

# news release

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## AREA 9 MEALS ON WHEELS SURVEY RESULTS

What is the impact of the Area 9 Meals on Wheels program on the lives of the elderly and disabled? This is the question that needed to be answered by surveying those who receive the Meals on Wheels service from the Area 9 In-Home and Community Services Agency.

In the most recently completed 12-month report period 988 elderly and disabled individuals who have chronic health conditions or major impairments, participated in the Meals on Wheels program.

In March, a survey was provided to current participants. Completed surveys came from all five counties served by the Area 9 Meals on Wheels program: Fayette, Franklin, Rush, Union and Wayne.

"Responses to three of the survey questions are very revealing on the impact of the services," said Beth Evans, Meals Program Director:

- *Is the driver (meal deliverer) the only person you see on some days?*  
47% of the respondents said yes, that on some days the meal deliverer is the only person they see. In addition to delivering the meal, the person's well being is checked by the deliverer each day.
- *Has your nutrition (health) improved since you started receiving your meal?*  
88% of the respondents indicated their nutrition has improved.
- *Would you still be living at home if you did not receive Meals on Wheels?*  
14% of the respondents said no, they would not be living at home without the meal and the daily check by the deliverer.  
34% were not sure if they would be at home without the meal and the daily check by the deliverer.

"The responses to these questions on the survey indicated the value and importance of the Area 9 Meals on Wheels program," says Tony Shepherd, Executive Director of the Area 9 Agency.

Mr. Shepherd further stated, "The nutritionally balanced meal, the daily contacts, the improved nutrition is not only making the recipients have an improved quality of life, but it also allows a significant number to remain living as independently as possible in their own home, in their own communities, thus delaying or preventing nursing home placement. Placement in a nursing home is much more expensive for people who need only a few community based home care services to get by."

Some noteworthy and humorous comments by recipients on the survey form were:

- "On some days I wouldn't have anything to eat if it weren't for Meals on Wheels."
- "I enjoy the meals very much. I have more strength since I've been taking the meals."
- "We appreciate being served by Area 9 and the nice person who delivers them...thanks a lot."
- "My husband's blood sugar has improved greatly since we have been on the meals. I'm very thankful, they have been a great help to both of us."
- "I very much appreciate the opportunity for the meals, but also the precious person who delivers my meal makes me feel special."
- "Everything about Area 9 has been great and a big help."
- "I'm unable to prepare my meals because of my health. My doctor recommended I get meals brought to me."
- "My cholesterol is now down to what the doctor wants. I credit Meals on Wheels for helping to achieve this goal. Thank you."

To find out more about Area 9 Meals on Wheels, call 765-966-1795 or 1-800-458-9345. Area 9 In-Home and Community Services Agency is a service of Indiana University East.

