



National Council on Aging



ATLANTA  
COMMUNITY  
FOOD BANK



NASUAD

National Association of States  
United for Aging and Disabilities

# BENEFITS OUTREACH: PRACTICES THAT WORK

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June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019

# Overview

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1. Survey results on state systems for benefit assessment and enrollment
2. Innovations in Benefits Outreach National Contest
3. Research on messaging to diverse older adults
4. Research on Facebook messaging
5. Local benefits outreach practices in Atlanta

# Survey to State Agencies

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- Survey sent to state members
  - State aging and disability agencies responsible for a wide range of LTSS, such as state-funded services, OAA programs, and Medicaid LTSS
  
- Questions about state systems for benefit assessment and enrollment
  - Medicare low-income subsidies, SNAP, and LIHEAP

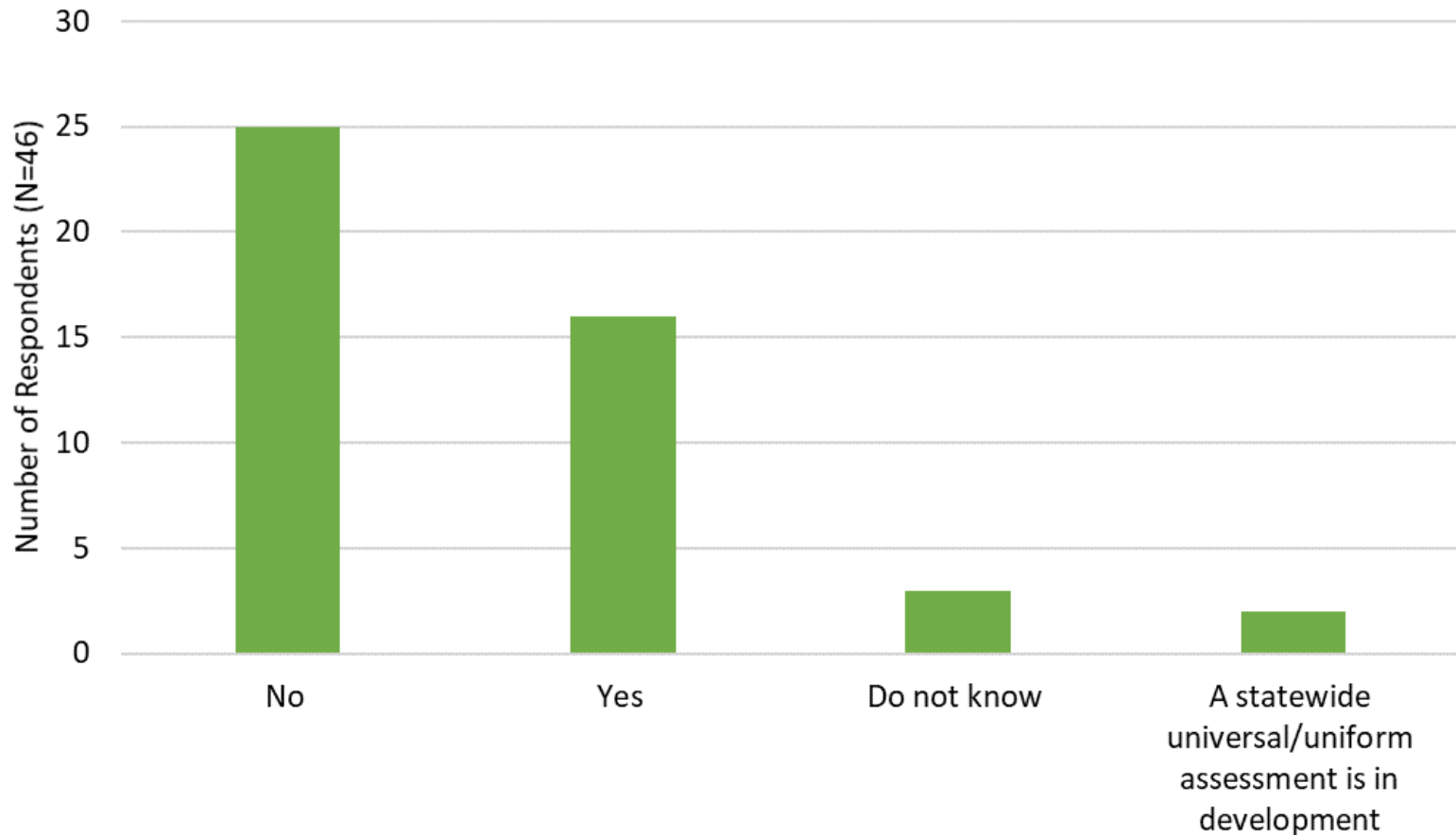
# Increase in Demand

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1. Adult Protective Services
2. Home-Delivered Meals
3. Family Caregiver Support
4. Transportation
- 5. Aging and Disability Resource Center**
6. Case Management
7. Personal Care Assistance/Attendants
8. Respite
9. Homemaker
10. Chore Services
11. Adult Day Social Services (Does Not Include Health Component)
- 12. Information and Referral**
13. Consumer-Directed Personal Care Attendants
14. Alzheimer's Support Program
15. Behavioral Supports
- 16. State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)**
17. Housing Assistance
18. Elder Abuse Prevention
19. State Adult Guardianship Program
20. Congregate Meals

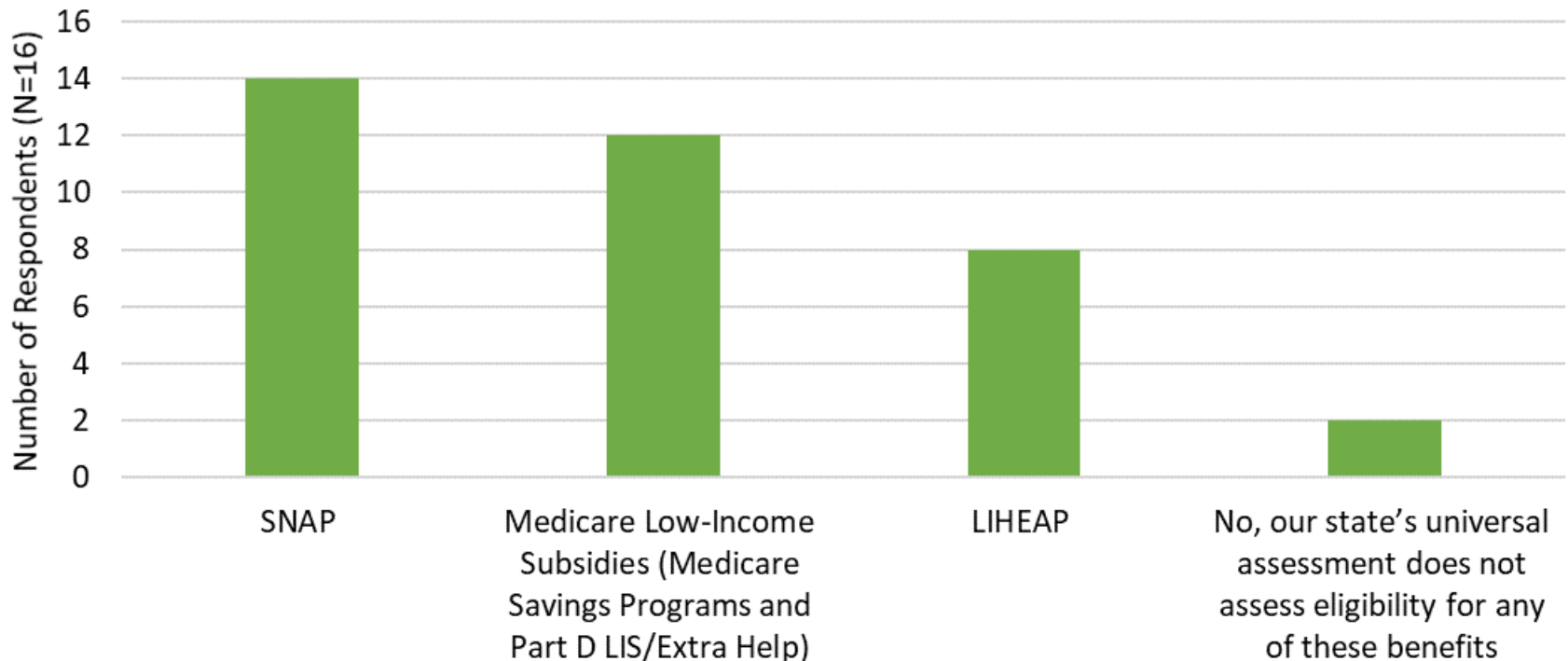
# Statewide Universal/Uniform Assessment

