

STAFF NOTICE

COMING CHANGES IN HOME DELIVERED MEAL TRAYS

Overview

Starting _____ we will be making an exciting change in the trays used for most of our home delivered meals. We will replace disposable trays with a re-usable tray.

There are a lot of good reasons to make this change, but perhaps the most important is improvement in our client's satisfaction with the meal we deliver. Studies have shown that appetites improve with attractive presentation. Our new re-useable trays will have a solid, china-like look whose clean lines and elegant appearance make an attractive and appealing presentation.

For staff and volunteers, the new trays will be easier to load and transport. There is no sealing required. And our clients will find these snug fitting trays easy to open. You won't have to worry about sharp edges or trays that twist or open accidentally. For the program, re-usable trays mean less inventory reordering and maintenance in addition to long term savings: re-usables generally pay for themselves over disposables in 6 to 9 months!

Drivers

Here's how it works. Each day, when a meal is delivered to the home, the delivery person will pick up the prior day's tray. Our seniors will have been notified that the return tray should be rinsed out, and that it will be sanitized back in our kitchen. Drivers will be provided with a separate container to collect the used trays, in most cases a cardboard box. In order for us to get the benefits of re-usables *it is very important to pick up the return tray each day!* You might note that since the previous day's tray must be returned, it encourages the client to eat the food. It is easier to notice if a client is not eating properly because they don't have a tray to return.

In the Kitchen

Serving the food should be fairly quick and efficient to help retain heat. The faster you serve the meals and load the carriers, the less the food cools. Avoiding the sealing step with re-usables helps a lot.

While many programs do not pre-heat the trays, re-usable trays retain heat best when they are pre-warmed prior to serving the food. They must not, however, be made too hot to touch. Also, pre-warming the meal carriers is highly recommended, whenever possible. Place a plastic milk jug full of hot tap water in your bag or carrier 10-20 minutes before you plate the food. If you don't pre-warm the carriers, they will draw off heat from the meals until they both come to the same temperature.

The final step for the kitchen staff is loading the returned trays into racks and putting them through the dishwasher. We may sanitize the trays the day they are returned. or do this the following morning, while the meals are cooking, so the trays are warmed in the dishwashers prior to serving the meals.

Remember

A beautifully served meal nourishes the body and the soul...we can all be proud of the quality of service we are providing to our seniors!