on the survey that respond to the H9 outcome (clients report having increased social ties and/or perceived social support):

- Question 2) *Because I have a RSVP volunteer I feel less lonely.*
- Question 3) *Because I have a RSVP volunteer I feel I have close ties to more people.*

In your work plan, you determine your target for achieving the outcome by deciding how many of the clients eligible to be surveyed will answer positively (“somewhat agree” or “strongly agree”) to at least one of the two questions. (For more information on reporting on the outcome, see [How to Analyze the Survey Data](#) on page 9).

What should I do with information from the other questions?

Because I have a RSVP volunteer...	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Not applicable
1) ... I am eating regularly scheduled meals.					
2) ... I feel less lonely.					
3) ... I feel I have close ties to more people.					
4) ... I can remain living in my own home.					
5) Overall, I am satisfied with my RSVP volunteer.					
6) Overall, the RSVP Program has met my expectations.					

Responses to the other questions can provide helpful information to improve or alter your service activity and contribute to greater understanding of client changes. This information can be shared with community and stakeholder groups (advisory council, volunteer stations, volunteers, funders, partners) through reports or promotional material. Strong agreement with any of the statements by almost all of the clients is cause for celebration. Disagreement with the statements provides an opportunity to look closely at your service activity.

Question 1) *Because I have a RSVP volunteer I am eating regularly scheduled meals.* Given that this is the basis of a home meal delivery service activity, you would hope to see almost all of the clients respond in agreement (“somewhat agree” or “strongly agree”). If clients disagree (somewhat or strongly) about eating regularly scheduled meals, it would be important to consider the reason. For instance, you might check the service model (e.g., Are you operating enough days?), or implementation (e.g., Are volunteers missing deliveries? Is the food adequate?). Comments provided by clients may offer insights about any problems that are occurring.

Question 4) *Because I have a RSVP volunteer, I can remain living in my own home.* Agreement with this statement would demonstrate that the service contributes to client independence. If a large number of clients disagree, look for clues as to why. Consider gaps in the service activity or whether clients are in need of additional services to remain independent. Perhaps clients are suffering health issues which put them at risk for continued home living. Your project might be able to offer additional services or a referral. Again, the comments may provide clues to the client issues.

Question 5) *Overall, I am satisfied with my RSVP volunteer focus on client satisfaction with the RSVP volunteer.* If many clients disagree with these statements, examine the volunteers' performance and relationships with clients. Perhaps volunteers are chronically late or unable to handle multiple client demands. It may be that additional training is needed to ensure that volunteers are able to do their best work and know about other resources to offer. Check those comments.

Question 6) *Overall, the RSVP program has met my expectations* focuses on client satisfaction with the RSVP project as understood by the client. Disagreement with this statement may indicate a problem with the service or a misunderstanding of what the home meal delivery service can or cannot do. Consider the comments on those surveys where there are disagreement for additional information.

What should I do with any comments?

Comments can be an excellent way to gather additional information and find out what's on clients' minds. Comments can shed additional light on the responses to other questions, both why a client might have disagreed with one of the statements or agreed with it. In particular, comments can often identify the nature of the problem. This information can help you determine modifications to the service activity or other appropriate responses. Comments can also highlight outstanding qualities of service that you quote in reports or volunteer recruitment materials.

Does H9 replace aging in place?

For many years I have used aging in place as my most important outcome ("Because of the RSVP volunteer, I can remain living in my home"). Can the outcome "increased social ties and/or perceived social support" replace it?

"Increased social ties and/or perceived social support" can replace the aging in place outcome. In fact, the H9 outcome supports the aging in place outcome. Twenty years of medical research has established a strong connection between social ties and/or perceived social support and positive mental and physical health outcomes. Put simply, researchers believe that positive social ties and feeling that support is available can help individuals be and remain physically and mentally healthy. The contact with RSVP volunteers doing meal services can address both the nutritional (physical) and social connections (mental) needed for good health. The healthier people are, the more likely they are to remain living in their own homes.

Performance Measure Checklist (H9 Example)

Below is an optional checklist to help you decide if performance measure H9 is appropriate for your project, and if the [sample client survey](#) on page 1 will work for you.

Go through this checklist in any order you want – just make sure to address each item. For each item, decide if it is complete (Check “yes, done”), or needs work (Check “needs work”).