## States with a Statewide Universal/Uniform Assessment



# Eligibility for Benefits Assessed

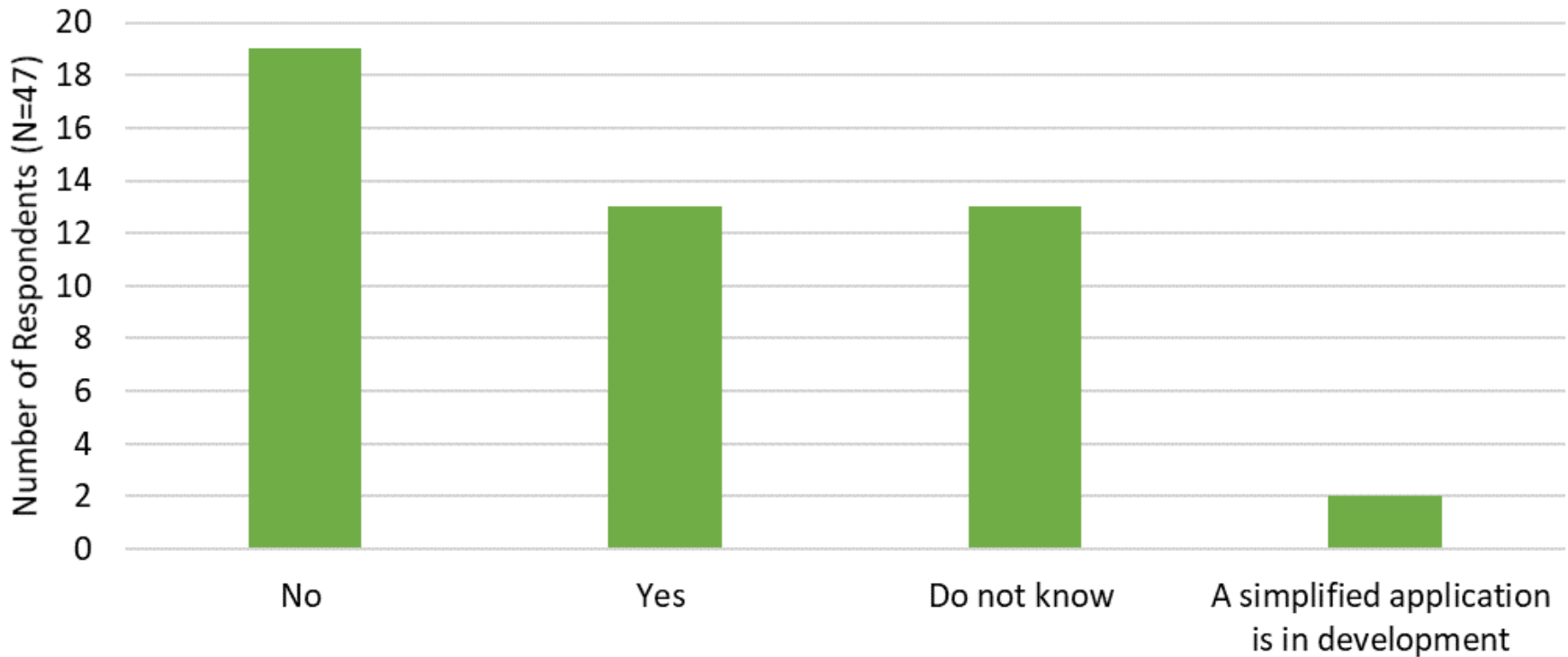
## Eligibility for Benefits Assessed in Statewide Universal/Uniform Assessments



# Simplified Applications

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## States that Use Simplified Applications



# Simplified Applications

## ■ Forms:

- “The application for Medicaid, food and cash benefits is a four-page form. Individuals may also apply on-line for these programs.”
- Combined Application Projects (CAPs)
- Elderly Simplified Application Project

