

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MEALS ON WHEELS

University of
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AMONG USERS OF THE SERVICE AND THEIR NEXT OF KIN

A new qualitative study highlights the benefits of Meals on Wheels and why the service could become an essential part of social care services

NUTRITIOUS MEALS

- The meal delivery can act as a prompt to eat for people with cognitive decline or other mental health issues
- The meals require little or no preparation, making it easy for older users of the service and those with mobility, and other challenges, to have a meal every day
- This can contribute to reduced risk of malnutrition and hospital admissions



REDUCING SOCIAL ISOLATION

- The human contact provided by drivers when they deliver the meals could become an essential component for many users of the service in improving wellbeing



WELLBEING CHECKS

- The drivers' check-ins can highlight any safety or other concerns
- This can assist some users of the service to continue living in their own home for longer



PROMOTING INDEPENDENCE

- Receiving Meals on Wheels can help prevent or delay the move into residential care
- This can substantially reduce subsequent costs to social care services and the NHS



MEALS ON WHEELS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE

- Carers employed through social care agencies are not always allocated enough time to cook a hot meal
- Meals on Wheels are a lifeline and should receive enhanced and ongoing support from national and local Governments

“ People who use Meals on Wheels, and their families, commonly say: ”

‘It’s nice when somebody knocks at the door and you know it’s dinner time, it gives a point to the day, especially when it’s a hot meal.’

‘They’re a very important part of my daily life. I couldn’t do without the service, it’s excellent.’

‘They are doing a sterling service and keeping people in their own homes.’

‘They are a key part of helping me to care for my father because it gives me the freedom to know that at lunchtime, if I wasn’t there, he would be okay. It’s a complete lifesaver for me.’