Go back and review the items that need work and see what you can do to address the issue.¹

Check whether each item is “done” or “needs work”	yes, done	needs work
<p>1. Start with the outcome. Give it a read. OUTCOME: H9-Number of homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities who reported having <u>increased social ties/perceived social support</u>. CNCS defines social ties/perceived social support as “relationships with other people and/or the belief that these people will offer (or have offered) effective help during times of need”.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is your current outcome the same or different than outcome H9? Does the outcome in your current work plan match the H9 outcome (increased social ties/perceived social support)? 		
<p>2. Review the community need in relation to your service activity.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there needs or deficiencies in your community that could be effectively addressed by the service activity? Is that clearly stated in the community need statement? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the community need in your current work plan addressed .by your service activity? <p>A service activity related to meal delivery does address independent living.</p>		
<p>3. Consider if your service activity will contribute to the outcome H9.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the H9 outcome seem appropriate given the service provided by RSVP volunteers? That is, is it reasonable to expect that the people who receive your service will feel less lonely or feel they have close ties to more people because of the RSVP volunteer? 		

¹ The tutorial, [Measuring Home Meal Delivery Activities: RSVP Project Example](#), includes RSVP project staff discussing the items on this checklist.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the service contribute in a meaningful way to the H9 outcome? Is the level of effort of the volunteers sufficient in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Frequency (how often it occurs, e.g., 5 days a week)? ○ Duration (for how long it occurs, e.g., 9 months)? ○ Intensity (how much occurs. e.g., 10 minutes a visit)? 		
4. Take a close look at the survey to ensure that it is appropriate.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the survey questions seem appropriate given your service activity? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the survey seem appropriate for your service clients? Can they understand it and fill it out? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you believe the items on survey are addressed directly by your service activity? 		
5. Finally, check your ability to manage the data collection for this outcome.		
Volunteer Station		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have a working relationship with your volunteer stations? That is, do they usually communicate and respond in a timely way? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have a MOU which spells out performance measurement assistance needs? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will they be able to manage the distribution of the survey? Is there an opportunity to get it to the clients? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will stations be able to collect the surveys? Would they be able to prepare RSVP volunteers as “survey helpers” to collect the surveys? 		
Grantee		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have the staff time and/or stakeholder support in place to provide support to the collection, and aggregate and report the data? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you collect and report on the results within one year? 		

Diego RSVP Work Plan (Sample)

Home Meal Delivery Activity

Focus Area: Healthy Futures

Objective: Aging in Place

Stations: 10

RSVP Volunteers: 100

Community Need: The 2010 Census showed that Diego County has the second fastest growing population of people aged 65+ in the state of Indiana. Currently at 16% (2012), the population of people age 65 and over is expected to grow to 19.5% by 2015. In addition, over 20% of seniors (65+) in Diego County fall below the poverty line and are at risk of being malnourished. This poverty rate is twice as high as the state average (10%) (Kaiser Commission estimates based on the Census Bureau's March 2012). Finally, as people age, the chances of developing chronic illnesses and conditions that limit their ability to perform routine tasks that allow them to remain independent, including purchasing and preparing nutritious meals regularly, increase considerably. The Meals on Wheels Association of America reports that fifty-nine percent (59%) of home-delivered meal participants reported having three or more diagnosed, chronic illnesses or conditions” (2001).

In the face of the growth of the population and the challenges faced (malnourished, physically limited), the Diego County Council on Aging reported that seniors who maintain acceptable nutritional health standards are more likely to remain independent than those seniors who are not getting proper nutrition (2010). Medical research also indicates that positive social ties and feeling that support is available can help individuals stay and continue to remain physically and mentally healthy (Holt-Lunstad J, Smith TB, Layton JB (2010) Social Relationships and Mortality Risk: A Meta-analytic Review). The contact with RSVP volunteers providing meal services can address both the nutritional and social connections needed for good health. The healthier people are, the more likely they are to remain living in their own homes.

For some homebound seniors, the daily home-delivered meals may be the only contact with others and the only hot, nutritious meal they eat in a day. To address the nutritional health needs of homebound people age 65 and over, Diego County’s Council on Aging and Nutrition Office provides a meal delivery program.

Service Activity: 100 RSVP volunteers will each serve 15-20 hours a week for 50 weeks of the year. Volunteers will assist, preparing, packaging, and delivering nutritious hot meals to at least 300 homebound seniors, five days a week. RSVP volunteers will serve at seven warehouse locations under the supervision of the Greenfield County Council on Aging and Nutrition Office. Volunteers who deliver meals will be assigned to regular routes (i.e. deliver meals to the same seniors) in an effort to get to know the clients and create a sense of consistency and trust.