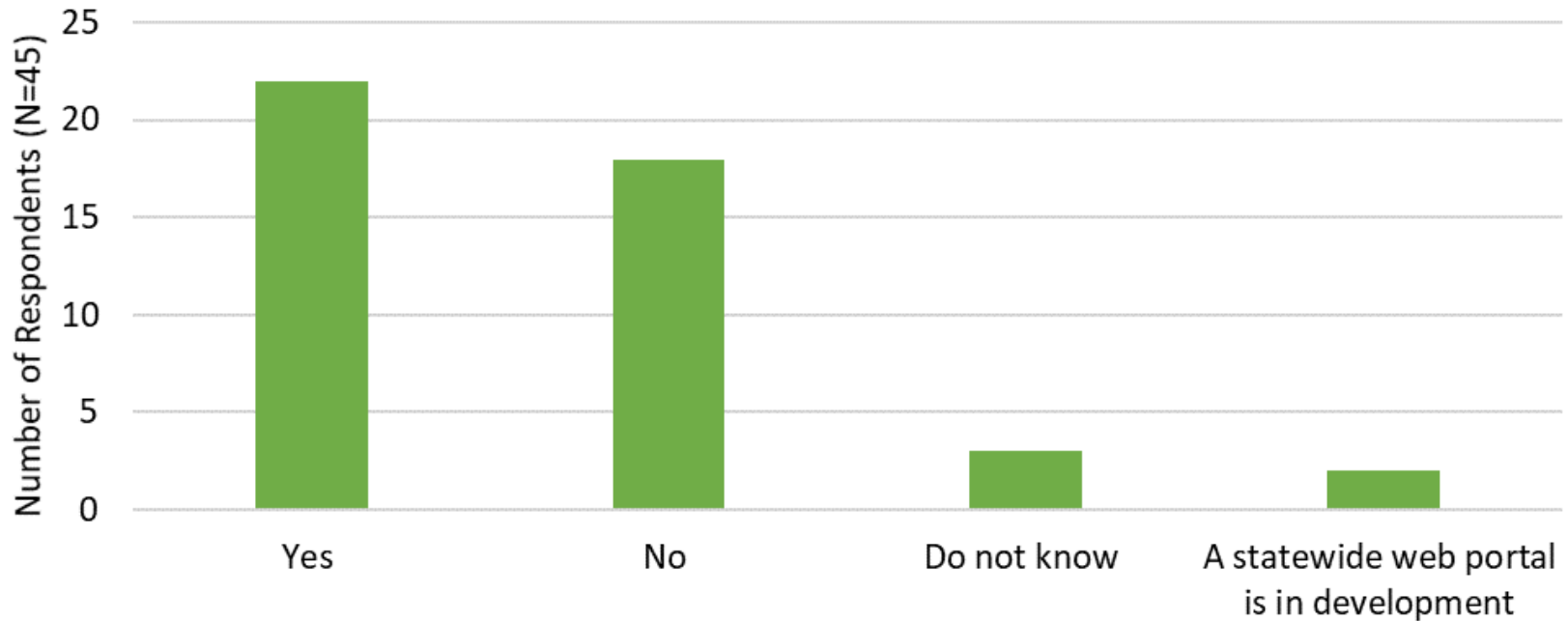
## ■ Online:

- “Our state has an online integrated system for determining eligibility across multiple benefits programs...For most people, it will take from 30 to 60 minutes to fill out the application.”
- “Individuals may apply for multiple programs in one single application flow through the state's online application. Applicants only see the questions applicable to the requested programs.”



# Web Portal for Benefits Screening and Enrollment

### States with a Statewide Web Portal for Benefits Screening and Enrollment



# Texas Benefits

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Your Texas Benefits Intro Video

47,152 views

LIKE DISLIKE SHARE SAVE ...



TexasHHS  
Published on Oct 25, 2013

SUBSCRIBE

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=130&v=wYcX2i1iPPk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=130&v=wYcX2i1iPPk)

# State Level Partnerships

- “We work closely with the Department of Commerce (LIHEAP) and the department of human services.”
- “The SHIP program that is housed in the SUA partners with the state Medicaid Department on benefit assessment and enrollment.”
- “The Department of Social Services (DSS) partners with the Department of Corrections (DOC) for incarcerated individuals who are nearing release to determine eligibility for Medicaid (in place) and SNAP (coming soon).”
- “Aging is continuing to work with the Medicaid Waiver State Agency and other state agencies on implementation of an uniform assessment tool.”
- “Aging and Disability Services Division is working with the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services to create a one stop shop to identify programs that individuals may be eligible for and expedite the eligibility process.”

# Innovations in Benefits Outreach National Contest



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- Identification and sharing of promising practices in benefits outreach to persons with disabilities and older adults.
  
- Practices that provide outreach, education, screening, and/or assistance for benefit programs.
  
