

SUPPORTING SOCIAL CONNECTION FOR OLDER ADULTS

PET ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS



OLDER ADULTS ARE AT A HIGH RISK OF SOCIAL ISOLATION AND LONELINESS.



1 IN 4 SENIORS LIVE ALONE.

56% of Meals on Wheels
home-delivered meal clients live alone

**1 IN 3 ADULTS AGE 60+
FEEL LONELY.**

THE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF SOCIAL ISOLATION INCLUDE:

- ANXIETY
- DEPRESSION
- CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE
- COGNITIVE DECLINE
- LOWER QUALITY OF LIFE
- INCREASED USE OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES

PETS PROVIDE OLDER ADULTS WITH VITAL SOCIAL CONNECTION.

**"I can't imagine life without Ruby. She is always here
to cheer me up and keep me company."**

**PETS IMPROVE THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL
HEALTH OF THEIR HUMAN CAREGIVERS.**

- ♥ IMPROVED CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH
- 🏃 INCREASED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
- 💬 INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERACTION
- 👥 STRONGER COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

**MEALS ON WHEELS CLIENTS HAVE STRONG
BONDS WITH THEIR PETS, REPORTING IMPROVED
WELL-BEING AND DECREASED LONELINESS.**

100% believe their pet brings
happiness to their life

100% feel that their pet is a
member of their family

98% say their pet makes
them feel less lonely

97% say their pet comforts them
when they have bad feelings

96% feel their pet makes
them healthier

**CLIENTS WITH PETS REPORTED HIGHER
SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT WITH FAMILY AND
FRIENDS THAN CLIENTS WITHOUT PETS.**



SENIORS STRUGGLE TO CARE FOR THEIR ANIMAL COMPANIONS.

The most needed services are **PET FOOD, VACCINATIONS, NAIL TRIMMING AND ASSISTANCE IN LIFTING FOOD.**

1 IN 2 CLIENTS
reported being unable to access either preventative or sick/emergency veterinary care.

45% were unable to get **PREVENTATIVE CARE** for their pets

22% were unable to get **SICK OR EMERGENCY CARE** for their pets



The primary barriers to accessing veterinary care are **COST & TRANSPORTATION**

SENIORS PET OWNERS CAN FACE IMPOSSIBLE CHOICES.

OLDER ADULTS MAKE HEARTBREAKING SACRIFICES TO CARE FOR THEIR PETS.



MORE THAN 1 IN 5
reported going without food themselves to feed their pets.



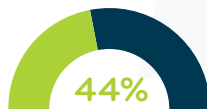
"I am on a fixed income, and it is very hard for me to keep food on the table for myself, let alone my dog."



29%
have gone without necessities for themselves—such as **MEDICAL CARE, PAYING BILLS, UTILITIES**—to provide for their pets.

MEALS ON WHEELS PET PROGRAMS KEEP OLDER ADULTS AND THEIR PETS TOGETHER.

1 IN 2 CLIENTS
have no one outside of Meals on Wheels to help them with their pets.









44%
of Meals on Wheels Members provide **PET SERVICES.**

"I am so blessed to have found her. I think we both needed each other, and I give thanks for her every day."



97%
of clients say that Meals on Wheels support makes it possible **TO KEEP THEIR PET.**

MEALS ON WHEELS PET SERVICES VARY BY PROGRAM BUT MAY INCLUDE:

-  **PET FOOD**
-  **SUPPLIES**
(cat litter, leashes, treats, toys, etc.)
-  **VETERINARY CARE**
-  **GROOMING**
-  **EMERGENCY BOARDING**
-  **DOG WALKING**

SUPPORT MEALS ON WHEELS PET PROGRAMS TODAY.