Performance Measure Output: (H8) Number of homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities receiving food, transportation, or other services that allow them to live independently.

Target: 300

Instrument: Database

Instrument Description: The *Meal Delivery log* is completed daily by delivery volunteers and entered into the Meal Delivery Database on a monthly basis by the Project Director.

Performance Measure Outcome: (H9) Number of homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities who reported having increased social ties/perceived social support.

Target: 170²

Instrument: Survey

Instrument Description: *Home Meal Delivery Survey* will be administered once a year to clients who have received meals for at least 6 months.

² **How did Diego RSVP get this number?** They know that all 300 clients are eligible to be surveyed (all have at least 6 months of service). They hope to get back at least 225 completed surveys. Of the 225 anticipated returned surveys, they hope to see seventy-five percent (75% or around 170) meet the outcome.

How to Analyze the Survey Data

Home Meal Delivery Survey Sample

You can develop a simple spreadsheet to summarize your data and report to stakeholders. Below is another easy way to summarize the information for the H9 outcome: clients report having increased social ties and/or perceived social support. You will need the completed surveys, a tally sheet, a calculator and a pencil.

Steps

1. Gather all of the *Home Meal Delivery* surveys.
2. Develop a tally sheet like this one.

Number of eligible respondents (i.e. 6 months or more of service): ____ Number of respondents: ____	Number that somewhat agree or strongly agree
Q2 ... I feel less lonely.	
Q3 ...I feel I have close ties to more people.	
Both Q2 andQ3	

3. Note the number of eligible clients that were offered a survey. For Diego RSVP, the project in the [sample work plan](#) (page 7), the 300 clients that receive at least 6 months of service were offered a survey. Then count up actual surveys received and note that number. Diego RSVP received 250 completed surveys.

Number of eligible respondents (i.e. six months or more of service): 300 Number of respondents: 250	Number that somewhat agree or strongly agree
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4. Go through the pile and focus on just two statements in each survey: Question 2 (...I feel less lonely) and Question 3 (...I feel I have close ties to more people). For each survey, you should put only one hash mark (or leave blank) on the tally sheet.
 - If “somewhat agree” or “strongly agree” is marked for **both** Q2 and Q3, put a hash mark in “both Q2 and Q3”.
 - If “somewhat agree” or “strongly agree” is marked for Q2 (only), put a hash mark in that row.
 - If “somewhat agree” or “strongly agree” is marked for Q3 (only), put a hash mark in that row

- Do not put anything if they check “not applicable”, “somewhat disagree”, “strongly disagree”, or leave the question blank.

Number of eligible respondents (i.e. 6 months or more of service): <u>300</u> Number of respondents: <u>250</u>	Number that somewhat agree or strongly agree
Q2 ... I feel less lonely.	++++ +++++ ++++ ++++ +++++ etc.
Q3 ...I feel I have close ties to more people.	++++ +++++ ++++ ++++ +++++etc.
Both Q2 and Q3	++++ +++++ etc.

- Count up the totals and note the numbers.
 - Q2...I feel less lonely=50 agree responses (somewhat or strongly)
 - Q3...I feel I have close ties to more people=110 agree responses (somewhat or strongly)
 - Both Q2 and Q3=40 agree responses (somewhat or strongly)
 - Total=200 agree responses (somewhat or strongly)

Number of eligible respondents (i.e. six months or more of service): <u>300</u> Number of respondents: <u>250</u>	Number that somewhat agree or strongly agree
Q2 ... I feel less lonely.	50
Q3 ...I feel I have close ties to more people.	110
Both Q2 andQ3	40
Total	200

- Report on the H9 outcome in eGrants using your progress report. Diego RSVP Home Meal Delivery can report that 200 out of the 250 (80%) surveyed clients report having increased social ties and/or perceived social support. In the progress report, they would simply note the number, “200”, as in “200 homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities report having increased social ties and/or perceived social support”.

7. Other reports. In addition to the progress report, think about other reporting opportunities where you might share the information in more detail. For instance, “300 clients received meals from Diego RSVP volunteers. Of the 250 clients who completed surveys...
- Twenty percent (20%) agreed that because of the RSVP volunteer, they feel less lonely.
 - Forty-four percent (44 %) agreed that because of the RSVP volunteer, they have close ties to more people.
 - Sixteen percent (16 %) agreed that because of the RSVP volunteer, they feel less lonely AND also feel that they have close ties to more people.