- Awardees:
  - New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Aging Services
  - Feeding the Gulf Coast

# New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Aging Services



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## ■ NJSave

- An online application to help low-income older adults and individuals with disabilities save on medical care, prescriptions, and other living expenses.

- NJSave allows individuals to check their eligibility and apply for various savings and assistance programs, such as the Medicare Savings Programs, LIS/Extra Help, and LIHEAP through just one online application.



STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF AGING SERVICES

# NJSave Outreach



# NJSave Outreach



NJ SAVE Application Tutorial Video


1,018 views

👍 10    💬 0    ➦ SHARE    📌 SAVE    ⋮

 **TheNJ DHS**  
Published on Oct 15, 2018

**SUBSCRIBE 853**

# NJSave Outreach



# NJSave



**Your One-Stop Application for Benefits and Savings in New Jersey**



**You May Qualify for Programs If:**

- You are a resident of the State of New Jersey
- You are age 65 or older
- You are between the ages of 18 and 64 and receiving Social Security Disability benefits
- You meet certain income requirements

**Benefits and Programs:**

- Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged and Disabled (PAAD)
- Hearing Aid Assistance to the Aged and Disabled (HAAAD)
- Lifeline Utility Assistance
- Medicare Savings Programs
- Senior Gold Prescription Discount Program





**Additional Savings Programs:**

- Universal Service Fund (USF)
- Low-Income Heating and Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Property Tax Freeze
- Reduced Motor Vehicle Fees
- Low-Cost Spaying/Neutering

**Get Help Now and Save Today!**

NJ Department of Human Services, Division of Aging Services  
1-800-792-9745    [www.aging.nj.gov](http://www.aging.nj.gov)



Scan Barcode  
With Your  
Smartphone!



# NJSave



**Find Out If You Are Eligible to Save!**



**Are you disabled or age 65 or older?**

**Do you need help paying Medicare premiums, prescription costs, and other living expenses?**





**THREE Easy Ways to Save Today:**

1. Scan the Barcode
2. Go to [www.aging.nj.gov](http://www.aging.nj.gov)
3. Call 1-800-792-9745





# Feeding the Gulf Coast

## ■ Food Bag Program

- Fresh fruit and vegetables along with shelf stable food for older adults and people with disabilities.
- Opportunity for clients to learn more about benefits such as SNAP, LIS, the MSPs, and LIHEAP.



# Feeding the Gulf Coast



**FEEDING THE GULF COAST**

**COMMUNITY foodbank**

In Partnership With

**FOOD BANK OF NORTH ALABAMA**

**MfN MISSISSIPPI FOOD NETWORK**

## SENIOR BENEFITS FAIR

*Are you receiving all the benefits you may be eligible for?*

**OUR BENEFITS ENROLLMENT CENTER OFFERS FREE HELP TO LOW-INCOME SENIORS & THOSE ON DISABILITY WITH INFORMATION & ENROLLMENT ASSISTANCE.**

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Benefits (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps
- Low Income Subsidy (LIS or Extra Help)
- Medicare Savings Program (MSP)
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- 1 Free Senior Bag\*

\*with free benefits screening, must be over 50 and supplies are limited

*For more information, contact us at*  
**1-877-833-2550**  
*or visit online at*  
**BENEFITSENROLLMENTCENTER.ORG**

Benefits Screenings will be provided by Feeding the Gulf Coast.

# Considerations for Diverse Populations



# Messaging Research Update

- 2016: NCOA sponsors national telephone survey of over 1,000 adults aged 60+ with incomes below 250% FPL
  - Asked about knowledge of benefits programs, interest in programs, where they get trusted information, and tested messages
  - Focus groups with older adults & caregivers in four cities
  - See findings at:  
<https://www.ncoa.org/centerforbenefits/outreach-toolkit/what-the-research-says/>

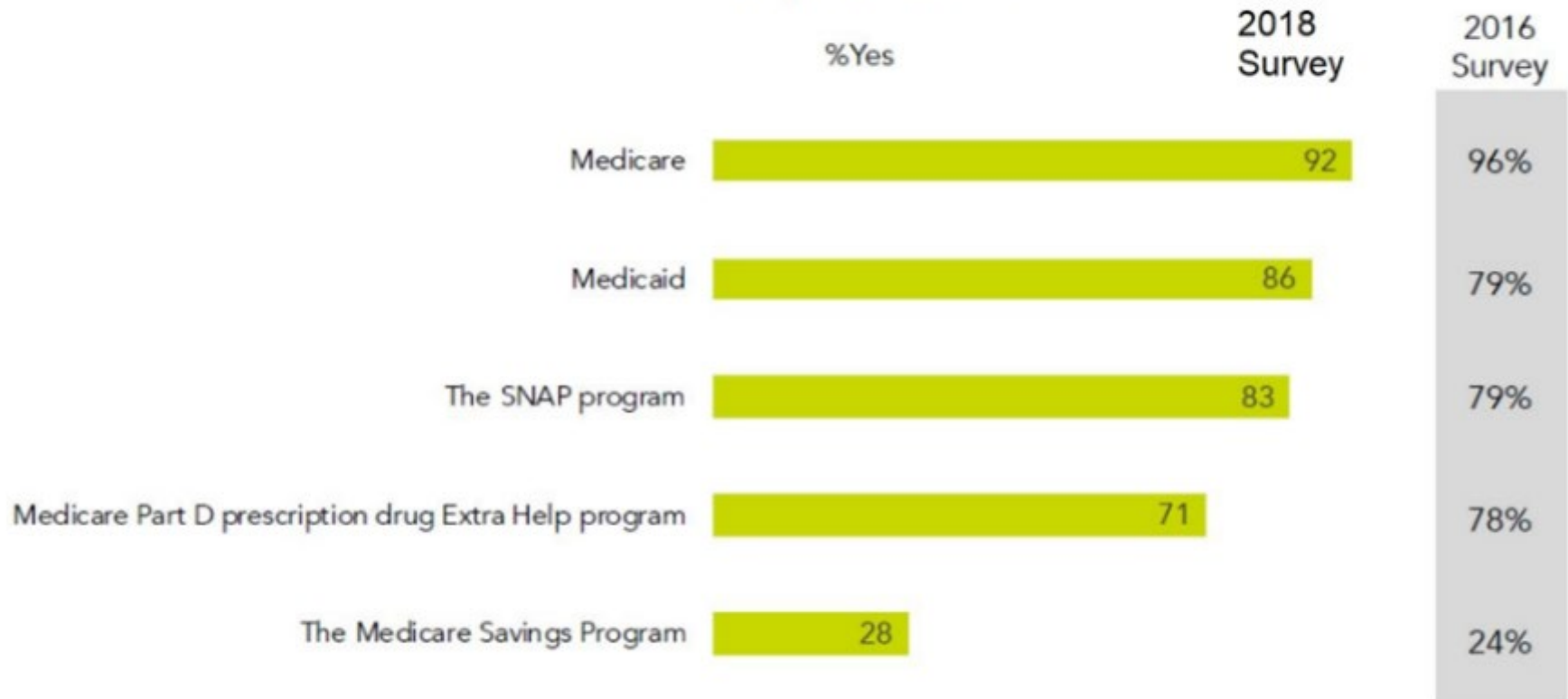
# Messaging Research Update (cont.)

- 2018: Partnered with Diverse Elders Coalition to repeat survey with 481 older adults from underrepresented populations (Asian-American, Latino, LGBT, Native American)
- Survey translated into:
  - Spanish
  - Chinese
  - Korean
  - Vietnamese
  - Khmer (Cambodian)



# Awareness of Benefits

Q: Have you ever heard of...



# Barriers to Applying

- Concerns about paperwork ranked as top reason diverse populations hesitated to apply
- Other top barriers:
  - Belief that other people need more help
  - Not knowing how to begin process
  - Thinking the amount of the benefit is not worth the hassle
    - Part D Extra Help valued at \$4,900 year (Social Security)
    - Medicare Savings Programs put \$135.50 back in Social Security check
    - Average SNAP benefit for senior is \$105/month



# Messaging that Works

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Across both surveys and all population groups, and among focus group participants, the #1 message that resonated when asked what would compel people to seek information on these benefits was:

***“Help for people on fixed incomes is important because the cost of living goes up, but our incomes do not.”***



# Messaging that Works (cont.)

Q: Here are reasons why some people choose to apply for help. Please tell me if each of these is a reason why you personally might choose to apply.

	% Major reason	% Major Reason 2016 Survey*
Help for people on fixed incomes is important because the cost of living goes up, but our incomes do not.	70%	76%
Help can mean less worry and stress on you about paying your bills.	66%	60%
Money for groceries can make it easier to eat healthy food and prevent getting sick.	65%	63%
Help with prescription drugs can be a savings up to \$4,000 a year.	64%	63%
These public programs help people stay independent.	64%	59%
The average help paying for food comes to about \$1,350.	58%	46%
Social Security is less than it used to be and these public programs help fill in that gap.	57%	52%
You worked hard and paid taxes that went into these public programs.	57%	48%
Millions of seniors across the country get help from these public programs.	53%	35%
In-person help is available to sign up for these public programs.	53%	33%
These public programs are part of the discounts and assistance seniors get, like senior discounts at National Parks.	49%	27%
A lot of people in your community are eligible for help.	47%	26%

\*The exact language for some of the reasons is different from the 2016 survey.

# Trusted Sources of Information

- Among the diverse audiences, children and spouses were the first place they turned for trusted information
  - 70% are in touch with a child, grandchild, or other family member at least once a week
- Other sources of trusted info:
  - Local aging agencies
  - Health care providers
  - Friends/peers
  - Other family members



# Getting the Word Out

Q: What are your main sources of news and information? Select any that apply.

- 53% Local TV news
- 44% National TV news
- 44% Friends
- 42% Radio
- 36% Family
- 34% Local newspapers
- 28% Internet news sites
- 26% Community-based organizations
- 24% Facebook
- 21% Cable news
- 17% Ethnic media
- 14% National newspapers
- 3% Twitter



62%  
Use the internet at least  
Once a week

46%  
Use Facebook at least  
Once a week

# Benefits Outreach Using Facebook

- Pros:

- Minimal budget to run
- Easy to turn on/off
- Target service area
- Way to reach people unfamiliar with your agency (as opposed to posts, where they already need to follow/like your page)

- Cons:

- If you use the ad to gather info from people, need to have mechanism for swift response
- May not work if your agency is not poised to do outgoing calls
- Beware constantly changing Facebook rules!



# New Facebook Ad Policies re: Political Content

Facebook defines political content as any ad that:  
*Relates to any **national legislative issue of public importance** in any place where the ad is being run.*


- *Abortion*
- *Civil rights*
- *Crime*
- *Economy*
- *Education*

- *Energy*
- *Environment*
- *Foreign policy*
- *Government reform*
- *Guns*
- **Health**
- *Immigration*
- *Infrastructure*
- *Military*
- **Poverty**
- **Social Security**
- *Taxes*
- *Terrorism*

# These Ads Were Flagged...




 **SHIINE - SD's Senior Health Information & Insurance Education Program**  
Sponsored · 

Are You on Medicare & Having Trouble Affording Your Prescription Drug Medications? You May Qualify For Benefits To Help.



WWW.SHIINE.NET  
**Free Survey: See If You Qualify** Learn More  
This post is brought to you by SHIINE, a free, unbiased a...

5 Likes 5 Shares

 Like  Comment  Share

 **Medicare SHIP**  
Sponsored · 

Want to stretch your grocery budget? See if you qualify for special programs that help people on Medicare.



**Find out if you qualify for money saving benefits- Take the survey.** Sign Up

Must go through authorization process to be able to run ads:  
<https://www.facebook.com/business/help/1838453822893854>

# Facebook Best Practices

- Fixed income message/reference to Medicare helps target your audience
- Photos of people facing camera perform best
- Call to Action in headline
- Provide upfront information about your agency to be transparent
  - Include link to website



The image shows a Facebook post from the National Council on Aging (NCOA). The post is sponsored and features a photo of an elderly man in a grocery store. The headline asks if the user is living on a fixed income and mentions benefits for food costs, Medicare premiums, and electric bills. A green button says 'FIND YOUR BENEFITS >'. Below the photo, there is a section titled 'Free Survey: See If You Qualify' with a 'Learn More' button and the URL 'BENEFITSCHECKUP.ORG'.

**National Council on Aging**  
Sponsored · ✨

Living on a fixed income? You may qualify for benefits that help pay food costs, Medicare premiums, electric bills, and more.

**ncoa**  
National Council on Aging

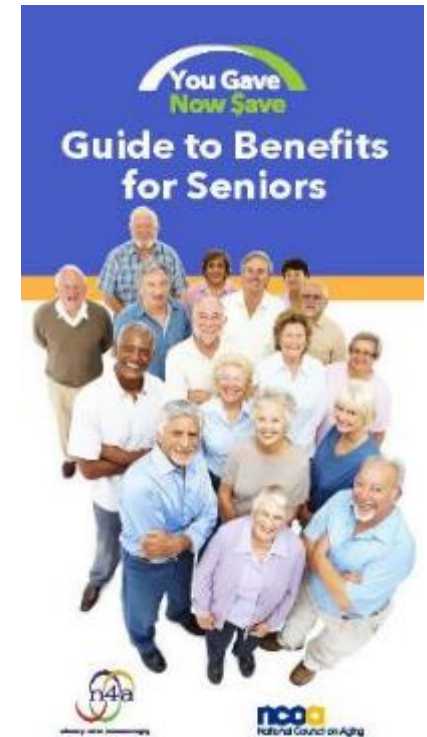
**FIND YOUR BENEFITS >**

**Free Survey: See If You Qualify**  
This post is brought to you by the National Council on Aging, a 65-year old nonprofit advocating for seniors across the country.

[BENEFITSCHECKUP.ORG](https://www.benefitcheckup.org) [Learn More](#)

# Resource: You Gave, Now Save

- Guide to benefits in English, Spanish, and simplified Chinese
- Download at [www.ncoa.org/yougavenowsave](http://www.ncoa.org/yougavenowsave)
- Order print copies from the Eldercare Locator: 1-800-677-1116





# Looking Ahead

- NCOA is working with Diverse Elders Coalition to test, translate, and disseminate creative outreach materials
- Developing a beta version of BenefitsCheckUp.org in Spanish



The screenshot shows the BenefitsCheckUp.org website. At the top left, there are logos for BenefitsCheckUp and NCOA. A purple button labeled "Sign Up for News" is on the top right. Below the logos is a "Disaster Relief" notice. A navigation menu includes "Home", "Find My Benefits", "About Us", "Sponsors", and "Resources". A main banner features the text "There are over 2,500 benefit programs available nationwide. Find out what benefits may be available in your area." with a search input field and a "Get Started" button. A testimonial for Sharell & Tom, Phoenix, AZ, is shown with a photo and text about savings on prescriptions. At the bottom, a statistic states "Join the 7,653,415 people who have discovered \$29.4 billion in benefits".



# Special Populations, what's worked for us



# Diverse Staff and/or Volunteers

- People find you/Word of Mouth
- Different Experiences/Audiences
- Intentional design



# Facebook Ads/Google Adwords

- Cost depends on Targets
- Organizational Control issues/fixes
- Different Audience  
(again)
- Removed Barriers



Month	Amount Spent	Impressions	Clicks	CTR	Cost per Click	Conversions/Leads Generated (Forms Filled Out)	Cost Per Lead
April (English)	\$79.45	4,234	145	2.68%	\$ 0.55	59	\$ 1.35
April (Spanish)	\$67.85	4,593	123	3.42%	\$ 0.55	24	\$ 2.83
May (English)	\$920.55	34,506	968	2.81%	\$ 0.95	366	\$ 2.52
May (Spanish)	\$225.58	7,346	319	2.43%	\$ 0.71	82	\$ 2.75
June (English)	\$1,127.87	52,509	289	1.20%	\$ 1.79	34	\$ 33.17
June (Spanish)	\$300.00	14,359	236	2.95%	\$ 0.71	24	\$ 12.50
July (English)	\$2,272.09	132,500	711	0.54%	\$1.56	87	\$ 26.12
July (Spanish)	\$74.43	3,559	59	1.66%	\$ 6.77	11	\$ 6.77
August (English)	\$1,741.99	91,032	353	0.39%	\$ 4.93	33	\$ 52.79
August (Spanish)	\$225.57	13,265	155	1.17%	\$ 1.46	29	\$ 7.78
September (English)	\$1,658.01	89,264	271	0.30%	\$ 18.00	62	\$ 26.74
September (Spanish)	\$596.58	33,237	226	0.68%	\$ 18.00	23	\$ 25.94
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$9,289.97</b>	<b>480,404</b>	<b>3,855</b>	<b>1.69%</b>	<b>\$ 3.45</b>	<b>834</b>	<b>\$ 15.94</b>

# Partner with the Experts

- They have an existing audience that trust them
- They have existing partners that trust them
- Co-Sponsoring – ie: Senior Enrollment Fair
- Cost is in time to build the relationship more so than in dollars



# Questions?

- Esteban Gonzalez
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